



Mental Health IS a CATCA Problem



We have a problem

1 in 3 Canadians will be affected by a mental illness or injury, either directly or through family, friends or coworkers. Additionally, 1 in 5 will experience a mental health or addiction problem.

Studies show that trauma has been found to be the central issue for people with mental unwellness, addiction, substance abuse and co-occurring disorders.

Mental illness, including addiction, is a disease – not a choice.

CATCA is committed to providing all leaders and members with training to assist those who are struggling and are committed to pushing the employer to improve supports and benefits related to mental health. We will continue the work to protect mental health by addressing underlying causes of stress and anxiety caused by fatigue and improper work life balances.

Your mental health matters! Together, we can help each other through our struggles and connect members and their families with the support networks they need.

We are in this together!

Confidentiality

In mental health matter confidentiality is everything. It is critical to not gossip or divulge anything shared with you in trust by another person. Your fellow members need to know that they can trust their representatives and the process should they decide to talk to you. This means that anything that is shared with you needs to be held in the strictest confidence, except as legally required or where an intention to cause self-harm or harm to others has been shared.

Stigma

Noun: a mark of disgrace or infamy; a stain or reproach, as on one's reputation.

Stigma refers to attitudes and beliefs that lead people to reject, avoid, or fear those they perceive as being different. Negative attitudes and negative responses can make a person feel unwanted and shamed, or stigmatized. As a result, the Canadian Mental Health Association reports that 60% of people with a mental illness will not seek help due to the stigma of being labeled as mentally ill.

Stigma around mental health can interact with other forms of stigma related to race, gender, physical disabilities and sexuality and can intensify the experiences and/or create barriers to accessing help.

Let's eliminate the Stigma

- Imagine walking in the shoes of others
- Be aware of the labels you use, your attitudes and judgements
- Speak up when you hear or read remarks that fuel stigma

Providing Support

It can be difficult to understand why someone is acting the way they are. **Here are some tips for providing support:**

- The illness is the problem – the behaviour is not their fault.
- Be patient
- Show empathy (feeling the person's experience) not sympathy (feeling sorry for the person)
- Listen and offer support
- Avoid pushing unsolicited advice
- Do not invest more into someone's recovery than they do

Remember, as a union representative you are not a counselor, but **YOU** are there to help our members find the required resources with a supportive peer. The goal is to remove fear and walk the member through the process. We do not want our members to feel alone! Be sure to set boundaries and are not hindering your own mental health.

Take care of yourself too!

Human Rights and Mental Illness

Both Unions and Employers are required to make every reasonable effort short of undue hardship, to accommodate an employee who falls under a protected ground who can claim the legal protections afforded by human rights legislation.

Disability is a protected ground.

Disabilities come in many forms; they can be visible or invisible. It is important to remember that mental illness or injury, and addiction fall under the umbrella of disability.

Members can use Canadian human rights legislation to protect themselves against harassment or discrimination based on the prohibited grounds of disability, both mental and physical.

Duty to Accommodate

The Company has a duty to accommodate. Accommodation means removing barriers to allow for the equal participation and equal access to the workplace. The principles that drive the duty to accommodate are:

- Respect for dignity (this is achieved through proper communication and respecting confidentiality)
- Individualization (no two people are alike and no two accommodations have to be alike)
- Integration and full participation.

Goals of the Accommodation Process

Some people may require a permanent accommodation, but many with mental health challenges will only need temporary measures to support them to remain at work or transition back to work after a period of leave. It is important to remember that mental illness is often episodic. People with depression do not feel sad all the time, just as people with other mental illnesses don't always experience symptoms. Some members with mental illness may need accommodation for a short period of time and then not need it again for years.

Types of Accommodations

Every situation is different especially in our industry. Depending on a member's position in the Company an accommodation can take a variety of forms. The most common are flexible scheduling, part time hours, and modified work duties.

Challenges

Often mental and psychological disorders are invisible;

- Employees needing an accommodation may not communicate the need for an accommodation, as denial or lack of understanding of their needs is common for those experiencing mental health challenges.
- The stigma around mental/psychological and substance use disorder and dependency often result in individuals not coming forward until the very last moment, including after termination: **this does not absolve the employer of the duty to accommodate.**
- Addiction and substance use disorders and dependencies are often falsely seen as a choice by employers and co-workers.

Although the above issues can make accommodating an individual more challenging, they in no way reduce the employer's duty to accommodate, but rather heighten the responsibility to properly communicate with and assist the individual seeking accommodation.

The Union's responsibility as described by the Canadian Human Rights Commission is to:

- Model positive attitudes toward accommodations;
- Actively participate in the accommodation process; and
- Support and suggest reasonable accommodation requests, unless it would create undue hardship.

Undue Hardship

Though the primary duty for accommodation is the Employer's, the union must not impede reasonable efforts to accommodate a worker and cannot formulate work rules that would be discriminatory.

