Tackling the Stigma Surrounding Mental Illness in the Workplace

OPSEU International Youth Day
August 13, 2015

partnersformentalhealth
WHY WE EXIST

‘Mental health issues will not come out of the shadows until people speak out. Power comes from acknowledgement. Healing comes from action.’

- a member of the public quoted in the Out of the Shadows at Last report of the Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology
Partners for Mental Health aims to change the way Canadians think about, act towards and support mental health and those living with mental illness.
WHO WE ARE

Our vision: To live in a society that values and promotes mental health and helps people living with mental health problems and mental illness to lead meaningful and productive lives.

Our purpose: To transform the way we think about, act towards and support mental health in Canada by catalyzing a social movement.
WHO WE ARE

• A national charitable organization founded and chaired by the Honourable Michael Kirby.

• Began as a strategic initiative of the Mental Health Commission of Canada with the Mental Health Strategy for Canada as our roadmap.

• Our primary areas of focus include:

  Children & Youth

  Workplace
WHY WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH
Mental illness affects many.

- **1 in 5 Canadians** will have a mental health problem or illness this year.

- **44% of workers** say they have or have had mental health issues.

- **At least 70%** of mental health problems and illnesses have their onset during adolescence and early adult years.
WHY WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH

The impact of mental illness in Canada is profound.

**Annual Economic Cost of Mental Illness in Canada**

$51B


**Canadians Missed Work This Week Due to Mental Health Issues**

500,000


**Workplace Disability Claims Are Related to Mental Illness**

1 in 3

WHY WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH

David Goldbloom, MD
Chair, Mental Health Commission of Canada and Senior Medical Advisor, CAMH
STIGMA AND ITS DEVASTATING IMPACT
Stigma remains one of the primary obstacles to creating and maintaining mentally healthy workplaces.

Less than $\frac{1}{3}$ of Canadians facing mental health problems or illness report getting help.

Among those aged 15-24, less than 25% actually receive mental health services.
“We inhabit our bodies; we live in our minds. The great paradox is that the very space within which we experience our lives, hold our memories, make our decisions and share the joys of being alive is at the same time the space that we most stigmatize and neglect in health care.”

- Stakeholder submission to the Mental Health Strategy for Canada Framework
“I’m a 31-year-old Canadian woman who has been fighting the disease of depression since my late teenage years. It’s pretty sad when you sit around wishing you had any (literally ANY) other disease other than mental illness. It’s the constant justification that you’re actually sick. Why do we who suffer with this debilitating disease have to suffer socially as well?”

– Kim

Most people living with a mental illness say that the stigma they experience is often worse than the illness itself.
Stigma refers to negative attitudes (prejudice) and negative behaviours (discrimination) toward people with mental health problems and illness.

Stigma means having fixed ideas and judgments about people, as well as fearing and avoiding what we don’t understand.

Nearly 60% of young people (under age 25) with a mental illness say they have experienced the impact of stigma.
Stigma often results in the exclusion of people with mental health problems from activities that are open to other people, such as getting a job, finding a safe place to live, participating in social activities and having relationships, resulting in:

- Discrimination
- Loss
- Inequality

Source: Opening Minds, Mental Health Commission of Canada
Stigma leads to self-stigma.

The prejudice and discrimination that people face often becomes internalized.

Many begin to believe the negative things that other people and the media say about them and they can experience lower self-esteem and feel guilt and shame.

54% of those who met the criteria for anxiety disorder, mood disorder or substance dependence feel embarrassed about their mental health problems.

STIGMA

Let’s support the good days, the bad days and all the days between.

Stigma can be reduced. Change is possible.

What it requires is a collective effort for all Canadians to help make a difference—at home, at work, in schools and on the frontlines of health care.

So, how can we start talking about mental health/illness in a more positive and supportive way?
Not Myself Today is a national workplace initiative that aims to:

• Increase awareness and understanding of mental health and mental illness

• Reduce stigma

• Foster a culture of acceptance and support for mental health and for those facing challenges
GETTING STARTED – NOT MYSELF TODAY

Through a shared insight – the feeling of not being oneself – we want people to connect to the topic of mental health and build understanding for those who may be facing challenges.

As part of this initiative, we hope to engage you in conversation and enable you with tools and resources to help build a mentally healthy workplace.

