

# Mental Health in the Workplace

## Best Practices and Strategies for Organizations

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**PARG**  
Professional Accounting  
Research Group

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# AGENDA

- What we're seeing
- Why mental health is a workplace issue
- Manager's role
- Mental health tool box
- Tools in action – 6 steps to successful return to work

# WHAT WE'RE SEEING

## EVOLVING WORKPLACE DEMOGRAPHICS

- Aging employee population
  - Multi-generation workforce
- Increased demand for productivity
- 'Sandwich generation' resulting in increased psycho-social issues
- Poor health of employees, including an increase in depression and related physical conditions



# WHAT WE'RE SEEING

## IMPACT OF MENTAL HEALTH ON THE WORKPLACE

- Mental Disorders make up **32%** of total open Long-Term Disability claims.
- When considering both primary and secondary diagnoses, we find that **45%** of open Long-Term Disability claims have a Mental Disorders component.
- Professional & management sector employees experience **over 50%** of Long-Term Disability claims related to Mental Disorders.
- The impact of Mental Disorders in the workplace extends beyond the cost of disability claims:



Statistics Canada found that **lost productivity from presenteeism was at least 7.5 times greater than productivity loss from absenteeism**. Presenteeism occurs when employees are physically present but, due to an unaddressed physical or emotional issue, are distracted to the point of reduced productivity.

# IMPACTING FACTORS...

- Stigma
- Reluctance to seek help
- Access to treatment



# WHY MENTAL HEALTH IS A WORKPLACE ISSUE:

- have more face time than family/friends
- can recognize change earlier
- have more influence

**And earlier treatment can mean:**

- reduction in severity and frequency of symptoms
- increased likelihood of full recovery



# WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO EMPLOYERS?



**Risk  
Regulatory/  
Legal**



**Financial**



**Organizational  
Performance**

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# IPSOS REID SURVEY 2012

6600

Respondents



2300

Managers and Supervisors



18

Industries  
Public, private, non-profit

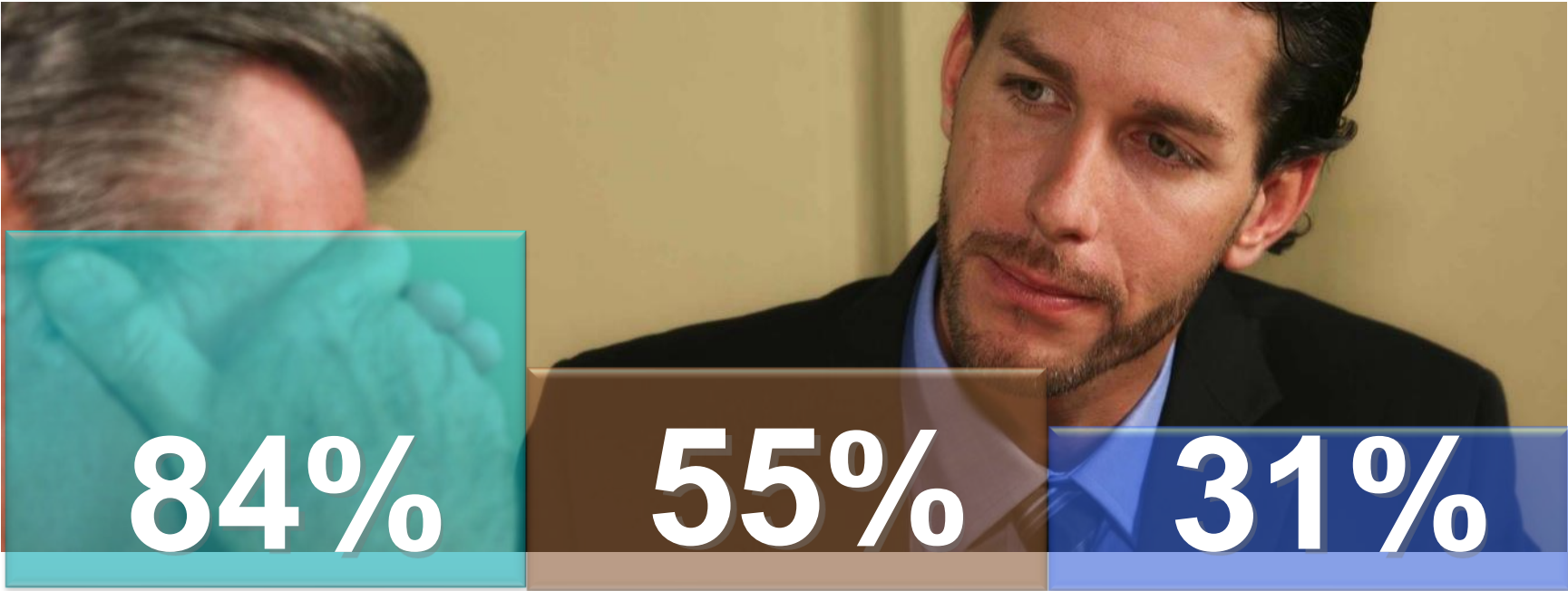


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# KEY FINDINGS – SUPERVISORS’ ROLE



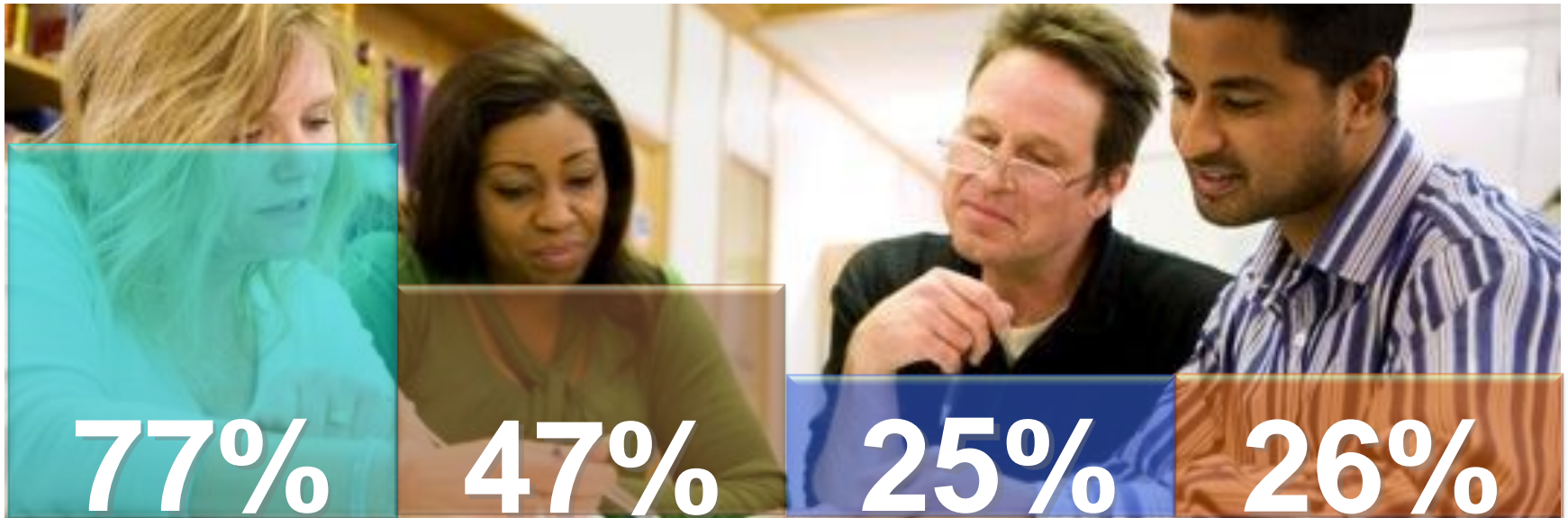
Believe it's their job to intervene

Have personally intervened

Have received training

**Supervisors are taking action, but with little training**

# KEY FINDINGS – IMPACT ON SUPERVISORS



Say workers seek their help

Have gaps in their own skill set

Are not sure what to say or do

Say workplace policies discourage them

**Supervisors are struggling to do the right things**

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# CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EFFECTIVE LEADER

- Self aware
- Understanding your own perceptions and reactions
- Effective communicators
- Ability to engage and inspire
- Able to adapt to employee's leadership needs



# MENTAL HEALTH TOOL BOX


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[Psychological health and safety](#) | [Managing workplace issues](#) | [Employee resources](#) | [Job-specific strategies](#) | [Free training and tools](#)


**Improve psychological health and safety in your workplace.**  
Support employee success when mental health is a factor.

