

# **Presentation to The CSB Union Management Consultation Committee CSB Peer Support Program- Stronger Together**

Corporate Services Branch Mental Health & Wellness Team  
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YOUR HEALTH AND SAFETY... OUR PRIORITY.

# Purpose

- To describe CSB's Stronger Together peer support program.
- To outline the benefits of Peer Support.

## Mental Health in the Workplace

- The CSB Mental Health and Wellness Team (MHWT) is mandated with implementing The National Standard of Psychological Health & Safety in the Workplace including the 13 Psychosocial Risk Factors.
- The team aims to:
  - Reduce the stigma around mental illness
  - Provide resources and training in the area of mental health and wellness
  - Demonstrate positive psychological self-management
- Research shows positive results in the area of mental health and wellbeing in organizations where a Peer Support Program has been implemented.

## Peer Support

- Peer Support is emotional and practical support between two people who share a common experience, such as a mental health challenge or illness. A Peer Supporter has lived through a similar experience, and is trained to support others.
- Research shows that peer support provides the following benefits:
  - Alleviates stigma
  - Fosters healthier coping strategies
  - Reduces absenteeism
  - Reduces long- and short-term disability claims
  - Increases access to clinical resources
  - Accelerates recovery
- Peer support serves to compliment, but does not replace EAP (Employee Assistance Program), professional, clinical or medical care.

# Peer Support Program VS Employee Assistance Program

What is the difference between a Peer Support Program (PSP) and the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)?

## PSP

- Peer supporter has a similar lived experience
- Informal setting
- No predetermined number of interactions
- Therapeutic, but not therapy
- No perceived power differential
- Based on hope with recovery as the goal
- Open to discussing issues beyond mental health

## EAP

- Clinician may not have lived experience
- Formal clinical setting, scheduled meetings
- Determined number of sessions
- Therapy
- Possible perceived power differential
- Based on treatment options with recovery as the goal
- Addresses issues broader than mental health

## Stronger Together

- CSB has contracted with Mental Health Innovations (MHI), a leader in the field of workplace in mental health, to implement the **Stronger Together** peer support program in CSB.
- After the successful pilot of Stronger Together, it will be rolled out to all Health Canada and PHAC employees.
- MHI has screened, selected, and trained 22 peer supporters from CSB.

## Questions / Comments

