

## Honouring Canadian Healthy Workplace Month with tips to keeping your employees healthy in the workplace

October is [Canadian Healthy Workplace Month](#), and Sun Life is a proud sponsor of this important awareness campaign. And since October 10th is also [World Mental Health Day](#), we thought this would be a good time to remind you about the importance of mental health and its impact in the workplace.

While mental health is often seen as an individual concern, its impact in the workplace is profound. More than 500,000 Canadians miss work each week with mental health issues<sup>1</sup> and the economic burden on employers from claims, absences and lost productivity related to mental health issues is an eye-popping \$20 billion per year<sup>2</sup>.

### Here's what employers can do to address chronic disease in the workplace

Employers can tackle the costs and incidence of chronic illness by taking a number of approaches, starting with the early identification of the health challenges that are affecting your organization. This is a three-step process that includes:

1. An organizational health assessment – the most critical starting point towards the success of any workplace health program.
2. Strategic planning – your group benefits provider can be a key ally in helping you set objectives and develop a plan.
3. Targeted programming such as health, wellness and absence management programs and policies, supported by leadership commitment to a culture of health and employee communication.

As a plan provider committed to supporting mental health in the workplace, Sun Life provides our clients with a groundbreaking [Workplace Mental Health Risk Assessment](#) that measures an organization's current level of mental health support. Many of our clients – representing some of Canada's most recognized workplaces – are leveraging the Assessment to define their own organizational health strategy and action plan.

By setting clear objectives, cultivating a strong organizational culture of health and taking a strategic approach that targets the physical, mental and financial health risks of your organization, you can make significant strides toward securing a healthy future for your employees and your business.

<sup>1</sup> Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, "Mental Health and Addiction: Facts and Statistics." 2015

<sup>2</sup> Mental Health Commission of Canada, Making the Case for Investing in Mental Health in Canada, 2013.

# FOCUS update

group benefits news

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We have also created [this infographic](#), which demonstrates how mental health is prevalent in the workplace, but there are steps employers can take to help address this issue. We hope you share this infographic with plan members and keep this very important conversation going.

To find out more about the impact on chronic disease in the workplace, read the Bright Paper, [Chronic disease in the workplace: focus on prevention and support](#).

## Questions?

Contact your Sun Life Financial group benefits representative.

Group Benefits are provided by Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada, a member of the Sun Life Financial group of companies.

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