STEPS TO IMPLEMENT THE
Psychological Safety Standard

Step 1   Commit to the vision of the standard.

- ☐ Check your collective agreement for any language regarding psychological health and safety.
- ☐ Make business, legal and health cases for management to commit to Implementing the Psychological Safety Standard. SEE ATTACHMENT A.
- ☐ Select a Champion and identify the Employer's lead.
- ☐ Connect with your current OH&S Committee
- ☐ Develop and/or review and provide input to a mission statement. SEE ATTACHMENT B.

Step 2   Share the vision.

- ☐ Discuss at Local meetings
- ☐ Put up posters
- ☐ Include the local's commitment to the Standard in newsletters, local websites and local social media.

Step 3   Collect and assess in house data.

- ☐ Collect and review information such as sick leave, WCB claims, LTD claims, EFAP usage, incident reports, OH&S reports and psychological friendly policies

Step 4   Plan to assess risks.

- ☐ Determine how you are going to assess risks ie) by department, by unit, by whole organization
- ☐ Distribute Guarding Minds at Work Survey

Step 5   Analyze survey results. SEE ATTACHMENT C.

- ☐ Identify areas of high, medium and low risk
- ☐ Explore root cause analysis
- ☐ Prioritize risk factor(s)
- ☐ Establish goals and develop an action plan to address the prioritized risk factor(s) that have been chosen.

Step 6   Implement the action plan

Step 7 Evaluate

- ☐ Re-distribute Guarding Minds at Work Survey
- ☐ Review current data and policies

ATTACHMENT A
RESOURCES FOR ENGAGING THE EMPLOYER

This video provides an overall view of The Psychological Safety Standard
www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/media/4183

Statistics

MHCC – Issue Brief, Workplace Mental Health, June 3, 2016

› 500 000 workers do not attend work – due to MH problems and illnesses

› 1 in 3 disability claims related to mental illness and increasing

› Mental health claims represent 70% total cost of disability claims

› 1 in 5 Canadians will experience a mental health problems or illness

› 40 % of nurses report burnout

› 14% of nurses have tested positive for symptoms of PTSD

› Healthcare Workers are 1.5 times more likely to be off work due to illness or disability

› 46% of nurses reported workplace violence during the most 5 recent shifts – 1/3 said they were physically assaulted

Business Case

Negative Impacts: Compromised employee psychological health has a range of negative effects on organizations, including… (Guarding Minds @ Work)

› **Financial.** Mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety are rapidly becoming the main cause of disability in developed countries. Employers are facing increased disability premiums, rising health and benefits costs and expenses associated with replacing absent employees.

› **Productivity.** In addition to absenteeism, psychological ill-health is a significant contributor to 'presenteeism', decreases in performance due to illness or injury while an employee is still at work. A recent study found that, compared to a variety of common disorders (e.g. asthma, migraine, arthritis), depression caused the greatest decline in work productivity and focus.

› **Safety.** Reduced psychological health and safety contributes to accidents, incidents and injuries. Most jobs require employees to have good concentration, social skills and the ability to solve problems effectively. These skills are undermined by most mental health conditions. As a result, co-workers, customers and employees are at risk of serious, and sometimes dire, outcomes due to unrecognized or poorly managed mental health conditions.

› **Workplace morale.** Reduced psychological health and safety contributes to conflict and grievances. If one member of a team is struggling, the whole team is compromised. Unlike physical illnesses or injuries, which tend to be visible to fellow employees, mental health problems are often described as 'invisible', because these problems aren't apparent or recognized by team members. Changes in a colleague's usual behaviour or performance due to mental health problems may be perceived as intentional, resulting in misunderstanding, resentment and tense relationships. This, in turn, contributes to absenteeism and turnover.

Positive Impacts: On the other hand, a psychologically safe and healthy workforce has meaningful benefits for organizations, including... (Guarding Minds @ Work)

> **Improved recruitment and retention.** In today's complex and ever-changing job market, current and potential employees have higher expectations for their jobs. They expect to be treated fairly, recognized appropriately and provided with opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and develop new skills. Employers who create and sustain a 'great place to work' will attract and keep the best workers.

