

MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

LET'S MAKE IT HAPPEN



It is estimated that over
1.5 MILLION PEOPLE
in the Greater Toronto and
Hamilton Area's (GTHA) labour force
**HAVE EXPERIENCED A
MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE.**

This is taking an unsustainable
toll on our residents.

Over the next 10 years, current mental
health issues in the GTHA labour force
could result in almost **\$17 BILLION**
IN LOST PRODUCTIVITY.

CivicAction has a bold vision for our
region. We see a GTHA where residents
enjoy mental well-being, realize their
potential, work productively, and
contribute to their community.
CivicAction will mobilize the GTHA's
employers and employees to help
achieve this vision and strengthen our
people, businesses, and economy.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM IN THE GTHA?



It is estimated that **over 1.5 million people** in the GTHA's labour force have experienced a mental health issue. That's **1 in 2 people**.

Over the next 10 years, current mental health issues in the GTHA labour force could result in almost **\$17 billion in lost productivity**.

People are experiencing a broad spectrum of mental health issues including anxiety, depression, bipolar, and substance use disorder.

Projections suggest that there could be up to **583 suicides in the GTHA this year** if past suicide rates continue.

WHAT'S CONTRIBUTING TO THE PROBLEM?

In a region that is highly urbanized and culturally diverse with modest economic growth, people in our workforce face economic and social challenges that can negatively impact their state of mental health, such as:

INCOME INEQUALITY in Toronto ballooned by 31% between 1980 and 2005, the most drastic increase of any major Canadian city.

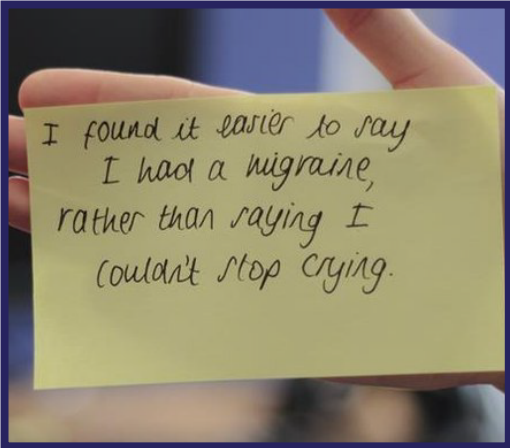
JOB INSECURITY: Fewer than half of all workers in the GTA are in permanent, full-time jobs.

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION: Research shows that resumes with English-sounding names are 35% more likely to receive callbacks than identical resumes with Indian or Chinese names.

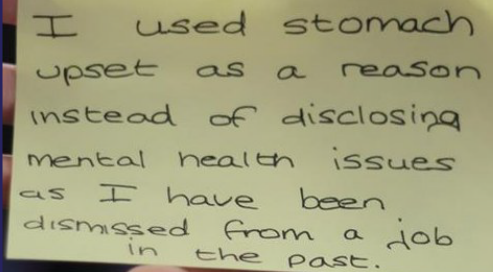
FAMILY CARE DEMANDS: Over the next 10 years people in the GTHA workforce could provide an estimated 450 million hours of informal caregiving to people with dementia alone, a productivity opportunity cost of \$30.4 billion.

HOUSING CONDITIONS AND AFFORDABILITY: The average home in Toronto cost over \$600,000 by the end of 2015.

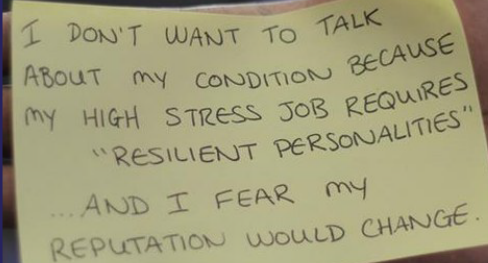
A majority of employees surveyed (60%) note that emotional / interpersonal issues are the top source of workplace stress. The top emotional / interpersonal issue identified is the culture of the workplace.



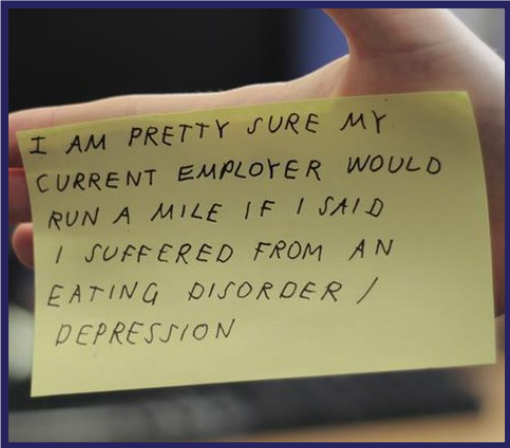
I found it easier to say
I had a migraine,
rather than saying I
couldn't stop crying.



