

Manulife Financial's Workplace Solutions for Mental Health



Mental Health in the Workplace

Mental illness affects the lives of millions of Canadians each year and is emerging as a dominant issue in the Canadian workplace.

Employers are seeing the impact of this on their employees and their families, as well as the rising costs associated with absences and increasing disability premiums.

Manulife Financial Group Benefits understands the effect that mental health issues are having on the Canadian workforce and is committed to helping meet the needs of our clients in this area. We have developed *Workplace Solutions for Mental Health*, a comprehensive strategy to help employers and employees achieve what we believe to be better mental health outcomes.

Workplace Solutions for Mental Health is part of our WellConnected – Better Outcomes™, which supports the delivery of our disability and absence management programs to our clients. Our national network of disability experts focus on helping employees return to work so our clients can focus on their core business.

Did you know?

- Mental illness costs the Canadian economy more than \$51 billion a year in lost productivity, direct medical costs and reductions in health-related quality of life.
- Approximately 7.5 million Canadians per year suffer a mental disorder.
- People aged 15-24 (often new to, or about to enter the workforce) are most at risk of developing a mental disorder.
- More than 30% of Manulife Financial's long term disability claims are related to mental illness.
- By 2020, it is estimated that depression will be the leading cause of disability on the planet.

Sources: Toronto Centre for Addiction and Mental Health and World Health Organization stats taken from *The Working Wounded*; The Globe and Mail; June 22, 2008

CFO Framework for Mental Health and Productivity, November 2007; Global Business and Economic Roundtable on Addiction and Mental Health

Our approach

Manulife Financial's approach to mental health provides our clients with access to support and practical services that will help assist with recovery and return to work for employees.

- **It is practical.** The tools and resources we develop are embedded in our disability and absence management processes. They can be immediately put into use to help our clients deal with the impact of mental health in their organization. We provide information they can take and apply to their environment.
- **It is outcome focused.** We provide practical tools and services that employers, especially front line managers can use to help their employees be healthy and productive. This all equates to better financial outcomes – reduced time away from work, increased productivity at work, less long-term use of health benefits and improved health and wellness.

Each case is evaluated on an individual basis, beginning with a comprehensive initial assessment that takes into consideration not only medical, but non-medical factors such as workplace and family issues. After the assessment, we work with the employee, using case management tools that address the medical and non-medical issues that may be impacting their return to work.

By addressing both medical and non-medical factors in a proactive way, we can enhance the treatment program, help expedite return to work and achieve long-term stability. There is no cookie-cutter approach to mental illness. We assess the individual factors associated with each case, developing unique and flexible case management action plans that assist with recovery.

Our case management at work

With you and your employees every step of the way...

Susan has been with her employer for 29 years. She has been in her current leadership role for the past two years.

On June 28, she submitted a doctor's note that indicated she needed to remain off work for medical reasons. At this point she had been off work for four weeks.



Initial Discussion and Communication

The Manulife Financial Case Manager assigned to this case contacted Susan to discuss her situation. Susan revealed that she had become increasingly overwhelmed at work over the last few months and could no longer handle the stress.

She was now being seen every two weeks by her attending physician and had self-referred to her Employee Assistance Program.

Case Assessment and Decision

A referral to a psychologist was made and an appointment was secured for July 21. The Case Manager and physician agreed to re-evaluate Susan's response to treatment in three weeks time (August 6).

Communicating the Decision

Within three days of Susan's appointment with the psychologist, an update to all key stakeholders was completed. A formal memo was provided to inform them that Susan's absence was being supported and that further return to work planning was to take place on August 6. The Case Manager in accordance with privacy guidelines contacted Susan's employer to confirm the timelines for the return to work and discuss the possibility of a return to work facilitation meeting.

Ongoing Case Management

The Case Manager talked to Susan and her physician on a weekly basis to discuss her functional abilities, ongoing symptoms and response to treatment.

Return to Work Facilitation

A facilitation meeting was arranged with Susan, a Manulife Financial Return to Work Specialist and a representative from Susan's company on August 10. It was determined that the factors preventing Susan from returning to work were related to her perceived inability to work with particular employees and her belief that she wasn't supported by her employer. A plan was developed that included Susan attending a leadership effectiveness support program.

