SHRM BERKS COUNTY
LUNCH AND LEARN
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PRIORITIZING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS IN THE WORKPLACE

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Mental Health – Pop Quiz!

Before we get started, let's take a pulse on your knowledge!

With a licensed therapist offering expertise during this session, feel free leave any specific questions in the chat, or raise your hand if you'd like the opportunity share or ask any questions during the presentation.

True or False – stats provided by the CDC Mental Health Quiz:

▶ Poor mental health increases the risk for long-lasting physical conditions, such as heart disease, stroke or cancer. (True)

▶ Mental illnesses are very common, accounting for approximately 1 in 5 US adults. (True)

▶ Mental illness cannot be treated. (False)

▶ Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among people ages 10 to 24 in the US. (True)

▶ People with mental illness are violent. (False)

▶ Three-quarters of mental illnesses begin before the age of 24, with half of all mental illnesses occurring before the age of 14. (True)

▶ Serious mental illness costs America $193M in lost earnings per year. (False - $193 Billion!)

"Check in with your neighbor, your coworker, your friends and your family and ask how they're doing – and listen sincerely."

Jason Sudeikis, Actor and Star of "Ted Lasso" on the importance of mental health.

Mental Health Overview

By creating awareness with employers and employees alike, we can help break the stigma and create a more positive work environment by focusing on employee mental health and well-being.

Employers that are more aware can help provide resources and understanding in order to help break through barriers that prevent or delay employees from getting the help they need in order to become happier, healthier employees.

There are still many harmful attitudes and misunderstandings around mental illness, which may make people ignore their mental health, fuel stigma, and make it harder to reach out for help.

Effective prevention and treatment options exist, however many people do not have access to effective care or are hesitant to ask for help.

According to Mental Health America, there are more than 200 classified forms of mental illness. Some of the more common disorders are depression, bipolar disorder, dementia, schizophrenia, anxiety disorders and substance abuse disorders. Symptoms may include changes in mood, personality, personal habits, social withdrawal, avoidance and more.

Employee Workplace Statistics

According to the mental health experts at Spill, global workplace statistics include:

1. Only 13% of employees feel comfortable discussing their mental health in the workplace.

2. Globally, around 12 billion working days — or 50 million years of work — are lost every year to depression and anxiety.

3. The cost of staff turnover due to poor mental health has increased over 150% in the last three years.

4. 61% of employees who have left jobs or plan to leave a job in the next 12 months cite poor mental health as a factor.

5. Around 300,000 people with mental health issues lose their jobs each year.

6. A further 38% of employees without a mental health condition will be feeling unmotivated, flat, burnt out, anxious or low – this middle ground is known as languishing, and it's surprisingly common.

Reference: https://www.spill.chat/resources#stats

Negative Impact of Mental Health Issues in the Workplace

- **Employee Burnout**
- **Turnover**
- **Absenteeism**
- **Stress**
- **Decreased Engagement or Quiet Quitting**
- **Reduced Productivity**
- **Poor Customer Service**
- **Lower Confidence Levels**
- **Low Morale**
- **Job Dissatisfaction**
- **Increased Cynicism and Negativity**
- **Substance Abuse at home or in the workplace**

Workplace Factors Impacting Mental Health

According to the World Health Organization, several factors within the workplace can have an impact on employee mental health:

- ▶ under-use of skills or being under-skilled for work
- ▶ excessive workloads or work pace, understaffing
- ▶ long, unsocial or inflexible hours
- ▶ lack of control over job design or workload
- ▶ unsafe or poor physical working conditions
- ▶ organizational culture that enables negative behaviors
- ▶ limited support from colleagues or authoritarian supervision
- ▶ violence, harassment or bullying
- ▶ discrimination and exclusion
- ▶ unclear roles and expectations
- ▶ under- or over-promotion
- ▶ job insecurity, inadequate pay, or poor investment in career development
- ▶ conflicting home/work demands

Wellness in the Workplace

Since the pandemic, it is estimated by the experts at Spill that 81% of workplaces have increased their focus on employee mental health.

Employees are more likely to have a positive mental outlook in the workplace when they have:

- ▶ **a sense of confidence, purpose and achievement**
- ▶ **an opportunity for positive relationships and inclusion**
- ▶ **a safe and healthy working environment**
- ▶ **a sense of structure, community and teamwork**

For people with mental health conditions, a great work environment can contribute to recovery. It can also help individuals gain confidence and promote inclusion in the workplace.

Wellness in the Workplace Examples

Are there any other examples that YOU can share as an HR professional?

- ▶ Employee Assistance Programs (EAP)
- ▶ Strong Company Culture with an Employee-First Mindset
- ▶ Create a Culture of Health and Safety
- ▶ Employee Events or Food Days – Just for Fun
- ▶ Exercise or Wellness Programs
- ▶ Promote Healthy Work Habits to Avoid Overwork, Stress and Burnout
- ▶ Regulate Workloads and Promote Work/Life Boundaries
- ▶ Kindness and Compassion
- ▶ Open Communication and Encouragement
- ▶ Employee Recognition Programs
- ▶ Support and Resources

Employer Best Practices

With a focus on a stronger culture and employee engagement, employers can take steps to make sure employees feel seen and heard.

