


FOCUS ON MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE



Flour City District - IAOM
August 3, 2023

*Presented by: Susan VanKrevelen,
Certified Mental Health First Aid Instructor*



“Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well, work well and contribute to their community.”

-as defined by the World Health Organization

The latest published statistics (2021) show:

- **1 in 5 adults** (57.8 million) in the US experienced mental illness during 2021.
- Only **47.2%** of the 57.8 million **received treatment**. Additionally, only 65.4% of those documented as having **serious** mental illness received treatment.
- **Suicide** is the 2nd leading cause of death among **people aged 10 to 14** and the 3rd among those **15 to 24** in the US.
- **46%** of all people who die by suicide had a **diagnosed** mental health condition.
- The average delay between symptom onset and treatment is **11 years**.
- **Recovery** from a mental health condition is not only possible, but also **probable** with help
- **33.5%** of US adults with mental illness also experience **substance use disorders** (19.4M individuals).
- **46.3 million people aged 12 and over** had a documented substance use disorder in 2021.
- 3M+ Americans **live in recovery** after some form of substance use challenge.
- **3 out of 4** people who experience addiction do eventually recover.

Mental Health in the Workplace Statistics

- Decent work is good for mental health.
- Poor working environments – including discrimination and inequality, excessive workloads, low job control and job insecurity – pose a risk to mental health.
- 15% of working-age adults were estimated to have a mental disorder in 2019.
- Globally, an estimated 12 billion working days are lost every year to depression and anxiety at a cost of US\$ 1 trillion per year in lost productivity.
- There are effective actions to prevent mental health risks at work, protect and promote mental health at work, and support workers with mental health conditions.

Reasons why there is hesitation to talk about Mental Health – Mental Illness

- Stigma associated with mental illness or challenges
- Availability of services
 - Location, cost, transportation, etc.
- Fear & Embarrassment
 - Employment
 - Family and friends / culture
 - Rejection
- Lack of knowledge
 - Who to call
 - Where to start
 - “Am I a failure?”

Protecting & Promoting Mental Health at Work

Talk about Mental Health just as openly as you do physical ailments & injuries

- Be aware of and have access to information regarding assistance and benefits available to employees at your organization

Manager training for mental health – Mental Health First Aiders

- Helps managers recognize and respond to team members experiencing emotional distress
- Builds interpersonal skills like open communication and active listening
- Fosters better understanding of how job stressors affect mental health and can be managed
- Prepares managers to react quickly & effectively in crisis situations

Training for workers

- Mental health literacy and awareness
- Improves knowledge of mental health and reduces stigma against mental health conditions

Interventions for individuals

- Build skills to manage stress and reduce mental health symptoms, including psychosocial interventions and opportunities for leisure-based physical activity.

How can you help?

Always call 911 or 988 if someone is in crisis mode

Watch for recognizable signs and symptoms - (as discussed on the next slide)

Things to consider:

- **If on the job** – first talk with your leader and/or EHS representative to determine best next step which may include having a conversation with a mental health first aid specialist
- **If outside of work** – friend, family, etc. consider the following
 - Your current surroundings – right time, right place? Safety first – theirs and yours
 - Your relationship
 - Think about your best approach in advance – may only get one shot
 - Give them your full attention, a listening ear and space to just talk


ALWAYS HONOR TRUST unless there is a clear indication of danger to self or others; or subject to mandatory reporting.

Noticeable Signs & Symptoms:

- Bad days vs Mental Health challenges
- Some possible indicators that some one may be experiencing a mental health challenge:
 - **Behavior** –
 - An emerging pattern of showing up late for or cancelling personal and professional commitments.
 - Choosing to isolate from other - peers, friends or family.
 - Appearing irritable or sad
 - **Appearance:**
 - Appearing more unkempt than usual for that person
 - Tired looking
 - Sad, lost, blank stare
 - **Feelings:**
 - Sadness
 - Worry
 - No longer enjoying work, activities or hobbies
 - **Thoughts:**
 - Difficulty concentrating or focusing at home, school or work.
 - Indecisiveness

Tips for having a conversation with someone you believe may be experiencing a challenge:

- Express concern using unaccusatory, non-diagnosing words
- Listen non-judgmentally
- Let them know if you understand or if you're not sure you understand but want to
- Avoid using words such as weird, crazy, odd, "that's not normal", etc.
- Take them seriously
- Make yourself available to talk again if needed
- Don't turn what you've been told into gossip
- If you don't understand, do some research and learn about what you've been told; reach out to a resource or utilize a reputable website such as NCMW, WHO or NAMI



Resources within the US page –
988 vs 911, National Council, NAMI, most insurance and employee assistance plans,
community clinics, private sector – MD, or Mental Health Clinician.
“Your own EAP or other internal program referral contacts”

Will format and expand for websites and phone numbers

Thank you for inviting me to share some information around Mental Health with you today

My stats – background

Invite others to share thoughts and ask questions

What is “Mental Health”

Often think of severe illness but day to day just as im

Share a few stats – The why

Affect on overall safety – mentally, physical, psychologically

What are some signs and symptoms that may prompt the need for a nonjudgmental convo

Some simple steps to get the ball rolling

Resources 988 vs 911, National Council, NAMI, most insurance and employee assistance plans, community clinics, private sector – MD, or Mental Health Clinician.

My thoughts – Slide will be deleted upon finalization of deck