ALL TOOLS AND RESOURCES ARE FREE.  
USE THEM TO HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE.



### Financial Literacy

It's no surprise that money and finances can be a major life stressor, and this worry can seep into all aspects of your life, including your performance at work.  
[Read more](#)



### Learn about the National Standard – Recognition and Reward

Recognition and Reward is present in a workplace where there is appropriate acknowledgement, appreciation and recognition in a fair and timely manner. Create a psychologically safe and healthy workplace using these tips from the National Standard.

### Latest News

**NEW WORKPLACE STRATEGIES BRAND – SAME COMMITMENT TO MENTAL HEALTH**

The Centre for Mental Health in the Workplace has a new name and look! The program officially became Canada Life Workplace Strategies for Mental Health (Workplace Strategies) on Oct. 1, 2019 – the first day of Healthy Workplace Month.  
[Learn more](#)

**FROM SURVIVING TO THRIVING - POST-SECONDARY STUDENTS PRACTICE SAFE STRESS**

[www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com](http://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com)

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# FREE HELP IS AVAILABLE



## Working Through It



### Plan for Resilience

Workplace Edition  
For Leaders, Managers and Self-employed

'Virtual peer support' videos designed to speak directly to people struggling with mental health issues.

Plan to improve your ability to bounce back after a potential health, personal, or work crisis. It will help you identify effective strategies and resources to draw on when needed.

Explore this "first of its kind" program focused on helping people leaders learn how to effectively recognize and manage mental health related issues in the workplace.

## MANAGING MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

## Supporting Employee Success

A fillable booklet that helps inform the development of an effective workplace plan between the employer and employee including how to develop accommodations or solutions related to workplace function and issues.



## Return to Work

When mental health is a factor

Explore this easy to use guide to help navigate the process of an employee's return to work.

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# ACHIEVING A SUCCESSFUL RETURN TO WORK – 6 STEPS



**Step 6:** Creating the Return-to-Work Plan

**Step 5:** The Employee's Role

**Step 4:** The Job

**Step 3:** The Role of the Supervisor

**Step 2:** Co-Worker Reactions

**Step 1:** Maintain Contact

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# STEP 1 – MAINTAIN CONTACT

- Have a company policy to stay in touch throughout sick or disability leave.
  - Express concern for well-being & support
  - Is there anything I can do?
  - Is there anything you need?
  - Offer to share organizational news and events
- Its not about investigation or interrogation
- Recognize value of contact even when employee appears unreceptive



# STEP 2 – WORK RELATED ISSUES AND CO-WORKER REACTIONS

- Address work-related issues before an employee returns to work:
- Conflict with co-workers or manager
- Performance
- Accommodation requirements;
  - Consider impact on co-workers if accommodation are going to affect them.





# STEP 3 – THE ROLE OF THE SUPERVISOR

- Should be involved from the beginning to ensure realities of work environment and group dynamics are considered
- Be involved in discussion with the employee about the return to work plan BEFORE the employee returns to work.
- Ask the employee on how you may best support them during the return to work. "How can I help you be successful at work?"

# STEP 4 – THE JOB

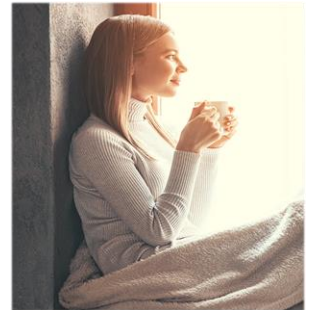
- Understand which tasks are essential to the job
- Consider tasks that can be swapped with another employee
- Ask for employee feedback re: task modification that will allow them to work differently but just as effectively.
- Provide flexibility around time and location of work to the extent that it allows productivity to be maintained.