Employers with a focus on employee wellness can see positive results with overall happier employees, as well as increased productivity, employee engagement, retention, job satisfaction, reduced stress and better work/life balance.

With more employers recognizing the importance of employee mental health and wellness, employers can continue to promote wellness in the workplace, to create a more supportive work environment and begin to break the stigma that surrounds the subject of mental health.

It's important for employers to be able to understand how and when to provide support to their employees. There are a variety of ways to offer training, support, stress management, necessary resources and more – leading a more inclusive workplace, allowing employees to feel valued, important and validated.

Employer Specific Training

Protecting and promoting mental health at work is about strengthening your company's capacity to recognize and act on mental health conditions at work:

- **Manager Training –** Help managers recognize and respond to employees or peers experiencing emotional distress. Manager-specific training helps to build interpersonal skills such as open communication and active listening, as well as a better understanding of how job stressors affect mental health and can be managed.

- **Employee Training –** Create an open dialogue surrounding mental health literacy and awareness to improve knowledge of mental health and reduce stigma against mental health conditions at work.

- **HR Support** – Help employees build skills to manage stress, EAP Programs, Wellness Programs, Building Stronger Cultures, Communication, Community Resources, build time for leisure based activities, etc. Take time to build specific DEI related policies to create a more inclusive and supportive workplace.

Promoting Wellness in the Workplace

How can YOU help to promote wellness in YOUR workplace?

- Highlight the benefits of Employee Assistance Programs, which can help employees deal with a variety of concerns such as mental health, emotional well-being, family issues, financial or legal concerns, relationship issues, or dealing with challenges or setbacks at home or even in the workplace.

- Help to break the stigma surrounding mental health and illnesses by creating or sharing employee wellness programs and resources, while also providing support and encouraging employees to seek care or help for themselves or their family members.

- Work to reduce the discrimination, fear or prejudice that often surrounds mental health and mental illness, encouraging employees to seek care and support without fear of retaliation. Be aware of cultural, religious or other stigmas that surround seeking treatment.

- Offer resources and aid in the prevention of substance abuse issues, thoughts of self-harm or suicide, and more.

Employer Checklist & Takeaways

1. **Implement, highlight and understand the importance of Employee Assistance Programs and their benefits, which can help employees deal with a variety of issues.**
   ▶ An example from Mutual of Omaha includes resources for: Emotional Well-Being, Work and Life Transitions, Family & Relationships, Healthy Lifestyles, Information and Referral Resources, Online Resources for substance use and other addictions, dependent and elder care resources, access to a library of educational articles, legal and financial tools, etc.

2. **Create and promote a positive work environment for happier, healthier employees – resulting in increased employee retention, engagement and job satisfaction.**
   ▶ Wellness Initiatives, Employee Events, Regulated Work Loads and even company food days can go a long way!

3. **Research, review and implement strategies to reduce stereotyping, fear or discrimination in the workplace for those struggling with mental health issues, or for those struggling to ask for help.**
   ▶ Check your handbook and continue to focus on adding DEI-specific policies to promote Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

4. **Research and offer Employer Specific Training to Managers and HR Staff**
   ▶ Mental Health Awareness Training (MHAT)
   ▶ Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)
   ▶ Psychological Safety for Leaders: Blue EQ Virtual Training (example)
   ▶ Partner with a local wellness/mental health clinic for stress management training and more.

FREE RESOURCES AND SUPPORT SERVICES

LOCAL
- RUOK Berks? Text RUOK to 484-816-7865 -- https://ruokberks.com/resources/
- PA211 – Get Connected. Get Help: Call 2-1-1
- Holcomb Behavior Health Local Crisis Hotline: 888-219-3910

NATIONAL
- Suicide and Crisis Hotline: Call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org
- Disaster Distress Helpline: CALL or TEXT 1-800-985-5990 (press 2 for Spanish)

Abuse/Assault/Violence
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 or text LOVEIS to 22522
- National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-4AChild (1-800-422-4453) or text 1-800-422-4453
- National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) or Online Chat

LGBTQ+
- Trans Lifeline: 1-877-565-8860 (para español presiona el 2)
- The Trevor Project's TrevorLifeline: 1-866-488-7386

Veterans/Active-duty Military
- Veteran's Crisis Line: 988, then select 1, or Crisis Chat or text: 838255
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Mental Health Resources
- Help for Military Service Members and Their Families

Treatment
- FindTreatment.gov
- American Psychiatric Association Foundation
- American Academy of Child and Adolescent   Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist Finder
- American Psychological Association

Wellness matters. You matter. Your employees matter. Q&A – Thank You!

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