How to Prepare to Implement Guarding Minds at Work

There are several steps to take before you are ready to implement Guarding Minds at Work at your workplace. It is important to take these steps sequentially. This will ensure that you are able to properly implement Guarding Minds at Work.

Pay special attention to the Action Items at each step – this involves your input. You may also want to write down your thoughts so you can refer back to them later.

1. Know the Psychosocial Factors

What are Psychosocial Factors?

Psychosocial factors are elements that impact employees' psychological responses to work and work conditions, potentially causing psychological health problems. Psychosocial factors include the way work is carried out (deadlines, workload, work methods) and the context in which work occurs (including relationships and interactions with managers and supervisors, colleagues and coworkers, and clients or customers).

What Psychosocial Factors does Guarding Minds at Work address?

There are 13 Psychosocial Factors assessed by Guarding Minds at Work. They are consistent with domains identified by a large body of research as areas of fundamental psychosocial risk; the definitions and language used here are unique to GM@W. For each of the factors, lower scores indicate greater risk to employee psychological health and organizational psychological safety; higher scores indicate greater employee and organizational resilience and sustainability. The factors are interrelated and therefore influence one another; positive or negative changes in one factor are likely to change other factors in a similar manner. The 13 Psychosocial Factors are relevant to Canadian organizations and employees, whether those organizations are large or small, in the public or private sector.

PF1: Psychological Support

PF2: Organizational Culture

PF3: Clear Leadership and Expectations

PF4: Civility and Respect

PF5: Psychological Competencies and Requirements

PF6: Growth and Development

PF7: Recognition and Reward

PF8: Involvement and Influence

PF9: Workload Management

PF10: Engagement

PF11: Balance

PF12: Psychological Protection

PF13: Protection of Physical Safety

More information about each factor is available in the Resources section of the Guarding Minds at Work website.

2. Identify Organizational Needs

It is important to determine your organization's particular needs. This will help you build your business case, communicate with your staff (including senior management) and decide on appropriate action. In later stages, it will provide an indicator of whether implementing Guarding Minds at Work has been successful.

For more help at this stage check out:

Workplace Strategies for Mental Health

www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com

Psychological Health and Safety: An Action Guide for Employers

www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/Workforce_Employers_Guide_ENG_1.pdf

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ACTION ITEM: Write 3 reasons for implementing Guarding Minds at Work in your workplace

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3. Determine Assessment Resources

Choose the assessment resources that are suitable for your organization.

Organizational Review

A review of existing policies and practices related to the protection of your employees' psychological health, this is the first step toward determining the extent to which your workplace is psychologically safe.

This is suitable for your organization if...

- Your organization has fewer than 25 employees
- Your organization has recently conducted an employee survey
- Organizational or procedural barriers make it difficult to carry out a survey at this time

Initial Scan only

A 6-item employee questionnaire that indicates to what extent your employees are stressed or satisfied at work. This Initial Scan can be used as a precursor to, or if you are unable or hesitant to use, the more comprehensive Survey.

This is suitable for your organization if...

- You want a quick snapshot of stress/satisfaction and mental health culture at your organization
- Your organization has recently conducted an employee survey that did not include any assessment of stress/satisfaction and mental health culture at work and at this time you want only a general overview
- There are concerns about the cost, resources or logistics required to have employees complete the more comprehensive Survey

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Survey

A comprehensive, 68-item questionnaire administered to all employees within an organization or work unit, the Survey provides an index of performance across the psychosocial factors.

This is suitable for your organization if...

- You or your organization lack the data or objectivity required to complete the Organizational Review accurately
- You have limited resources and can only invest in either the Organizational Review or the Survey
- You feel your needs would be best served by a comprehensive risk assessment from the employee perspective only

Organizational Review + Initial Scan

This is suitable for your organization if...

- Your goal is to undertake a psychosocial risk assessment that identifies whether there is a need for a more comprehensive Survey from the employee perspective.

Organizational Review + Survey

Guarding Minds at Work Recommends

This is the recommended approach. Conduct the Organizational Review plus the Survey if you are seeking a comprehensive psychosocial risk assessment. You must complete both in order to generate a Comparison Report that incorporates both employer and employee perspectives.

4. Identify Key Participants

It is vital to ensure that the appropriate people are involved and committed to implementing Guarding Minds at Work. It is important to have support at all levels within your organization (including senior management/leadership) to ensure a successful outcome.

