

Meeting of March 27, 2017

Update on Mental Health

- Last update at HRUMCC was in June 2016 and at NLMCC in October 2016.
- Entering year three of our Integrated Mental Health (MH) Framework and 3-Year Action Plan.
- Like to acknowledge and thank Theresa MacInnis for her significant contribution as Co-chair on the Mental Health in the Workplace Implementation Committee (MH Committee) with Sara Filbee, ADM-Atlantic Region, and Mental Health Champion for the Department.

On our Radar-Government-Wide activities

- Workplace mental health continues as a government priority in 2017-18.
- Seeing the influence of the Mental Health Joint Task-Force Recommendations, through:
 - Launch of the Federal Workplace Mental Health Strategy (July 2016)
 - TBS/OCHRO Federal consultations with employees on 3 priority areas of the Strategy:
 - changing culture to be respectful to the mental health of all colleagues;
 - building capacity with tools and resources for employees at all levels; and
 - measuring and reporting on actions.
 - Creation of the TBS Centre of Expertise, co-lead by Sean Ross, Treasury Board and Denis St. Jean, Public Service Alliance of Canada.
- We continue to track these important context pieces, so that we remain aligned with evolving thinking and that we continue to build on existing expertise.

Departmental Context

- Employment and Social Development Canada's (ESDC) MH Committee continues to oversee/lead the implementation of the Framework and Action Plan.
- Keeping with the National Voluntary Standard, the Framework and Action Plan are organized against the foundational pillars of Promotion of health, Prevention of harm and the Resolution of incidents or concerns.
- The framework offers direction, guidance and support to the organization so branches/regions/workplaces may access what is needed to respond to their particular needs and support psychological health and safety.

Activities Highlights

- Every branch/region has identified individuals to spearhead work related to the Integrated Framework within their workplaces. These champions are part of a Network that meets regularly to share ideas and where there may still be gaps needed attention to feed into the Implementation Committee.
- We continue with the foundational activities that are essential to keep the momentum, such as Communications, training/learn offerings, opportunities/mechanism to hear from employees (testimonials, generic box, sessions, etc). Implementation Committee Co-chairs Theresa and Sara have also participated in several management meetings, staff meetings and at internal committees.
- We continue to share and learn from other departments and networks.
- As mentioned in June, two key 2nd year initiatives are the Workplace-based Peer Support Program (PSP) /Mentoring Program for Managers, and the Progress Measurement Strategy:

Peer Support Program (offers readily available resources for employees who struggle with mental health challenges)

- In December, began working with Mental Health Innovations, firm of experts in the field of Workplace-based Mental Health Peer Support Programs on what and how we go about developing a PSP at ESDC.
- With the guidance of Mental Health Innovations, a plan with key activities is identified.
- The first step was to engage with employees and managers and start a dialogue.
 - Held national consultations sessions across the country, with groups of employees and managers, including union representatives (Vancouver, Regina, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Saguenay, Shawinigan, Montreal, Gatineau, Toronto, St. Catharines, Dartmouth, St-John's and Bathurst).

Next Steps:

- MHI will take the next several weeks to compile and analyse information and provide summary of findings to the Implementation Committee.
- A meeting will be organized with key stakeholders (unions, Policy Health and Safety Committee (PHSC)/Occupational Health and Safety Committee, Employee Equity) to provide a brief on findings and results:
 - What Mental Health Innovations has heard through the engagement sessions
 - Discussion around readiness to move ahead
- Brief senior management on progress and proposed next steps.
- Next Phase May 2017 - December 2017:
 - Create an advisory committee with representative from employees, union representatives, PHSC members, EE Network and managers.
 - Under the guidance of MHI, the Advisory Committee will develop the governance of the PSP: policy, program, recruitment criteria and process and tools and training for peer supporters, etc.

Mentoring Program for Managers:

- In conjunction with these sessions, we have also engaged with managers on a Mentoring Program that would provide support/coaching from peer managers who have had experience in successfully dealing with workplace situations where mental health issues were present.
- The objective is to offer managers the opportunity to enhance their understanding and ability to respond to mental health related issues in the workplace in practical ways through 'enlightened coaching'.
 - Exactly how this program will work is yet to be determined, however the information from the sessions were very useful to begin building the program.

progress evaluation strategy (PES)

- The PES goal is to help us know whether the work we are doing to create and maintain a psychologically health and safety workplace is making a difference. Its focus is helping us LEARN; KNOW WHERE WE ARE; while having an eye on WHERE WE WANT TO GET TO.
- We want to be able to do this as we go along so we may adjust as needed.
- The Implementation Committee is looking at various data and sources that relate to the 13 factors identified in the National Standard affecting psychological health and safety in the workplace.
- The Evaluation Strategy has three components that taken together, allow us to tell ESDC's story by helping us answer three main questions:

Component 1: Question: To what extent have we implemented activities in the Framework?

Component 2: Question: What changes are we seeing in Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) since the Implementation of the Framework started?

Component 3: Question: What are employees' experiences of the workplaces?

Data: The Mental Health in the Workplace Survey - February 13th to March 27th - is the Baseline to which each year's progress will be measured.

- The survey is **an evidence-based, peer reviewed tool that the Department of National Defense team of experts compiled from scales in the academic literature to measure the 13 factors.**
- The wording was slightly adapted to ESDC environment though a review by the Implementation Committee, and a pre-tested exercise with about 260 randomly selected employees.
- Sent to approximately 8,000 randomly sampled employees from across the organization representing all business lines, branches, regions.
- Will be used to complement the PSES and PSEAS, to help us get below the "what" to understand in more depth the "why" and "so what/now what"
 - We hope to identify and explore the factors that most affect employees' actual well-being and **strategically** focus our efforts so that we can have the biggest positive impact for all.

PES Next Steps

- In the next few months, focus on analysis, reporting, and disseminating of data.
- Dissemination of results will be in phased approach as we complete data collection under each component listed above.

- The goal is to provide information that can support management in scoping their branch/regional mental health action plans and identifying their next steps.
- High level results will also be shared with all employees as part of carrying on the dialogue and promoting shared ownership over our workplace.
- Findings will be used to take stock, identify gaps and actions going forward as part of the next planning cycle: part of keeping the Integrated Framework “evergreen”.