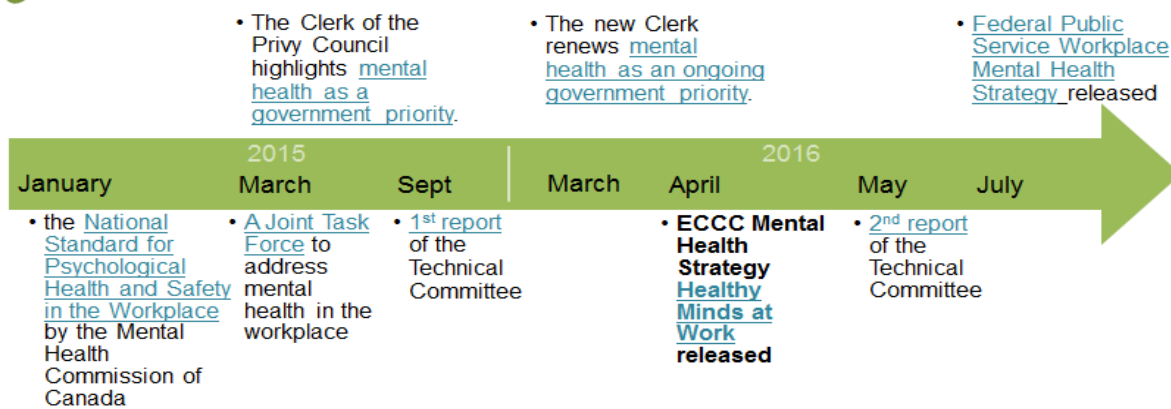


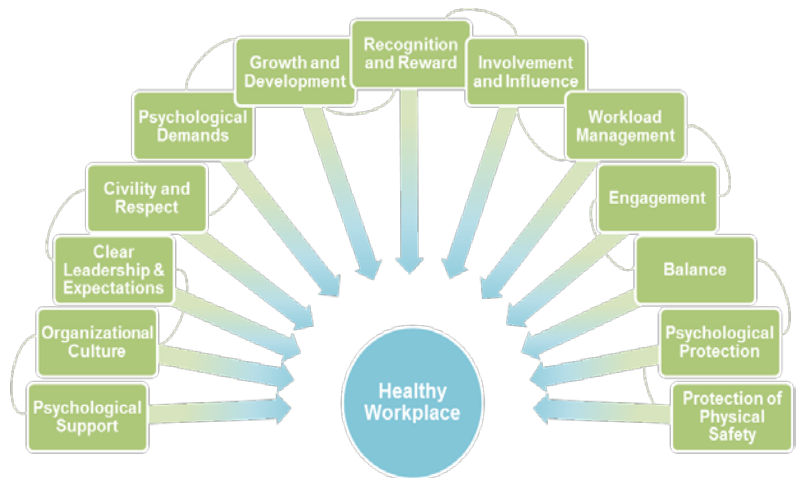
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Global call to action to eliminate the stigma surrounding mental health.



In recent years, there has been a global call to action, to raise awareness and eliminate the stigma that surrounds an increasingly prevalent public health concern: mental health. Mental health is not just about the absence of mental illness and it is affected by numerous factors from daily life, including the workplace.

In January 2013, the Mental Health Commission of Canada introduced the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace (the National Standard), a voluntary set of guidelines, tools and resources focused on promoting employees' psychological health and preventing psychological harm due to workplace factors. The National Standard relies on 13 workplace psychosocial factors (right) as indicators of organizational psychological health risks and as drivers for the development, implementation and evaluation of mitigation strategies.



In March 2015, the President of the Treasury Board of Canada and the President of the Public Service Alliance of Canada reached an agreement to establish a [Joint Task Force](#) to address mental health in the workplace. Since then, both the previous and the present Clerk of the Privy Council have confirmed mental health as a top priority in the federal public service in the 22nd, 23rd and 24th Annual Reports to the Prime Minister on the Public Service of Canada.

In June 2016, the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) developed a [Federal Public Service Workplace Mental Health Strategy](#) as a first step in creating a healthy, respectful, and supportive work environment that strengthens the public service. The Strategy focuses on three strategic goals: 1) Changing culture to be more respectful toward mental health issues, 2) Building capacity with tools and resources for employees at all levels, and 3) Measuring and reporting on actions.

