

## **Guarding Minds @ Work (GM@W): A Workplace Guide to Psychological Safety & Health**

Thirty per cent of B.C. employees work in an environment that is not psychologically safe and healthy, according to a new study conducted on behalf of Simon Fraser University's Consortium for Organizational Mental Healthcare ([COMH](#)), a national research group in the Faculty of Health Sciences.

The researchers - Dr. Joti Samra, Dr. Merv Gilbert, Dr. Martin Shain and Dr. Dan Bilsker - have developed Guarding Minds @ Work (GM@W): A Work place Guide to Psychological Safety & Health, the first Canadian evidence-based tool that provides employers with comprehensive ways to assess the psychological safety and health of their specific workplace. It includes user-friendly assessment tools, an online survey, a risk report card and ways to measure progress and outcomes.

"Everyone who worked on this project understands the realities of Canadian business, and the importance of transforming research into practical tools for a Canadian business environment," says Dr. Samra, adjunct professor and scientist with COMH.

Case law and legislation were an important consideration, notes Dr. Shain, also an adjunct professor. "Mental health is an integral part of workplace safety and health. The duty to provide a psychologically safe workplace is emerging as an ethical and legal obligation for Canadian employers."

The project, which involved national and international consultation, was commissioned by the Great-West Life Centre for Mental Health in the Workplace and funded by Great-West Life through its corporate citizenship program. (Guarding Minds @ Work is available online at no charge at [www.guardingmindsatwork.ca](http://www.guardingmindsatwork.ca))

The guide helps employers assess the psychological safety and health of their workplaces and offers effective solutions. "Mental health issues pose a direct impact to the bottom line of Canadian businesses," says Mike Schwartz, executive director of the Centre and a senior vice-president at Great-West Life. "But there were very few resources for employers to assess the psychological safety and health of their own workplaces."

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