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## **CASE STUDY RESEARCH PROJECT BACKGROUNDER**

### **What is the purpose of the case study research project?**

To document how the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace (the Standard) is being implemented among Canadian employers across all sizes and sectors and collect qualitative and quantitative data on the impact it is having on workplaces and the employees. The project's goal is to obtain learnings, identify best practices, and develop tools that will build the case for and enhance the adoption of the Standard on a national platform.

### **What is the Project?**

Three-year case study research project which involves a research team, expert panel, steering committee, and more than 20 organizations.

### **Why is this project being carried out now?**

Each week, more than 500,000 employed Canadians are unable to work due to mental health problems. January 2013 marked the launch of the new voluntary Standard which was developed to obtain measurable improvements in the health and wellbeing of Canadian employees, as well as improvements in organizational effectiveness. The Standard was championed by the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) and its partners in response to recommendations from its internal Workforce Advisory Committee and external consultations. Development of the Standard was undertaken collaboratively by the MHCC, the Bureau de normalisation du Québec (BNQ) and the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Group (CAN/CSA-Z1003-13/BNQ 9700-803/2013).

The Standard specifies requirements for a documented and systematic approach to develop and sustain a psychologically healthy and safe (PH&S) workplace, and may eventually be seen as a reference for best practices. The timeliness of the case study research project is central to building a business case to adopt the Standard for Canadian employers, identifies best practices, challenges/barriers/gaps and also inform future revisions to the Standard from the learnings gained through the project.

### **Who are the players (stakeholders) of the project and how were they selected?**

#### ***Funders:***

The Project is being funded by a number of parties, including the MHCC, Lundbeck Canada and The Great-West Life Centre for Mental Health.



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### ***Research Team:***

Working collaboratively with the MHCC, the selected research team will measure process and impact outcomes of the Standard implementation in each organization and report the findings in both aggregate (i.e. findings from all/identified groups of organizations complied) and individual forms (case studies for each organization outlining findings specific to their environments). The research team will help organizations implement an evaluation strategy as they implement the Standard. Finally, the research team will be involved in developing and implementing a robust knowledge translation and exchange strategy to disseminate findings from the project, including publishing findings in respected peer-reviewed journals.

A request for proposal was issued in September 2013 to secure a research team that will be able to carry out the work described above. The submitted proposals were reviewed by four independent reviewers, representing a National Government Federal department, Academia and Quebec. Reviewer recommendations were submitted to the MHCC's Executive Leadership team and then a decision as subsequently made. The selected research team consists of the following members:

### **Members of the research team:**

- Merv Gilbert, PhD, RPsych – Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health & Addiction, Simon Fraser University & Gilbert Action Ltd. Consulting Group
- Dan Bilsker, PhD, RPsych – Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health & Addiction, Simon Fraser University & Gilbert Action Ltd. Consulting Group
- Elliot Goldner, MD – Clinical Relations, Faculty of Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University
- E. Kevin Kelloway, PhD – Psychology, Saint Mary's University & Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in Occupational Health Psychology
- Mike Teed, MSc – Williams School of Business, Bishop's University
- Caroline Biron, M.Ps, Ph.D. – Faculty of Business Administration, Laval University

### ***Expert Panel:***

An expert panel, selected for their skills and expertise on the Standard, has been chosen to guide the research team with options of complying with the Standard and to address issues/concerns of the case study organizations as they adopt the Standard.



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### **Members of the expert panel:**

- Francois Legault, National Director, Employee Assistance Services, Specialized Health Services Directorate, Health Canada
- Mary Ann Baynton, Program Director, Great-West Life Centre for Mental Health
- Ian Arnold MD, FRCP Occupational Medicine
- Claudine Ducharme, Associée, Services-conseils en santé et en assurance collective chez Morneau Shepell
- Martin Shain, Principal, Neighbour at Work Centre

### ***Steering Committee:***

A steering committee has been established to guide and oversee the project for its duration. This committee will act as a strategic advisory committee to the project team and will consist of representatives from BNQ and the CSA group technical committee that helped develop the Standard and project funders. The committee will provide guidance and assistance to the project team, the research team and, if necessary, the participating organizations. It will also help define and achieve project outcomes, balance conflicting priorities and resources, review progress of the project and provide input at every stage of the project.

### **Members of the Steering Committee:**

- Mike Schwartz, EVP, Group Benefits, Great-West Life
- Kathy Jurgens, National Program Manager, Canadian Mental Health Association
- Charles Bruce, Nova Scotia Public Service Long Term Disability
- Daniel McCarthy, Senior Director, External Relations, Lundbeck Canada Inc.
- Jill Collins, CSA Group
- Sylvie Poissant, Directrice, développement, Group Entreprises En Santé

### ***Case Study Organizations:***

Participating organizations will commit to implementing the Standard, either fully or partially, by the end of the three year project period; nominate a champion within the organization and provide dedicated resources to assist him/her to carry out the implementation of the Standard and work collaboratively and share data/findings/issues/processes etc. throughout the project with research team and the MHCC.



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A call for interest was issued publicly in September 2013 to allow employers to submit their applications and interest to be a part of the case study project. We received more than 40 interests from organizations representing various organizations of all sizes and sectors.

**When are the project start and end dates?**

The project will begin on February 1, 2014 and end on January 31, 2017.

**How will the project findings be shared with the general public?**

A comprehensive communications and knowledge exchange plan will be developed to ensure the findings are shared with relevant stakeholders in the appropriate manner. This may include, but is not limited to, press releases, webinars, MHCC newsletters, magazine articles, announcements, roundtables, workshops, and conferences. MHCC will also develop a webpage for the project within the existing MHCC website that will house all the current and updated information on the case study project, including, but not limited to, current activities, findings, and announcements. Additionally, MHCC will be actively involved in bringing together Canadian employers, by way of roundtable discussions, leadership forums, webinars, and teleconferences, and by engaging in conversations regarding the Standard and project findings with the ultimate goal of encouraging adoption of the Standard on a national platform.

**Where are the participating organizations located? (i.e. what provinces/regions/etc.)**

We have a mix of organizations that have national, regional, provincial and local influence.

*The views represented herein solely represent the views of the Mental Health Commission of Canada.  
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