> **Improved employee engagement.** An engaged employee is someone fully involved in, and enthusiastic about, his or her work. When employees are engaged, they view their interests as aligned with those of the company. They are more willing to extend an extra or discretionary effort to assist clients, customers and their colleagues. The net result is improved performance, productivity and quality of goods and services.

> **Improved sustainability.** Organizations, like individuals, must be resilient in order to respond to external demands (e.g., market challenges, layoffs, mergers or restructuring). Businesses or work groups with psychologically healthy employees are best equipped not only to survive, but to thrive, when facing challenges.

> **Improved health and safety.** Employers strive to create an atmosphere where there is a shared commitment to employee well-being and security. In such environments, staff recognize their responsibility to care for their own physical and psychological health, but also to support colleagues whose behaviour indicates that they are struggling or whose actions place others at risk. In such environments, staff are also more accepting and collaborative when accommodating a colleague returning to work from a disability absence, whether physical or psychological.

Legal Case

> Employers may become liable if **mental injuries** are found to result from **careless, negligent, reckless or intentional acts and omissions**

> Claims in this area tend to relate to the fact that there has been ongoing employer "**bad behaviour**" during the duration of the employment relationship

> Legal perspective of Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace
> *www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/pdf/weathering_the_perfect_legal_storm_BEV_E.pdf*
> *www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/pdf/weathering_the_perfect_legal_storm_AAC_E.PDF*

Health Case

> Workplace risk factors can increase the likelihood that an individual will experience increased stress, which in turn increases the likelihood of developing or worsening a mental disorder.

> Does work cause mental disorders?

>> Rarely a link except in work related trauma

>> May increase likelihood or make an existing disorder worse or impede on treatment and rehabilitation

>> May contribute to mental distress

>> Guarding Minds @ Work

ATTACHMENT B
SAMPLE
MESSAGING

For Locals

The primary goal of implementing a Psychological Health and Safety Management System is to help protect worker psychological health and safety by addressing organizational and environmental factors. Union participation is critical to its success. We encourage union leadership in our organization to play an active role in the planning, implementation and evaluation of this initiative.

For the Employer

Our organization is committed to protecting the health and safety of all employees. This includes psychological health and safety. We are embarking on a new initiative to improve our health and safety management approach and consider the psychological health and safety of all employees in every facet of our operations.

ATTACHMENT C

A common approach to selecting action strategies in organizational settings involves the use of a Quality Framework (a best-practice approach to determining feasible actions organizations can take to remedy areas of concern).

Six key dimensions should guide your organization's selection and decision-making process:

1) Appropriateness (relevant to user needs and based on accepted or evidence-based practice)

2) Acceptability (respectful and responsive to user needs, preferences and expectations)

3) Accessibility (obtained in a timely manner, in a suitable setting, within a convenient distance)

4) Effectiveness (based on scientific knowledge to achieve desired outcomes)

5) Efficiency (resources are used optimally in achieving desired outcomes)

6) Safety (risks are mitigated to avoid unintended or harmful results)

ATTACHMENT D
RESOURCES

The National Standard

https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/what-we-do/workplace/national-standard

https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/media/4183

FAQ

https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/document/3894/faq-national-standard-canada-titled-psychological-health-and-safety-workplace-3-preven

https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/psychological-health-and-safety/psychological-health-and-safety-management-system

The National Standard Implementation Guide

www.csagroup.org/article/spe-z1003-implementation-handbook/

Mental Health in the workplace webinars

https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/workplace-webinar-series

Training

The Working Mind.

https://www.theworkingmind.ca

CMHA Certified Psychological Health and Safety Advisor

https://cmha.ca/workplace/training

Guarding Minds at Work

https://www.guardingmindsatwork.ca/resources

How to use Guarding Minds at Work

https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/pdf/CMH_-_Facilitator_Resource_Binder_-_How_to_use_GMAW_English.pdf

Legal perspective of Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace

https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/pdf/weathering_the_perfect_legal_storm_BEV_E.pdf

https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/pdf/weathering_the_perfect_legal_storm_AAC_E.PDF

Framework for reducing stigma in the workplace

https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/psychological-health-and-safety/framework-to-help-eliminate-stigma

Union Support

https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/managing-workplace-issues/union-support