



Canadian Psychiatric Association

Dedicated to quality care

Association des psychiatres du Canada

Dévouée aux soins de qualité

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February 6, 2013

Ms. Louise Bradley
Chief Operating Officer
Mental Health Commission of Canada
10301 Southport Lane SW, Suite 800
Calgary, AB T2W 1S7

Dear Ms. Louise Bradley,

The Canadian Psychiatric Association congratulates all parties involved in the creation of ***The National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace*** and anticipates that adoption of the guidelines will have significant and positive effects on stigma and mental illness.

In keeping with CPA objectives of prevention, a comprehensive workplace strategy to address known risk factors for mental illness, such as job strain, is expected to reduce to the progression of stress-related health problems to common impairing clinical disorders, such as mood and anxiety disorders and substance use disorders.

Every year, about 500,000 Canadians are absent from the workforce due to mental illness and many more at work but untreated. Prevention coupled with strategies which promote early treatment-seeking and improve access to high-quality treatment are likely to have the greatest impact on reducing the personal and economic costs of mental illness. Creating a safe and psychologically healthy working environment is also an important part of recovery and addressing barriers to sustained return to work. The CPA recognizes that continued innovation and partnership is still needed and anticipates that organizations implementing the *Standard* will see additional return by investing in education, benefits, mental health programmes and research targeting workplace mental health.

On October 2nd 2012, CPA together with Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health (CAMIMH) met with members of parliament to discuss the state of mental health in Canada. One of the key asks was for the Federal Government to take action to create psychologically effective work places for their employees. The CPA believes that as one of Canada's largest employers, the federal government should set the example by creating mentally healthy workplaces in the public service which will benefit management, employees and their families. This involves adopting mental health promotion practices, such as those set out in the *Standard*, as well as making psychological services and supports available to employees with mental health issues.

The CPA believes that the introduction of this *Standard* is a positive step towards realizing this recommendation and is hopeful that more steps will be taken to improve mental health support for all Canadians.

Sincerely,

Dr. Suzane Renaud
President CPA