Mental Health in the Workplace:

Mental illness affects people of all ages, educational and income levels, and cultures. Those groups that are more likely to report metal health issues include women, non-managers, workers in the not-for-profit sector and unionized employees.

Those least likely to report metal health problems are Quebec residents, people 65 years and older and interestingly, people who work in construction.

Mental health issues have significant impact in the work place. Consider the following;

- On any given week, more than 500,000 Canadians will not go to work because of mental illnesses.
- More than 30% of disability claims and 70% of disability costs are attributed to mental illnesses.
- It is estimated that between compensation to sick workers and lost productivity, mental health issues cost the Canadian economy $51 billion a year, of which $20 billion alone would be lost productivity. The total loss represents 4% of GDP.

Within the workplace, mental health may result in higher turnover, greater levels of job dissatisfaction, absenteeism, employer health impacts and productivity loss. It can also hit a company's bottom line with salary-related and lost production costs, short and long term disability and other health claims.

Good mental health is key to our well-being. We can't be truly healthy without it. It involves how we feel, think, act, and interact with the world around us. Mental health is about realizing our potential, coping with the normal stresses of life, and making a contribution to our community. It may be more helpful to think of good mental health as thriving. Good mental health isn't about avoiding problems or trying to achieve a "perfect life". It's about living well and feeling capable despite challenges. Mental well-being is bigger than the presence or absence of a mental illness.

People who live with a mental illness can and do thrive, just as people without a mental illness may experience poor mental health. Each of our paths to mental well-being will be unique. We all have our own goals, our own challenges, our own talents, and our own supports. But good mental health is in everyone's reach.

Consider the following tips:

- Build a healthy self-esteem
- Build positive support networks
- Get involved
- Build resiliency

For more information contact the Canadian Mental Health Association.

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