



Workplace

Mental Health

Strategy

Corporation  
of the City of London



*“The help I got from my supervisors and co-workers is something that I will never forget. It saved my life”*

**LANCE ADILI**  
FLEET SERVICES



Only  
**23%**  
would talk  
about their  
mental  
illness  
with their  
employer.

MENTAL HEALTH  
COMMISSION  
OF CANADA  
(MHCC)

## Introduction

The Corporation of the City of London is committed to supporting our employees to live healthy and work healthy. An important element of this commitment is supporting positive mental health. Providing a psychologically safe and supportive work environment and responsive assistance to employees experiencing mental health concerns, ensures the best environment for all.

A psychologically safe and supportive work environment is one where there is no stigma associated with mental health. Our Workplace Mental Health Strategy will work to increase employees' awareness, understanding and empathy of mental health through proactive promotion and education. In addition, we will work to ensure a range of preventative and responsive supports are available for employees who are experiencing mental health concerns; focused toward early detection and intervention. Our Strategy will be delivered with a continuous improvement approach, having regular reviews and check-ins with employees to ensure it is effectively meeting their needs.

Working together, the Corporation, individuals experiencing mental health concerns and their co-workers can help create an environment where we can all live healthy and work healthy. We all have a responsibility to stop the silence about mental health.

## What is Mental Health?

The World Health Organization defines mental health as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes their potential, can cope with the regular stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make contribution to their community.

*“The manager role has changed, employees are more willing to talk and we want to listen and help”*



**SCOTT STAFFORD**  
PARKS AND RECREATION

# Vision

The Corporation of the City of London will support the mental health and well-being of our employees by:

- fostering a supportive workplace culture for those directly and indirectly affected by mental health concerns
- assisting those with mental health concerns in regaining their optimal health
- promoting awareness of programs and resources in our workplace and community

*“Take care of yourself so you can take care of others”*



**JENNIFER MACARTHUR**  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES



## Many of us are affected by Mental Health

At some point everyone may experience mental health concerns. Examples such as personal, family or work stress are a reality for most people and mental distress or illness or other factors sometimes enter one’s life because of situations beyond our control. Maintaining good mental health can be challenging, but by eliminating the stigma and misconceptions around mental health, it is hoped that you will feel comfortable to talk openly, ask for assistance and access supports as early as possible.

Those who do not experience mental health concerns, will have a **friend, colleague** or **family member** who is dealing with one.

*“We must show our support and help guide our employees to the right resources”*

**JACK MANGANARO**  
ROADS AND TRANSPORTATION



*“Helping someone does not take special skills, it is as simple as asking: are you okay?”*



**JOANNE MCLEAN**  
SOCIAL SERVICES



*“It’s hard to understand what someone is experiencing until you experience it yourself”*

**JOHN DANASKOS**  
CITY CLERKS



## Focus Area 1

Foster a supportive workplace culture where there is no stigma associated with mental health by:

- Building awareness, knowledge and empathy of mental health concerns
- Strengthening our commitment to maintaining an inclusive, healthy, supportive and respectful workplace
- Improving our understanding of our respective roles in the prevention, early detection and intervention of mental health concerns

## Proposed Actions

- Provide training for managers, giving them knowledge and tools to support employees with mental health concerns
- Provide training for employees to assist them with early identification and seeking support
- Deliver awareness campaigns aimed at eliminating stigma, fostering empathy and knowledge of available resources
- Review relevant policies and procedures to ensure they are supportive of an inclusive, healthy, supportive and respectful workplace
- Feature mental health information in employee newsletters so employees are regularly updated on resources available
- Develop web tools for employees to access information, supports and resources
- Promote existing and create new iLearn courses focused on supporting positive mental health

**49%**  
(almost one half) of those who feel they have suffered from depression or anxiety have never gone to see a doctor about this problem.

CANADIAN  
MENTAL HEALTH  
ASSOCIATION (CMHA)



*“It took years to recognize something was wrong, but I found the help I needed”*

**BRAD ENRIGHT**  
LONDON FIRE DEPARTMENT



Mental illness affects everyone sooner or later

**1 in 5 people**

will experience a mental illness directly.

CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION (CMHA)



*“I want employees to feel they can come talk to me”*

**JOE WINSLER**  
SOCIAL SERVICES

## Focus Area 2

Provide proactive and responsive supports to help employees to maintain and improve their mental health by:

- Reducing the presence and impact of psychological risks, and enhancing employees' capacity to manage these
- Ensuring managers understand their shared role in employees' well-being and are equipped to provide support
- Assisting employees to identify and seek support early for mental health concerns
- Consider the diversity of our employees in the planning and delivery of supports

## Proposed Actions

- Provide specific training for Emergency Response Services employees focused on the mental health risks specific to their work
- Provide training for managers, giving them knowledge and tools to support employees with mental health concerns
- Provide training for employees to assist them with early identification and seeking support
- Deliver awareness campaigns aimed at eliminating stigma, fostering empathy and knowledge of available resources
- Provide workshops focused on mental health
- Expand and strengthen community mental health partnerships and supports
- Include mental health training in the New Employee Orientation Program
- Ensure alignment between the Workplace Diversity and Inclusion Plan and Workplace Mental Health Strategy
- Promote, offer and support activities associated with living a healthy lifestyle
- Review a workplace mental health peer to peer assistance program

*“Sometimes you can’t see the pain that someone is in”*

**CATHY PETERS**  
DEARNESS HOME



*“Remove the stigma and I promise more people will feel comfortable to reach out for the help that is out there”*

**EVAN JONES**  
PARKS AND RECREATION



## Focus Area 3

Ensure the Strategy meets the needs of employees by:

- Adopting a continuous improvement approach
- Considering the diversity of our employees in the planning and delivery of supports
- Adjusting the Strategy as required to respond to organizational changes
- Regularly measuring effectiveness and impact
- Providing regular communication to employees and senior leaders on the strategy and its effectiveness

## Proposed Actions

- Incorporate mental health related risks into the City of London Health and Safety Continual Improvement Program
- Complete a Workplace Mental Health Risk Assessment
- Conduct a review of supports and services available to employees
- Review policies and procedures to ensure they are supportive of an inclusive, healthy, supportive and respectful workplace
- Establish an employee wellness advisory group
- Conduct an annual review of the Strategy activities and their effectiveness, providing an update to senior leaders and all employees

**2 out of 3 people**

suffer in silence fearing judgment and rejection.

CANADIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

*“Each of our employees can be affected by mental health whether it be themselves, a family or friend. By eliminating the stigma, we can “Stop the Silence””*



**ART ZUIDEMA**  
CITY MANAGER

## What to do if you or a co-worker become distressed?

- Ask for help – we all need help at some time – talk to your manager or union representative

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- Call our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at 1-800-387-4765 – It’s confidential and free

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- Talk to your healthcare professional and find out about community resources

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- Remember each of us is carrying burdens others may never understand

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- Offer support not criticism - be a positive support

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- Respect differences and diversity

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- Don’t participate in gossip and stop others who are

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- Respect the privacy of the person who is distressed

## Mental Illness

affects people of all ages, educational and income levels and cultures.

CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION (CMHA)



For more information, visit Team London  
or contact Human Resources at ext. 0930

