Why should employers be concerned about mental health?

In today's workplace, along with overall health and safety in the workplace, mental health in the workplace also needs to be a top priority. Simply put, poor mental health can also put a strain on productivity and performance. While employers are well aware of physical hazards and injury risks in the workplace, they may not realize the financial impact of poor mental health.

The cost of mental illness is significant. In Canada alone, the annual cost of mental health and substance use disorders is estimated to be $56 billion, which includes both individual and societal costs. The cost of mental illness is not just measured in financial terms; it also affects the quality of life for many Canadians.

Mental Health in the Workplace

In this section, we will explore why mental health is important in the workplace, how to create a mentally healthy work environment, and what employers can do to promote mental health and well-being in the workplace.

What is a psychologically healthy and safe workplace?

A psychologically healthy and safe workplace is one that promotes healthy mental well-being, physical health, and safety for all employees. It is an environment where employees feel respected, valued, and supported, and where they can express their ideas and opinions without fear of retaliation. A psychologically healthy and safe workplace is one where employees feel empowered to take control of their own mental health and well-being, and where they feel confident in seeking help when they need it.

What can employers do to help?

There are several strategies that employers can implement to create a psychologically healthy and safe workplace. These strategies include:

1. Encouraging open communication: Employers can create an environment where employees feel comfortable discussing their mental health concerns.
2. Supporting mental health awareness: Employers can raise awareness about mental health issues and promote healthy coping strategies.
3. Providing access to mental health resources: Employers can offer access to mental health services, such as counseling orEmployee Assistance Programs (EAPs), and promote healthy lifestyles.
4. Creating a positive work culture: Employers can foster a positive work culture that values diversity and inclusion, and promotes work-life balance.
5. Implementing mental health policies: Employers can implement mental health policies that are inclusive and supportive of employee needs.

Did you know?

Only 23% of Canadians feel comfortable talking to their employer about their mental health for fear of discrimination or dismissal.

Factors of Psychologically Safe Workplaces

1. Encourage open communication
2. Support mental health awareness
3. Provide access to mental health resources
4. Create a positive work culture
5. Implement mental health policies

What can employees do to help?

Employees can play an active role in creating a psychologically healthy and safe workplace. This includes:

1. Encouraging open communication with colleagues and supervisors.
2. Raising awareness about mental health issues and promoting healthy coping strategies.
3. Accessing mental health resources provided by the employer.
4. Creating a positive work culture through personal actions and behaviors.
5. Supporting mental health policies and initiatives.

For more resources, visit
www.worksafebc.ca/healthyminds/