For help with addressing concerns, identifying key messages and building buy-in, go to:

Workplace Strategies for Mental Health

www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com

Psychological Health and Safety: An Action Guide for Employers

www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/Workforce_Employers_Guide_ENG_1.pdf

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ACTION ITEM: Identify who in the organization should be involved in implementing Guarding Minds at Work and the roles they will play.

HOW TO PREPARE TO IMPLEMENT GUARDING MINDS AT WORK   **3**

5. Create a Communication Plan

Effective and regular communication with relevant staff throughout all stages of implementing Guarding Minds at Work is critical for increasing and enhancing engagement.

Methods for enhancing communication include:

- Discussing Guarding Minds at Work at staff meetings
- Including information in employee newsletters or bulletins
- Providing information in e-mails
- Including brochures/handouts with employee paycheques
- Holding 'lunch and learn' sessions on psychological health and safety
- Identifying a contact person(s) who can answer employee questions
- Sharing important dates, such as the launch of the Survey

ACTION ITEM: Create a communication plan to inform people in your organization about Guarding Minds at Work using these 3 statements:

1. Why Guarding Minds at Work is being implemented
2. Explanation of the Guarding Minds at Work components being implemented
3. A commitment to share and act upon the results

Resources

Template Letter: Introducing Guarding Minds at Work

Use this template to introduce Guarding Minds at Work to your employees. Modify the content as needed and/or place on your company letterhead.

6. Sign Up and Launch Survey

Now you're ready to prepare your survey. Sign up for your free Guarding Minds at Work account to get full access to all resources, including the Guarding Minds at Work Survey and Reports.

Please note: only an organizational representative who is planning on administering the Surveys should be signing up for an account. All resources, including sample Reports, are available for download in the Resources section.

Once you create an account and login, you will be taken to a secured section of this website. Information provided by you and ll Survey data will remain strictly confidential and kept on a secure server.

The Survey data will be kept anonymous and reported in aggregate only; individual-level data will not be released or shared. Survey data will only be used for quality assurance purposes by the Guarding Minds at Work Project Team. Great-West Life and any other partners will not have access to the data.

7. Track Results and Take Action

Generate Reports to track your Survey and Initial Scan results. Take action with suggested responses and use the Action Planning Worksheets to detail and prioritize what you will do next as an organization.

ACTION ITEM: Generate a report and note the score for each of the psychosocial factors to identify your top concerns.

Action Resources

Sample Reports

View a sample Overview report of Survey Results, and a sample Segmented report, which is available if you include segmentation questions when creating a survey.

Reading the Initial Scan Results

How to interpret the two scores generated in the Initial Scan Report, bearing in mind that they are a starting point for further investigation and follow-up.

How to Read Reports

This document provides a detailed explanation of the four different reports available and how to interpret your scores.

Selection of Suggested Actions

Use this worksheet to identify your organization's top concerns by noting the score in your Survey Results, to help you select suggested actions to undertake.

Applying a Quality Framework

Apply this framework to help you select appropriate actions to undertake for areas in which your organization has identified concerns.

Suggested Response Documents

These documents outline a range of actions that have demonstrated practical and scientific value for each psychosocial factor.

Action Planning Worksheets

Use these worksheets to help prioritize and plan the details of undertaking the selected actions for each psychosocial factor.

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8. Evaluate and Maintain

As you prepare to implement your planned actions to improve the psychological health and safety of your workplace, it's important to determine your evaluation strategy. The key question to answer is: "How will we know whether these actions have made a difference?"

Effective evaluation is:

- Practical: clearly relevant to your goals for the process, straightforward and simple to carry out, and cost-effective
- Flexible: adaptable to your particular workplace and available resources
- Continuous: uses an ongoing quality improvement approach in which feedback is provided over time to modify and improve the intervention

Effective evaluation is:

1. Determine the purposes of the evaluation.

2. Identify key people to provide input into the evaluation. This is your evaluation team.

3. Make a list of short-term and long-term outcomes to measure.

4. Collect short-term outcome results.

5. Use the short-term outcome evaluation results to modify your action plan

6. Collect long-term results.

ACTION ITEM: Determine your purposes for evaluation and assemble your evaluation team, before initiating your Action Plan.

Evaluation Resources

Evaluation Worksheets: Getting Started

As you prepare to implement your planned actions to improve the psychological health and safety of your workplace, it's important to decide upon your evaluation strategy.

Evaluation Worksheets

These worksheets provide a framework for evaluating whether actions undertaken for each psychosocial factor have been effective.