ANTIDEPRESSANT SKILLS AT WORK:
Dealing with Mood Problems in the Workplace

Dan Bilsker, PhD, RPsych
Dr. Bilsker is a Clinical Psychologist who works at Vancouver General Hospital and consults to the Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health & Addiction (CARMHA), Faculty of Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University (dan.bilsker@vch.ca)

Merv Gilbert, PhD, RPsych
Dr. Gilbert is a Clinical Psychologist who is a Principal in Gilbert Acton and provides consultation on organizational and employee health and productivity (mervgilbert@gilbertacton.com)

Joti Samra, PhD, RPsych
Dr. Samra is a Clinical Psychologist and Research Scientist with the Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health & Addiction (CARMHA), Faculty of Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University (jsamra@sfu.ca)

WHY BE CONCERNED ABOUT WORKPLACE DEPRESSION?

DEPRESSION →

- One of the most prevalent mental health disorders, which impacts people during their prime working years.
- Impacts cognitive, interpersonal, and motivational skills that are necessary for productive and meaningful employment.
- Raises the risk for accidents and injuries at work.
- Comprises the fastest rising cause of long term disability (estimated to cost the Canadian economy $15 billion+ per annum).

Dealing with depression in the workplace can reduce the burden of disease to the individual, the organization, and society.

WHAT IS SELF-CARE?

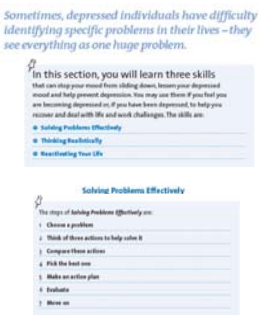
- An approach to **management of a disorder** (e.g., depression) that is guided by the individual and complementary to existing care and rehabilitation, whether public health care or company programs and services.
- Increasingly being incorporated into **best practice** guidelines for depression.
- **Timely** and can be made available to employees exhibiting early behavioral or functional signs of depression.
- **Cost-effective** as it can be readily reproduced and disseminated via print, CD-Rom or the internet.
- **Practical** in the focus on enhancing function and addressing personally relevant concerns.

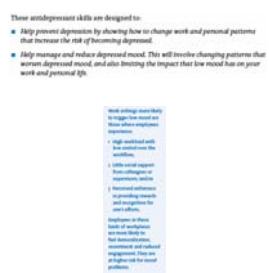
FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THIS AND OTHER WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTION PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES CAN BE FOUND AT:
www.carmha.ca *or*
www.bcmhas.ca
OR BY CONTACTING DR. JOTI SAMRA (jsamra@sfu.ca / 604.291.5263).

WHAT IS THE CURRENT PROJECT?

BC Mental Health & Addiction Services, an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority, in collaboration with the **Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health & Addiction (CARMHA)**, has created a self-care guide for depression the workplace. The mandate has been to create a guide that met the following criteria:

- **Accessible:** Available to depressed workers in an appropriate and confidential manner.
- **Evidence-based:** Consistent with available research literature concerning self-care and other intervention strategies for adults with depressed mood.
- **Relevant:** Provides information, instruction and advice concerning active steps the depressed worker can take to improve self-care, facilitate functioning, and address workplace issues.
- **Clearly presented:** Includes content that is clearly written and germane to working adults.
- **Brief:** Presents material in a concise manner, likely to maximize utilization.





HOW WAS IT DEVELOPED?

- Followed recommendations from the *Depression and Work Function* report (Bilsker, Gilbert, Myette & Stewart-Patterson, 2002).
- Modified existing self-care materials (e.g., *Antidepressant Skills Workbook, 2nd ed.*, Paterson & Bilsker, 2005) to ensure workplace content, relevance, and examples.
- Conducted focus groups with key stakeholders (e.g., employers, employees, unions, insurers) to maximize acceptability of content, format and delivery.
- Developed dissemination strategies to maximize uptake and utilization (e.g., workshops, professional & public presentations, adaptation to multiple media and/or language formats).

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NEXT STEPS

- Distribute print copies across private and public employment sectors.
- Post the manual on multiple internet and organizational intranet sites.
- Translate the manual into different languages.
- Make the web-based version manual interactive (e.g., writable, visual, sound clips).
- Form partnerships with professional and advocacy organizations to promote distribution.
- Develop a media campaign to promote awareness and access.
- Evaluate knowledge uptake, implementation, and clinical outcomes.
- Develop companion workshops to assist employees, employers, and mental health professionals.
- Develop an employer distribution list.
- Develop self-care materials for other types of workplace concerns.