

# MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

## What is Mental Health?

Mental health involves achieving balance in all aspects of your life: physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. It is the ability to enjoy life and deal with the day-to-day challenges you face. Mental Health is as important as physical health to daily living.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines mental health as:

*“... a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.”*

The Canadian Mental Health Association describes mental health as:

*“... striking a balance in all aspects of your life: social, physical, spiritual, economic and mental. Reaching a balance is a learning process... Your personal balance will be unique, and your challenge will be to stay mentally healthy by keeping that balance.”*

## Mental Health in the Canadian Workplace

The Canada Safety Council reports:

*Mental health claims are the fastest growing category of disability costs in Canada. They account for an estimated 30 to 40 percent of the disability claims recorded by Canada’s major insurers and employers. Three-quarters of employers say mental health issues are the leading cause of short and long term disability claims in their organization.*

Mental Health Works informs employers:

*Disability represents anywhere from 4% to 12% of payroll costs in Canada; mental health claims (especially depression) have overtaken cardiovascular disease as the fastest growing category of disability costs in Canada.*

Canadian Institute of Health Research reports:

*Some of the resultant statistics are frightening. Mental illness affects 1 in 5 Canadians. Of the 10 leading causes of disability worldwide, five are mental disorders.*

*It is estimated that by 2020, depressive illnesses will become the leading cause of disease burden in developed countries like Canada.*

## Helpful Resources

1. [www.mentalhealthworks.ca](http://www.mentalhealthworks.ca)  
Mental Health Works is an initiative of the Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario. Along with mental health facts, you will find training tools, and resources to help address mental health issues in the workplace.
2. [www.mentalhealthcanada.com](http://www.mentalhealthcanada.com)  
Provides links to information on a variety of topics related to mental health and resources across Canada.
3. [www.cmha.ca](http://www.cmha.ca)  
The Canadian Mental Health Association - is a nation wide charitable organization that promotes the mental health of all and supports the resilience and recovery of people experiencing mental illness. The Alberta division of the Canadian Mental Health Association, <http://www.cmha.ab.ca/>, provides direct services, programs and resources to the public in communities across Alberta.
4. [www.camh.net](http://www.camh.net)  
The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) is Canada's leading addiction and mental health teaching hospital in Toronto. This site contains useful information about mental health in general, addictions and mental health issues, concurrent disorders, resources, and education.
5. [www.suicideinfo.ca](http://www.suicideinfo.ca)  
The Centre for Suicide Prevention is a registered charitable non-profit organization serving Alberta and Canada. The centre has a special library on suicide and suicidal behavior, provides training workshops for Albertans including Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) and other workshops across Canada.
6. [www.anxietycanada.ca](http://www.anxietycanada.ca)  
Anxiety Disorders Association of Canada is registered Canadian non-profit organization whose aim is to promote the prevention, treatment and management of anxiety disorders and to improve the lives of people who suffer from them. This website provides information on anxiety disorders, links to provincial societies and other useful organizations.
7. [www.mooddisorderscanada.ca](http://www.mooddisorderscanada.ca)  
The Mood Disorders Society of Canada is a registered non-profit organization, volunteer driven organization that is committed to improving quality of life for people affected by depression, bipolar disorder, and other related disorders. The links and resources on this site direct you to reports and resources on a variety of mood disorder related topics.
8. [www.mentalhealthfirstaid.ca](http://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.ca)  
The Mental Health First Aid Canada program goals are to improve mental health awareness and provide individuals with skills and knowledge to help better manage potential or developing mental health problems in themselves, a family member, a friend or a colleague.

*Mental Health First Aid is the help provided to a person developing a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis. The first aid is given until appropriate professional treatment is received or until the crisis resolves.*

Alberta Mental Health Board (AMHB) offers courses in mental health first aid. For more course information go to [www.mentalhealthfirstaid.ca](http://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.ca).