Poll
Why?
The Statistics

• 1 in 5 people in Canada will personally experience a mental health problem or illness costing the Canadian economy at least $50 Billion per year.

• Approximately 8% of adults will experience major depression at some time in their lives.

• By age 40, nearly 50% of the population will have or have had a mental illness.

• Suicide accounts for 24% of all deaths among 15-24 year olds and 16% among 25 - 44 year olds.

• Suicide is one of the leading causes of death in both men and women from adolescence to middle age.

Source: Mental Health Commission of Canada
Demographic of our Teams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generations</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th># of Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baby Boomers</td>
<td>73 to 55 years of age</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen-X</td>
<td>54 to 43 years of age</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millenials</td>
<td>42 to 24 years of age</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iGen</td>
<td>&lt; 23 years of age</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CHS Staff Age Demographic
Impact of Mental Health Issues in the Workplace

• Absenteeism
• Presenteeism
• Lack of Productivity
• Conflict with Coworkers
• Increased Disability Claims
• Poor Quality/Quantity of Work
• Workplace Accidents
Our People

Committed
Tireless
Attentive
Caring
Brave
Engaged
Invested
Dedicated
Passionate
“Animal care professionals are some of the most pain-saturated people I have ever worked with. The very thing that makes them great at their work – their empathy and dedication and love for animals – makes them vulnerable.”

J. Eric Gentry
Florida Psychotherapist
Mental Health Risks in Animal Welfare

Veterinarian Suicide Risk according to the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association:

- Veterinarians are 3.5 times more likely to die from suicide than the general population
- 1 in 6 Vets have considered suicide
- The suicide rate for Vets is double that of dentists and doctors
Mental Health Risks in Animal Welfare

Animal Protection Officers:

• Are routinely exposed to traumatic events

• Encounter individuals in vulnerable situations

• Regular Interactions with people living with mental health problems

• Verbal assault and high risk of physical assault

• High public scrutiny
The Reality

• The number of people suffering from mental illness or concerns is increasing.

• We hire professions who are at a higher risk for mental illness.

• The demographic of our workforce may not be equipped to manage the emotional toll their job in animal welfare takes.

• The nature of the work we do puts us at a higher risk for burnout, compassion fatigue, and mental health distress.

We must be proactive!
Change the Culture

It starts with you!!
Strategic Plan

“Promote a culture where work-life balance is respected and both mental and physical health are a priority for each staff person”.

Calgary Humane Society
Let’s Get Proactive!

Build a culture that promotes good mental health.

- Review your policies
- Improve benefits & initiatives
- Talk about it - break the stigma!
- Train your teams
- Get prepared
Workplace Policies

Policy amendments:

• Increased vacation time

• Wellness days instead of sick days

• Breaks and lunch
Benefits & Initiatives

Wellness Initiatives:

- Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP)
- Mental health support during crisis situations
- Wellness Initiatives / Programs / Committees
- Recognition
Fur Therapy!

YOUR STRESS LEVEL IS HIGH. FOLLOW ME TO THE LAB...
Let’s Talk!

Let’s talk about Mental Health

Calgary Humane Society®
Connecting Lives
Break the Stigma

I don't think it's healthy that you have to take medication every day just to feel normal. Don't you worry that it's changing you from who you really are?

“CRAZY”

“Psycho”

“Nutcase”

“Mental”

“INSANE”

Well, lying in bed obviously isn't helping you. You need to try something else.

Calgary Humane Society®

Connecting Lives

www.robot-hugs.com (c) 2013
Training
Get Prepared

- Keep emergency contact information for employees up to date

- Emergency contact lists:
  - EFAP
  - Distress Centre
  - Local mental health resources
  - Resources available through your group benefits plan
What to Watch For

- Quality of work is suffering
- Reduced productivity
- Frequently late or absent
- No longer cares about appearance
- Withdrawn from their peers
- Irritable and moody
- Lack of engagement
- More frequent accidents /conflict at work

Source: Partners for Mental Health
Knowing the signs
What to do

ALGEE

A - Assess for risk of suicide or harm
L - Listen nonjudgmentally
G - Give reassurance and information
E - Encourage appropriate professional help
E - Encourage self-help and other support strategies

Source: www.thenationalcouncil.org
Return to Work

- Have the treating physician or insurance provider (in the event of a disability claim) provide a RTW plan to ensure a successful and meaningful return
- Meet with the employee prior to their RTW to review the plan and current capabilities
- Prepare the team for the employee’s return
- Stick with the plan
- Follow up and then follow up some more
Don’t Forget About Yourself

The Oxygen Mask Theory...
Don’t Forget About Yourself

“The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet.”

Dr. Naomi Rachel Remen
Summary

• Our work makes us vulnerable to burn out, compassion fatigue, and mental health issues

• Create a culture where your organization embraces and promotes psychological health and safety by putting policies, programs, and initiatives in place

• Make the conversation around mental health part of your workplace culture – end the stigma

• Prepare your team. Train them on how to identify signs of mental distress or illness, empower them to act, and ensure they have the resources needed

• Promote self care – lead by example!
References & Resources

- Suicide Among Veterinarians in the United States from 1979 – 2015
- Mental Health First Aid Canada
- The National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace
- Guarding Minds @ Work
- Not Myself Today
- The Self Compassion Project - 80+ Self-Care Ideas
- Jessica Dolce - Classes, Coaching, and Compassionate Badassery for Animal Care and Welfare Folks
- Workplace Strategies for Mental Health
- Canadian Mental Health Association
- Centre for Suicide Prevention
- Compassion Fatigue Awareness Project
- Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL)
- The Nonprofit Burnout Assessment
- The Self Care Activity Assessment
- The Self Care Checklist
- Simon Sinek - Millennials in the Workplace
THANK YOU!

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