FEELING
YOU ARE NOT ALONE.

JOIN US AND BE PART OF THE CONVERSATION ABOUT WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH.

NOTMYSELF TODAY.CA
GETTING STARTED - NOT MYSELF TODAY

...and 158 more companies & organizations
What can **you** do to help stop stigma?
YOU CAN HELP STOP THE STIGMA

#1: Use your words wisely

A variety of slang terms are used to describe mental health problems and illness which can add to stigma.

Be thoughtful about your own choice of words. Use accurate and sensitive words when talking about people with mental health conditions.
YOU CAN HELP STOP THE STIGMA

#2: Learn more

Myths, misinformation and lack of knowledge lead to stigma and discrimination – educate yourself about mental health and mental illness.

Review resources online. Take part in Not Myself Today activities. Listen and support those experiencing issues with their mental health.

www.partnersformh.ca
www.cmha.ca
www.camh.ca
www.mhfa.ca
YOU CAN HELP STOP THE STIGMA

#3: Debunk the myths

Enhance your knowledge and understanding of mental health and mental illness. Review the myths as part of our Not Myself Today initiative.

BUSTING MYTHS ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

NOTMYSELF TODAY
NOTMYSELF TODY.CA
DEBUNK THE MYTHS

TRUE OR FALSE

MENTAL ILLNESS AFFECTS VERY FEW PEOPLE.
DEBUNK THE MYTHS

ANSWER: FALSE

MENTAL ILLNESS ACTUALLY AFFECTS MANY PEOPLE IN CANADA, DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY. 1 IN 5 CANADIANS WILL HAVE A MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEM OR ILLNESS THIS YEAR.

44% OF WORKERS SAY THEY HAVE OR HAVE HAD MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES.

Sources:

partnersformentalhealth
DEBUNK THE MYTHS

TRUE OR FALSE

MENTAL ILLNESS TENDS TO BEGIN DURING ADOLESCENCE.

partnersformentalhealth
DEBUNK THE MYTHS

ANSWER: TRUE

THE FIRST EPISODE OF A MENTAL ILLNESS OFTEN OCCURS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 15 AND 30 YEARS.

ESTIMATES SUGGEST THAT AT LEAST 70% OF MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS AND ILLNESSES HAVE THEIR ONSET DURING CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE.
DEBUNK THE MYTHS

TRUE OR FALSE

MENTAL ILLNESS CAN BE CURED WITH WILLPOWER.
DEBUNK THE MYTHS

ANSWER: FALSE

MENTAL ILLNESSES ARE BONA FIDE MEDICAL CONDITIONS. RESEARCH SHOWS THERE ARE GENETIC AND BIOLOGICAL CAUSES FOR MENTAL ILLNESS, AND THEY CAN BE TREATED EFFECTIVELY.

MEDICATION, COUNSELLING AND PSYCHOSOCIAL REHABILITATION ARE TREATMENT OPTIONS THAT CAN HELP PEOPLE RECOVER FROM MENTAL ILLNESS.
DEBUNK THE MYTHS

TRUE OR FALSE

PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS TEND TO BE VIOLENT AND UNPREDICTABLE.
ANSWER: FALSE

People who experience a mental illness acutely sometimes behave very differently from people who do not.

While some of their behaviours may seem bizarre, people with mental illness are not more violent than the rest of the population. In fact, people with mental illness are more likely to be the victims of violence than the general population.

Source: Canadian Mental Health Association

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DEBUNK THE MYTHS

TRUE OR FALSE

PEOPLE LIVING WITH A MENTAL ILLNESS NEVER GET BETTER.
DEBUNK THE MYTHS

ANSWER: FALSE

MENTAL ILLNESSES ARE MEDICAL DISORDERS THAT CAN BE TREATED, OFTEN WITH POSITIVE RESULTS.

MANY PEOPLE WITH A MENTAL ILLNESS DO RECOVER AND GO ON TO LEAD HEALTHY, PRODUCTIVE AND SATISFYING LIVES.

MEDICATION, COUNSELLING AND PSYCHOSOCIAL REHABILITATION ARE TREATMENT OPTIONS THAT CAN HELP PEOPLE RECOVER FROM MENTAL ILLNESS.