Susan returned to work on a full time basis following this meeting. Upon her return, she attended the leadership effectiveness support program. This program focused on developing both leadership and conflict management skills for the workplace.

Aftercare Support and Transition to Self-Care

The Case Manager maintained contact with Susan and the key stakeholders at her company for two weeks following her full time return to work to develop an aftercare/self-care plan.

Following the facilitation meeting, Susan admitted that while she was reluctant to participate at first, she felt really supported following the return to work meeting and now had a clear plan of how to address her concerns.

Our strategy

There are seven core concepts that form the foundation of *Workplace Solutions for Mental Health*. These concepts were used to develop our current mental health tools and resources and will continue to be used as we expand our offerings in this area. Our case managers are trained using these fundamental principles and undergo regular mental health education to help keep them up to date on best practices.

Prevention

Employers can do many things to help prevent, or at least minimize absences due to mental health. We have a number of prevention related products and services like our Resilience® Employee Assistance Program provided in partnership with Human Solutions™ and Health Service Navigator™. Prevention will be a focus for future innovation and product development.

Early Intervention

Early intervention is a key factor to successful recovery. As part of our “right tool at the right time” disability management philosophy, we are expanding the tools available to case managers and enhancing the processes in place specific to mental health. Our idea is to focus on early intervention to help employees successfully return to work.

Community, Private and Public Partnerships

There are many organizations that provide outstanding services and support in the area of mental health. Some of these are non-profit or governmental organizations, while others are private companies that offer unique mental health care solutions. We will continue to expand our network of partners to bring best in class resources to our customers across Canada.

Active Case Management

Active case management means we take a proactive versus a “wait and see” approach. Our case managers look at each case on an individual basis starting with a comprehensive initial assessment and consider not only medical, but non-medical factors such as workplace and family issues. We recognize that employee engagement and participation in their recovery is critical. In our model we assess the individual factors associated with each case, developing unique and flexible case management action plans that assist with recovery.

Functional assessment

As with any diagnosis, our disability case management approach to mental health focuses on the abilities of the individual – what they can do versus what they can’t. This functional approach allows us to identify opportunities for earlier return to modified duties or hours, leveraging the individual’s abilities by recognizing that a return to the workplace should be part of their recovery plan.

Treatment

A quick scan of the mental health care model in Canada demonstrates how difficult it can be to navigate to the most effective treatment for a particular diagnosis. We actively strive to help employees gain access to appropriate medical and rehabilitative resources to help facilitate recovery and return to work.

Transition to Self-Care

If someone has been away from work due to a mental illness, an important part of their recovery is helping to ensure they have the necessary tools and resources to stay healthy and at work. We put support mechanisms in place that help the employee take control of their health and build resilience to avoid future problems.



Workplace Solutions for Mental Health includes:

- A public website for employers, employees and advisors.
- Practical, just-in-time tools to support our case managers and to help employers and employees deal with mental health in the workplace (such as the return to work guides for managers and employees).
- Educational materials about mental health for employers and employees (such as The Best Care Series by Manulife Financial).
- Current articles about mental health.
- Information about Manulife Financial's Mental Health Advisory Panel and any organizations that we are working in conjunction with to help support *Workplace Solutions for Mental Health* – who they are and how we work with them.

Our mental health website

A critical part of Manulife Financial's solution is our *Workplace Solutions for Mental Health* public website that serves as a resource centre for employees, employers and advisors seeking information about mental health. It is regularly updated with new material and also contains links to other reputable mental health websites. We will continue to enhance the website, responding to the needs of our clients.

To access *Workplace Solutions for Mental Health*, visit www.manulife.ca/groupbenefits.

Our advisory panel

Manulife Financial is committed to helping our clients achieve better mental health outcomes. We are working with several leading experts and organizations in the field of mental health to expand and enhance our services in this area. These people are all members of Manulife Financial's Mental Health Advisory Panel. With their practical experience, they are able to provide input that helps us continue to develop services for employers who are trying to address mental health concerns in their workplace.

For more information, please visit the *Workplace Solutions for Mental Health* website or talk to your Manulife Financial representative.



Human Solutions™ is a recognized leader in the area of employee assistance programs, trauma services, e-Health, selection and placement, relocation and coaching, and disability management.

Health Service Navigator™, Resilience®, WellConnected® and WellConnected – Better Outcomes™ are offered through Manulife Financial.

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