I used stomach
upset as a reason
instead of disclosing
mental health issues
as I have been
dismissed from a job
in the past.



I DON'T WANT TO TALK
ABOUT MY CONDITION BECAUSE
MY HIGH STRESS JOB REQUIRES
"RESILIENT PERSONALITIES"
...AND I FEAR MY
REPUTATION WOULD CHANGE.



I AM PRETTY SURE MY
CURRENT EMPLOYER WOULD
RUN A MILE IF I SAID
I SUFFERED FROM AN
EATING DISORDER /
DEPRESSION

© Photos by Cline, N. Courtesy of the Priory Group.
www.priorygroup.com/mental-health/anxiety
www.priorygroup.com/mental-health/stress-treatment-counselling

THERE IS A STRONG ECONOMIC CASE FOR SUPPORTING THE MENTAL HEALTH OF OUR WORKFORCE:



27% of employees report significant stress symptoms – a risk factor for mental health issues.

Depression heightens the risk of sudden and fatal heart attacks.

1 in 4 employees with high stress are more likely to report taking a mental health-related absence in the previous two years than approximately 1 in 10 employees with low stress.



Mental disorders have been the **top category for short-term disability leave** for the past several years.

82% of those who report **mental health issues** say it **impacts their work**.

67% of those who report **struggling with stress symptoms** say it **impacts their work**.



42% of employees say that the **top priority is “managers knowing what to do”** when an employee shows signs of distress.

WE FACE SIGNIFICANT BARRIERS TO ACHIEVING A MENTAL HEALTH-SUPPORTIVE WORKPLACE:

1 in 5 employees believe, erroneously, that whether or not someone becomes mentally ill is fully within their control.

71% of employees are concerned about **workplace stigma**, **65%** report **self-stigma**, and **53%** are concerned about **stigma from their physician**.



In Ontario, not all workplaces provide Employee and Family Assistance Programs (EFAP). Their availability ranges from a **low of 14%** of companies with fewer than 100 employees, to a **high of 81%** for companies with 5000+ employees.

Approximately **60% of working Ontarians** have access to an EFAP.

Although counselling and other support is available through these programs, many employees are unaware that they have access to the service and others are reluctant to seek help.

EVERYONE HAS THE POWER TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Mental health issues can directly or indirectly impact anyone regardless of type of work, position, or age.

CivicAction's Mental Health Advisory Group and Champions Council consists of GTHA senior and rising leaders from across sectors. They will drive action to help workplaces better support their people's mental health.

IN THE MEANTIME, CIVICACTION IS CALLING ON PEOPLE TO TAKE SIMPLE STEPS NOW TO BETTER SUPPORT CO-WORKERS.

AS AN EMPLOYER:

1. Learn more about the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace.
2. Encourage executives to talk openly about mental health.
3. Train managers and employees on how to recognize a behaviour change and how to respond.
4. Offer and promote an EFAP.

AS A COLLEAGUE*:

1. Starting a conversation is often the first step. If you notice a change in someone's behaviour, ask how they are doing.
2. Stay connected with people who are off work (send an email, a card, or visit).
3. Learn about employee services that are available to help colleagues having emotional or mental health challenges (e.g. employee assistance plans).
4. Talk about making your workplace stigma-free.

*Source: Bell Let's Talk (www.letstalk.bell.ca) and Dr. Heather Stuart, Queen's University, 2016

“Preserving our mental health is one of the most important things we can do for our economy. But it's also just the right thing to do in a humane society.”

- Dr. Kwame McKenzie, Chief Executive Officer, Wellesley Institute

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CANADIAN CENTRE FOR
ECONOMIC ANALYSIS



We thank our core partners for their continued support.

For more information, visit www.civicaction.ca/mentalhealth or follow us @CivicActionGTHA.

About CivicAction: For over a decade, CivicAction has brought together senior executives and rising leaders from all sectors to tackle some of our region's toughest challenges. CivicAction sets a non-partisan agenda, builds strategic partnerships, and launches campaigns, programs and organizations that transform our region.