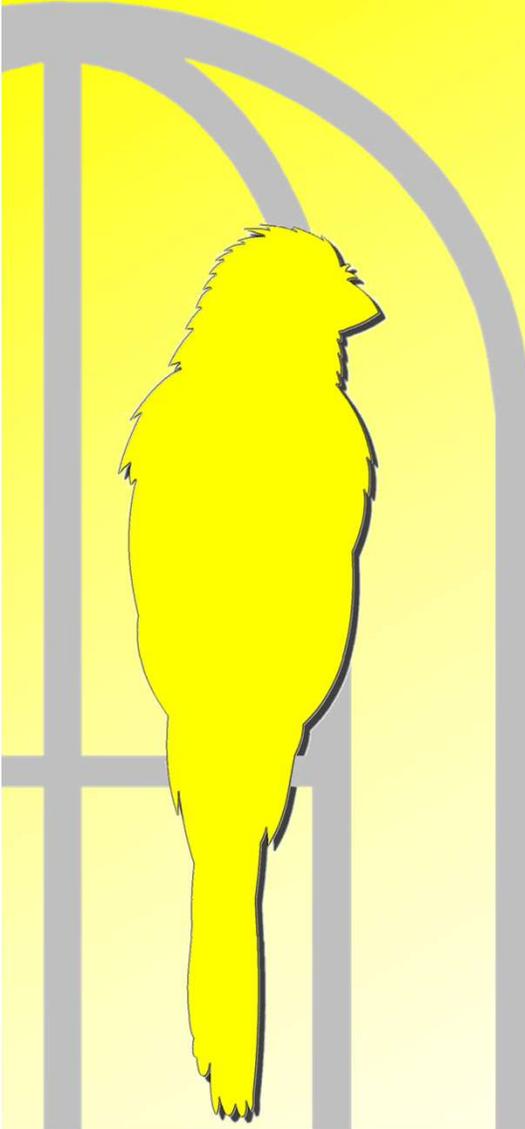


Occupational Mental Health Guideline



**Troy Winters, CRSP
Senior Officer, Health and Safety
CUPE National**

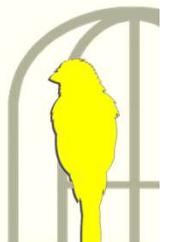
What is Psychological Health and Safety?

- Workplace mental health and safety focuses on identifying and addressing workplace hazards that can lead to *mental injuries*.



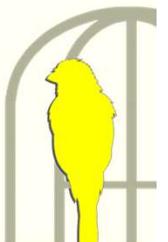
What is Psychological Health and Safety?

- A psychologically healthy and safe workplace is a workplace that promotes and protects psychological well-being and prevents harm by *eliminating or controlling* the risks caused by hazards in the workplace *that cannot be removed*.



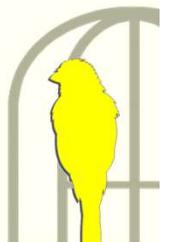
Mental illness

- **Mental illness refers to patterns** of thinking, feeling or acting which is sustained over a period of time and that may or may not interfere with daily functioning.
 - It must be noted that what is labelled as mental illness has changed over time because it corresponds to socially constructed norms existing at specific historical, scientific and social moments that have varied, and continue to vary across countries and communities.



Hazards that affect mental health

- All workers face different *psychological* factors that affect their well-being.
- Those factors are not related to hazards in the workplace and therefore are not what health and safety committees focus on.
 - Health and safety activists must never seek to attempt to diagnose a mental illness or condition.



Psychosocial Hazards

- Psychosocial hazards are those aspects of the design and management of work and its social and organizational contexts that have the potential for causing psychological or physical harm.

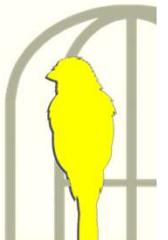


Psychosocial Hazards

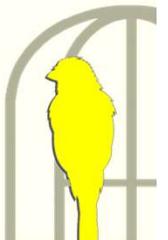
- Psychological Support
- Organizational Culture
- Clear Leadership & Expectations
- Civility & Respect
- Psychological Competencies & Requirements
- Growth & Development
- Recognition & Reward
- Involvement & Influence
- Workload Management
- Engagement
- Balance
- Psychological Protection
- Protection of Physical Safety
- Other physical stressors as identified by workers

How do these hazards cause injury?

- **Stress**

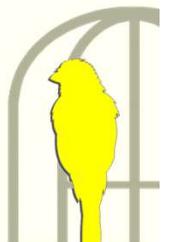


Stress



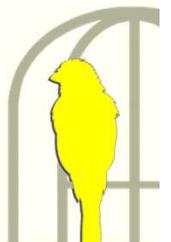
Workload stress

- A simple definition of overwork is too many duties and responsibilities for one worker, with too few hours in the day to complete all that is required or being expected to work beyond one's strength or capacity, causing physical and/or mental distress in the process.



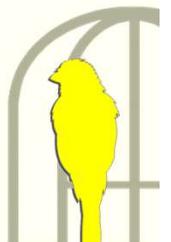
Mental Trauma

- Trauma is a severe psychological or emotional response to an upsetting, shocking, disturbing, distressing event or experience or ongoing exposure to high levels of stress. It is sometimes called *critical incident stress reaction*.



Resiliency

- Mental resilience can be thought of as an individual's ability to recover or rebound from any adverse situation or remain mentally strong when faced with ongoing stress or a traumatic or adverse event.

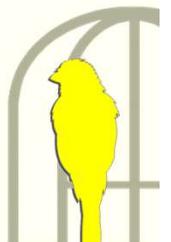


Creating a Mentally Healthy and Safe Workplace

Three Basic Steps

The process for making the workplace safer has three basic steps:

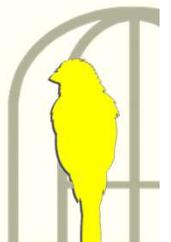
- Identifying hazards
- Assessing hazards and determining appropriate controls (changes)
- Implementing controls (changes) and inspecting to ensure hazards are properly controlled and new hazards have not been created.



Hazard Identification

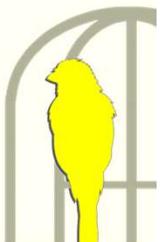
There are many ways that hazards can be identified in the workplace including:

- Health and Safety reports
- Inspections
- Surveys
- Mapping



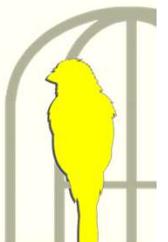
Response to Psychosocial Hazards

- **Hierarchy of Controls**
 - Elimination/ Substitution
 - Engineering Controls
 - Administrative controls
 - Personal Protective Equipment



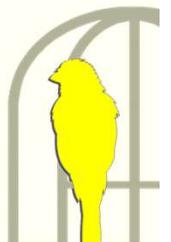
Improve Psychological Health and Safety in my workplace

- Workplace Culture
- External Resources



Conclusion

- Though it may seem daunting, building a healthier and safer workplace through the identification and removal of psychosocial hazards is possible.
- Health and safety activists need to stay focused, and not be discouraged by setbacks, or employer push back.



Conclusion

- The role of the workplace on the mental health of workers is becoming more accepted every day, and is the result of health and safety activists pushing the issue through the health and safety process.