Accommodating an employee with mental illness or substance use disorder engages the same process as a request for accommodation based on any other human rights ground.

The point of undue hardship is reached when all reasonable means of accommodation are exhausted and only unsafe, unreasonable or impractical options remain and where an individual cannot perform the core duties of their job.

The Process

An employee may approach a member of the Union or management, and request some type of accommodation. If the employee approaches the union it is important to:

- Ensure the individual knows that confidentiality will be respected.
- Make sure they understand that coming to you was the right thing to do and we will do our best to assist them.
- Explain to the individual that the accommodation process has to involve the Employer and the Employer will be reminded of the need of confidentiality.
- Encourage the member to see a doctor who can determine if they need some time off, or accommodations so they can keep doing their job – medical documentation will be required to trigger the accommodation request.

Approaching the Employer

When approaching the Employer it is important to:

- Go directly to the Human Resources person who has the responsibility and authority to make decisions (only tell people who need to know, when they need to know);
- The purpose of the request is to support the member, and a lack of information could hamper the accommodations process: this means that it may be necessary to provide supporting documentation from a doctor or other professional;
- Request only information that is relevant to the work situation so that appropriate plans for accommodation can be made: it is not necessary to disclose to the employer the nature or history of the illness;
- Ask the employee what they want.

Ongoing obligations

The duty to accommodate is ongoing. It does not end on the day a worker's accommodation request is denied or approved. Things can change: accommodation requests may evolve over time. In addition, workplaces may change.

Returning to work after leave

It is important for members to know that they can count on the union's support. Each accommodation measure is specific to the needs of the individual concerned. The best way to ensure that a member feels supported is to ask them what they need from you.

Know Your Resources

The following is a brief list of some of the resources available.

NAV CANADA Programs

- MyNavCan
- Light the Way
- CDERP
- CISM
- Thrive

GreenShield Employee Family Assist Program (EFAP)

Provides unlimited sessions of counselling for you and your eligible dependants, as well as couples therapy

<http://app.greenshieldplus.ca/en/sign-up> select “Through an Employer or Organization” (organization code is “navcanada”) Call 1-833-707-4747.

Employees can access EFAP services without a referral by first signing up for an account. It's best to do this from a desktop or laptop vs on a mobile device. Returning users can visit app.greenshieldplus.ca to sign in to their account. For first-time users, here's how to sign up:

- Navigate to app.greenshieldplus.ca.
- Select Sign up.
- Select Through an employer or organization, then select Continue
- Accept the Terms and Conditions and then select Continue.
- Select I have an Organization Code.
- Enter your NAV CANADA email address and select Continue.
- Check your email. Enter the verification code that you received at the email you provided and select Continue.
- On the Organization Code screen, enter your Organization Code: navcanada and select Continue.
- Continue with the steps provided to complete the sign up process.
- Once you've signed up, you can sign in to your account to access your profile and the services available.
- Eligible dependants can follow the instructions found in the FAQ to set up their own account.

For technical difficulties or questions regarding your GreenShield account, your Organization Code and/or registration, please contact the GreenShield support team at 1-833-707-4747 and follow the prompts. Support can be accessed Monday through Sunday from 8 am - 11 pm EST or by visiting greenshieldplus.zendesk.com.

LifeSpeak

Digital platform for you and your family to access expert advise on a variety of topics in support of your mental wellbeing, including mental health and addiction. <https://navcanada.lifespeak.com> access id: navcan

Canada Wide 211 Service

Free, bilingual resource to help navigate the network of community, social and non-clinical health and government services. Call 211 or www.211.ca

Canada Suicide Prevention Service

If you are thinking about suicide or are worried about a friend or loved one. Call or text 988, www.988.ca

Kids Help Phone

Canada's only bilingual phone and on-line counselling service for youth. It's free, anonymous and confidential. Call 1-800-668-6868, Text TALK to 686868, www.KidsHelpPhone.ca

Hope for Wellness Helpline

Immediate mental health counselling and crisis intervention for all Indigenous people across Canada. Call 1-855-242-3310, www.hopeforwellness.ca

Narcotic Anonymous

Find a meeting near you www.na.org

Al-Anon

Support for families and friends of those dealing with issues related to alcohol use. www.al-anon.org

Nar-Anon

Support for families and friends of those facing addiction issues. www.nar-anon.org

Pflag Canada

A national organization that offers resources to Canadians dealing with issues related to sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. www.PflagCanada.ca

Trans Lifeline

A grassroots hotline, for the trans community, by the trans community. Trans hotline offers financial support to trans people in crisis. 1-877-330-6366, www.translifeline.org

The Affordable Therapy Network

A network of therapists offering low-cost rates and sliding scale counselling services in an effort to increase access to affordable therapy and counselling services across Canada. www.affordabletherapynetwork.com