Mental Health at Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC):

ECCC launched its Mental Health Strategy in April 2016, [Healthy Minds at Work](#) – including a virtual wellness centre (intranet). Progress to date:

- ✓ A 2017-20 action plan approved
- ✓ A department-wide awareness campaign launched by the DMs - Take the Pledge campaign
- ✓ Panel discussion with senior leaders and invited guests
- ✓ Mental Health Co-Champions jointly selected
 - ✓ Sponsored Joint Learning Program workshops for NCR
- ✓ Mental Health Joint Working Group created
- ✓ Indigenous perspective on mental health included
- ✓ Youth Advisory Committee and Executive Leadership Council engaged
- ✓ Communications blitz during Healthy Workplace Month (October)
- ✓ Training/sessions offered in many branches
- ✓ Mental Health Wellness Centre updated
- ✓ Small Mental Health Team created within HRB (initial funding 2017-18)

(...cont'd)

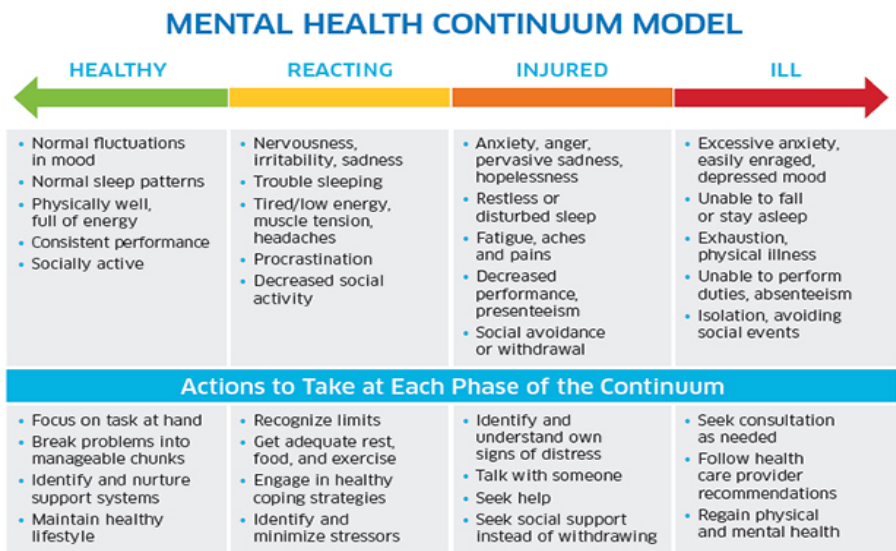
BACKGROUND INFORMATION (CONT'D)

The Mental Health Continuum

The Canadian Department of National Defense, in cooperation with the United States Marine Corps Department of Psychiatry, developed this model^[1]. It highlights the spectrum of mental and physical health concerns that may affect people during their lives.^[2] The model proposes that mental health and mental illness are on a continuum.^[3] People can be at various places of on this continuum from having normal mood fluctuations and healthy adaptive coping (green), through mild functional impairment (yellow), to more persistent injury or impairment (orange) to more severe disorders that require medical care (red).^[4]

This model is being widely used in public service organizations. It is part of the various training courses that are available, and forms one of the core tools in our action plan. One of its advantages is to provide a common language for employees and managers to identify and respond to mental health signals. The model also helps increase self-awareness and prevents the use of stigmatizing labels.

Many mental and physical issues, when identified and addressed early within their context - organizational or personal - can be temporary and reversible. Even when injured or ill, it is possible with the right support to return to health and achieve high level of functioning. One of the ultimate results of our work on mental health is to support individuals to remain healthy and productive, and to enable them to recover wherever they are on that continuum.



In addition to these concerted efforts to implement our Mental Health Strategy, ECCC continues to focus on creating a healthy and respectful workplace through other initiatives as well.

Public Service Employee Survey

The [2015-17 PSES Management Action Plan](#) highlighted four priority areas:

1. ECCC has a leadership culture at all levels where effective people management is a key accountability for all employees with direct reports.
2. Employees are treated with respect and dignity, are able to come forward without the fear of reprisal.
3. Business processes are streamlined and rendered more efficient by eliminating unnecessary approval layers and reducing the administrative burden.
4. Collaborative union- management relationships are actively promoted

The 2015-17 PSES Management Action Plan is part of the ECCC Human Resources Strategy, along with activities related to learning and career development, workforce capabilities for the future, official languages and more.

[ECCC 2016 pulse check](#) (see [results](#))– Following the implementation of the PSES Management Action Plan, a pulse check (mini-survey) has served as an indicator of progress made.

Respect in the Workplace: There is also much work being done to help create and nurture the core value of respect in our workplace:

- Respectful Workplace Committee – launched in April 2015, as a joint union-management initiative. Core Mandate: to identify and recommend departmental strategies, policies, and activities to strengthen and promote respectful workplace practices to improve workplace quality of life of all ECCC employees.
- Internal Policy on Conflict and Harassment Prevention
- Process to deal with Harassment Complaints
- Creating a Respectful Workplace (G417) as part of mandatory training for all employees.

^[1] The Working Mind: Workplace Mental Health & Wellness – Manager Training Program: Reference Guide, p.5

^[2] Ibid

^[3] Ibid

^[4] Ibid