

AS@W...BUSINESS CASE

What is the prevalence of select mental health conditions among the Canadian working population?

Condition	Prevalence in the working population (ages 15-64)	Prevalence in the working population (ages 15-64)
Major Depression (Mild to Severe)	8%-14%	1 in 10 employees
Bipolar Depression	2.4%	1 in 40 employees
Social Anxiety and Phobias	8%	1 in 12 employees
Panic Disorder	2.1%	1 in 50 employees
Schizophrenia	0.5%	1 in 200 employees
Suicide	---	1 in 25 Canadians during their lifetime

From: Attridge, M. (2008). A Quiet Crisis: The Business Case for Managing Employee Mental Health – Human Solutions Report. Wilson Banwell PROACT Human Solutions.



AS@W Antidepressant Skills at Work Dealing with Mood Problems in the Workplace

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What is known about employee stress levels?

- A Canadian survey of over 22,000 adults found that 31% of people experienced chronic work stress. This stress was either experienced alone or in combination with a chronic physical condition, a psychiatric disorder or both.
- Research has shown that working women report higher perceived stress levels than men. There are many reasons for this, including the fact that women continue to bear the responsibility for family demands as well as work demands.
- Stress levels have been found to be associated with compromised mental and physical health.

What are the most common sources of workplace stress?

- Long hours and heavy workload demand (34%)
- Poor interpersonal relations (15%)
- Exposure to the risk of accident or injury (13%)

What are some direct costs of mental illness in the workplace?

- The cost of lost productivity due to short and long-term disability as a result of mental illness and early death costs Canadian businesses upwards of \$30 billion a year.
- It was estimated by a large Canadian insurance company that 30% of their disability insurance claims related to mental health conditions. Of the remaining 70% of disability insurance claims, a quarter or more had mental health conditions as a secondary or underlying diagnosis.
- It was found in one study that 28% of all total healthcare expenditures for a company were for the treatment of depression. The other 72% was spent to treat physical ailments.
- Based on a sample of 4,122 full and part-time individuals in Canada it was found that:
 - Managers believe that on average it costs their businesses over \$9,000 per year **per employee** due to absenteeism of depressed, stressed or anxious employees.



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- One in six employees report having been diagnosed as clinically depressed.
- One in twelve employees believes they have depression but have not been clinically diagnosed.
- ☐ When demographics and other risk factors were controlled for, it was found that:
 - Employees who reported being depressed were 70% more expensive than those employees who were not depressed.
 - Employees who reported being highly stressed were 46% more expensive than those employees who did not experience high stress.
 - Employees who reported both depression and stress were 147% more expensive than those employees who were not depressed or highly stressed.

What are some indirect costs of mental illness in the workplace?

- ☐ A recent report (2008) found that:
 - *“Employees with one or more mental health conditions missed work at a rate five times higher than employees without these conditions.”*
 - *“Job performance was seven times worse for depressed employees compared to non-depressed employees.”*
 - *“Depressed employees had twice as high an absenteeism rate.”*
 - *“20% of the productivity of a depressed employee is lost because of poor concentration, memory lapses, indecisiveness, fatigue, apathy, and lack of self-confidence.”*
- ☐ A study focusing on a sample of 3,351 individuals from a U.S. national survey of 30,523 individuals found that people with depression reported 5.6 hours/week of lost productive time. 82.1% of this lost time was in the form of reduced performance rather than by absence. In contrast, those non-depressed individuals reported only 1.5 hours/week of lost time.



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ABOUT AS@W

How was *Antidepressant Skills at Work* developed?

The guide was developed by British Columbia Mental Health and Addiction Services (BCMHAS), an agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority. The guide and accompanying materials have been authored by **Dr. Dan Bilsker**, **Dr. Merv Gilbert**, and **Dr. Joti Samra** – registered psychologists and scientist-practitioners with expertise in issues relating to workplace mental health. These psychologists are with the Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health and Addiction (CARMHA), Faculty of Health Sciences, Simon Fraser University. The guide was written on the basis of a review of the scientific literature; consultation with employers, unions, mental health providers and employee groups; and adaptation of existing self-care depression programs.

How can the manual be accessed?

The manual is available for viewing and free download at www.carmha.ca/antidepressant-skills/work/ or from www.bcmhas.ca/research. Individuals or organizations are free to print and make multiple copies of the guide, with permission from CARMHA (publications@carmha.ca). Print copies and audio CDs are available at a low cost from our ordering page at www.carmha.ca/ordering.

For further information about AS@W and associated resources and materials, please visit www.carmha.ca/selfcare. This information will be updated on a regular basis.



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