

The Workforce
Mental Health
Collaborative
Training • Resources • Support

Problematic Substance Use
and the Workplace:
Time to take action

“ ”

BE MIND FULL
CHAMPIONS FOR POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH SINCE 1918



Canadian Mental
Health Association
Mental health for all

Association canadienne
pour la santé mentale
La santé mentale pour tous

Overview

- Why develop a Substance Use Policy?
- Who might be involved?
- Policy Components
- Objectives of a Policy
- How to support someone struggling in your workplace

Substance Use in the Workplace

Substance use can become a problem when an individual has lost control over their use and/or continues to use despite experiencing negative consequences.

Why develop a Substance Use Policy for your organization?

Drug and alcohol policies are beneficial to employers because they help to:

- demonstrate risk management
- provide guidance to employees and managers
- establish good workplace relations
- protect employers from disputes

Policies will vary from workplace to workplace and will reflect differences in:

- work/regulatory environment
- culture and values
- organizational size
- provincial legislation
- management

Who might be involved?

This will be up to each organization.

There are two suggested ways to involve stakeholders:

1. Form a committee
2. Consult with a combination of individuals from:
 - EAP
 - Union
 - Management
 - Human Resources
 - Occupational Health and Safety Committee
 - Employees with lived experience of substance use disorder

Components of a Substance Use Policy

1. Policy Statement
2. Objectives
3. Guidelines
4. Procedures
5. Policy Violations
6. Assessment, Rehabilitation & Aftercare
7. Confidentiality and Privacy
8. Resources

Policy Objectives

- Promote the health, wellness and safety of employees, co-workers, families and the surrounding community
- Communicate the organization's position on substance use to employees
- Provide education and awareness on substance use and treatment resources to employees, supervisors, managers and their families
- Create a positive environment for each individual
- Ensure consistency in how substance use issues are addressed

Additional Things to Consider

- Communicating your policy
- Policy Evaluation
- Education and Training
- Treatment and Aftercare
- Return to Work accommodation

Mental Health Works

Person centred. Evidence based. Solution focused.



Canadian Mental
Health Association

Association canadienne
pour la santé mentale

If I were struggling at work, how would I want my colleagues to treat me?

- By stepping back from assumptions
- By not judging
- By not labelling
- By considering how to show caring behaviour
- By refraining from participating in gossip or sharing damaging stories

What if someone at work is struggling?

Mental Health Works Approach



“I’ve noticed...”



“Tell me more...”



“What can we do together?”



“I’m here to help.”

References

1. Health Canada (2009). Workplace Health <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/occup-travail/work-travail/index-eng.php>].
2. The Health Communication Unit [THCU] (2005). *Evaluating Comprehensive Workplace Health Promotion*. Centre for Health Promotion – University of Toronto.
3. Addiction Services (Nova Scotia) (2007). *Building a Framework: A Resource Kit for Healthcare Organizations*.

“ ”

Thank you

Sarika Gundu

National Director, Workplace Mental Health Program

sgundu@cmha.ca

Greg Kylo

National Director, Program Innovation

gkylo@cmha.ca