NOTMYSELF TODAY

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TRUE OR FALSE

PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS SHOULDN’T WORK.
ANSWER: FALSE

PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS CAN, AND DO FUNCTION WELL IN THE WORKPLACE.

IN FACT, THEY ARE UNLIKELY TO MISS ANY MORE WORKDAYS BECAUSE OF THEIR CONDITION THAN PEOPLE LIVING WITH A CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITION LIKE DIABETES OR HEART DISEASE.
MULTIPLE CHOICE

WHAT IS THE MOST COMMON MENTAL ILLNESS IN CANADA?

ANXIETY DISORDERS
EATING DISORDERS
MOOD DISORDERS
SCHIZOPHRENIA
PSYCHOTIC DISORDERS
ANSWER:

ANXIETY DISORDERS


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TRUE OR FALSE

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD) IS AN ANXIETY DISORDER.
ANSWER: TRUE

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD) IS AN ANXIETY DISORDER THAT IS TRIGGERED BY A DISTRESSING OR CATASTROPHIC EVENT WHICH MAY INVOLVE EXPERIENCING THREATENED DEATH, SERIOUS INJURY OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE.

WHILE MOST PEOPLE EXPERIENCE TRAUMA AT SOME POINT IN THEIR LIFE, NOT ALL TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCES LEAD TO PTSD.

APPROXIMATELY 8% OF THE POPULATION WILL EXPERIENCE PTSD DURING THEIR LIFETIME.

PEOPLE IN CERTAIN OCCUPATIONS ARE AT HIGHER RISK. A STUDY OUT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA FOUND THAT EMERGENCY PERSONNEL SUCH AS DOCTORS, NURSES, PARAMEDICS AND FIREFIGHTERS EXPERIENCE POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS AT TWICE THE RATE OF THE AVERAGE POPULATION.

Source: Canadian Mental Health Association

NOTMYSELF.TODAY.CA
DEBUNK THE MYTHS

MULTIPLE CHOICE

WHAT % OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEPRESSION ARE IN THE WORKFORCE?

25%
40%
50%
70%
90%
DEBUNK THE MYTHS

ANSWER:

70%

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YOU CAN HELP STOP THE STIGMA

#4: Use the STOP criteria and SPEAK UP

Use the STOP criteria to recognize attitudes and actions that support the stigma of mental health conditions. Ask yourself, does what you hear, read or experience:

Stereotypes people with mental health conditions (that is, assumes they are all alike rather than individuals)?

Trivializes or belittles people with mental health conditions and/or the condition itself?

Offends people with mental health conditions by insulting them?

Patronizes people with mental health conditions by treating them as if they were not as good as other people?

If so, then, speak up and call it out. Help the person realize how their words affect people with mental health conditions.

Source: http://ontario.cmha.ca/mental-health/mental-health-conditions/stigma-and-discrimination/
WANT TO DO MORE?
WANT TO DO MORE?

- **be part of our campaigns**
  Bring Not Myself Today to work. Support child and youth mental health with Right By You.
  [partnersformh.ca/act](http://partnersformh.ca/act)

- **raise your voice**
  Change won’t happen if we stay silent – let your elected representatives know this issue matters to you.
  [partnersformh.ca/influence-policy](http://partnersformh.ca/influence-policy)

- **fundraise**
  Tap into your strengths and interests and inspire others to give.
  [partnersformh.ca/give](http://partnersformh.ca/give)

- **pledge**
  Pledge to take part in this movement.
  [partnersformh.ca/pledge](http://partnersformh.ca/pledge)

- **share your story**
  Tell your story and let others know they aren’t alone.
  [partnersformh.ca/share](http://partnersformh.ca/share)

- **give**
  Every dollar counts and goes to fund our campaigns and work.
  [partnersformh.ca/give](http://partnersformh.ca/give)

- **reach out**
  Show you care, really listen and provide support – it can be life-changing.
  [partnersformh.ca/resources](http://partnersformh.ca/resources)

- **volunteer**
  Share your time, skills and talents to supercharge our efforts.
  [partnersformh.ca/volunteer-opportunities](http://partnersformh.ca/volunteer-opportunities)

- **spread the word**
  Share these easy ways to get involved with your network – download these graphics today.
  [partnersformh.ca/our-impact](http://partnersformh.ca/our-impact)
Thank you!

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