# STEP 5 – THE EMPLOYEE’S ROLE

There are factors that can affect the success of the return to work;

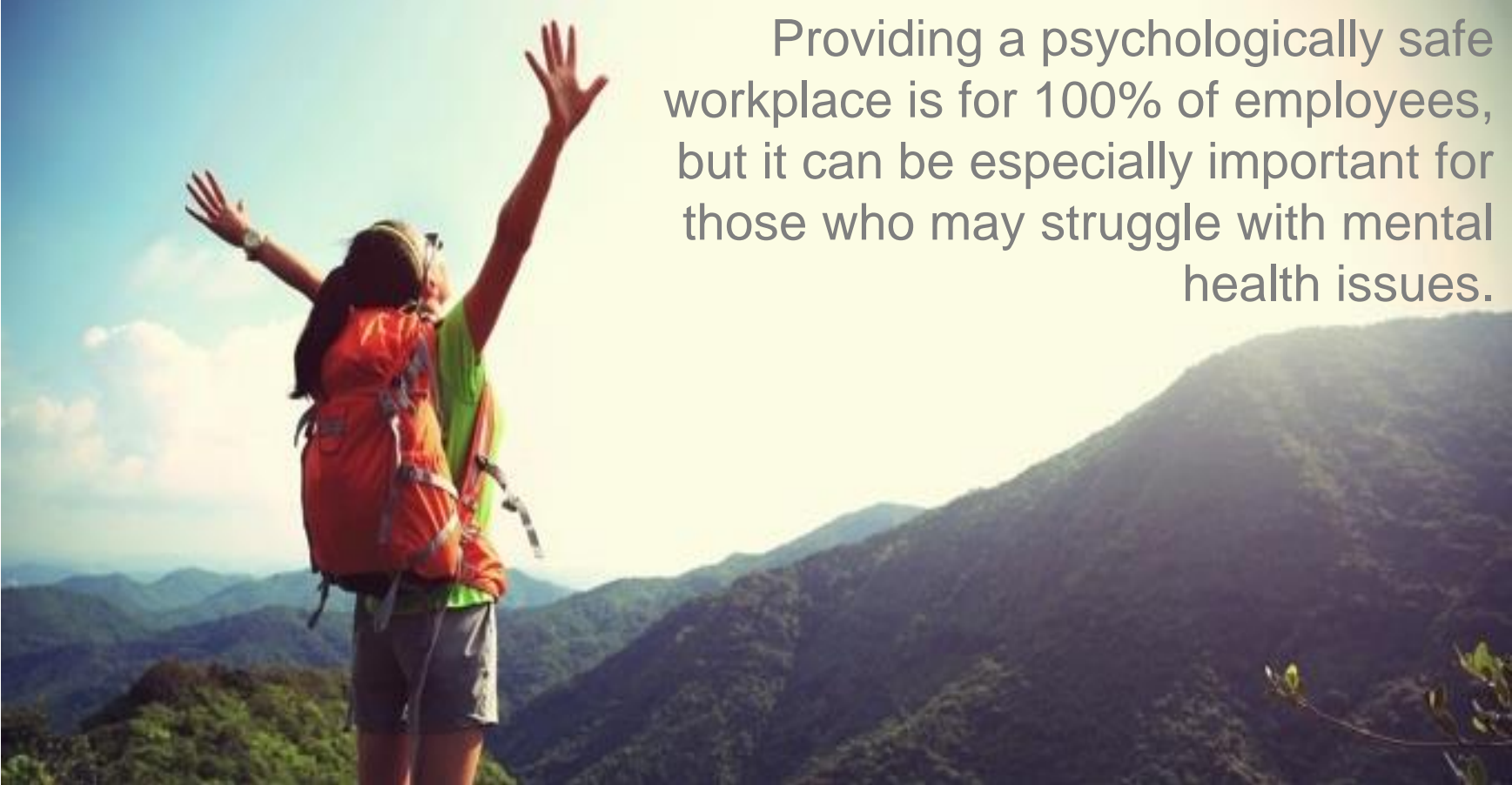
- Take control and responsibility for your well-being.
- Participate in the collaborate for your return-to-work
- Think of the return-to-work process as another step in your recovery.
- Prepare for how you would like to answer questions from co-workers about why you were off work.



# STEP 6 – CREATING THE RETURN-TO-WORK PLAN

In conversation with the employee, ask 3 key questions:

- How can I help you be successful at work?
- What will you do to ensure this return to work is successful for you?
- How will we deal with future issues in a way that is healthy for you?



Providing a psychologically safe workplace is for 100% of employees, but it can be especially important for those who may struggle with mental health issues.

# Thank you

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