



## One in five.

According to Health Canada, that's the number of Canadians who will directly experience mental illness in their lifetime. That means someone close to you may need an ear to listen, or a shoulder to lean on.

At different times, any individual's mental health risk may vary. Early recognition of risk is critical to managing that risk, and maintaining good health and quality of life.

## Recognizing risk

Recognizing the risk factors for a mental health issue needs to be addressed on several levels. As individuals, we need to be aware of the signs and behaviours that tell us we may not be functioning at our best. As people leaders, we want to recognize behaviours and performance issues that may indicate an employee is stressed or at psychological risk so that we can offer help and support. From the workplace perspective, it is important to know what resources are in place to support employees' psychological health, and where gaps may exist.

## Recognizing risk

### As an individual:

Become aware of your personal stress symptoms. The lists below highlight some of the most common symptoms of stress and psychological strain. While it is normal to experience these symptoms from time to time, a pattern of symptoms indicates risk.

#### Physical

- Difficulty sleeping or fatigue
- Frequent colds, flu, or infections
- Rapid loss or gain in weight

#### Emotional

- Feeling irritable
- Feeling trapped
- Feeling incompetent

#### Intellectual

- Difficulty concentrating
- Procrastination
- Excessive worry

#### Personal well-being

- Isolation from friends and family
- Excessive busyness
- Loss of sense of humour

### As a people leader:

A change in an employee's performance and/or behaviour from his or her typical behaviour may signify that he or she is stressed or at psychological risk. It is common for healthy functioning individuals to experience one or two of these behaviours from time to time or in response to a particular situation. The symptoms indicate an individual may be at risk when there is a pattern of change in his or her performance and/or behaviour over time.

Common symptoms/behaviours seen in the workplace are:

- missed deadlines
- relationship issues or conflicts with co-workers
- reduced productivity
- withdrawal or reduced participation
- reduced quality of work
- anxiety, fearfulness, or loss of confidence
- absent or late more frequently

### As an organization:

A commitment to establishing and maintaining a mentally healthy workplace is one of the key features of high-performing and psychologically safe organizations. Part of Morneau Shepell's commitment to creating a psychologically safe and healthy work environment includes:

- educating all employees about mental health and organizational policies, and available programs and support;
- regularly collecting and reviewing reliable data about mental health risks in the workplace (e.g., workplace stressors such as workload, work-life balance, etc.); and
- establishing clear responsibilities and accountabilities for the development and maintenance of a mentally healthy workplace.

Visit [morneaushepell.com](http://morneaushepell.com) for additional mental health related information and resources, or contact your Employee Family Assistance Program (EFAP) provider for individualized support.