



# INFORMATION REPORT

<b>TO:</b>	Chair and Members Audit, Finance and Administration Committee
<b>COMMITTEE DATE:</b>	October 23, 2017
<b>SUBJECT/REPORT NO:</b>	Workplace Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2016-2018) (HUR17019) (City Wide)
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	City Wide
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	David Lindeman 905-546-2424 Ext. 5657
<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	Lora Fontana Executive Director Human Resources & Organizational Development
<b>SIGNATURE:</b>	

## Council Direction:

At the May 19, 2016, Audit, Finance and Administration Committee, staff was directed to develop a policy that will foster workplace practices supporting the Workplace Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Staff was also directed to report back to the Audit, Finance and Administration Committee on the progress made on implementing the strategy on a periodic basis.

## Information:

Through our People and Performance Plan, the City has identified workplace mental health and wellbeing as a key priority for the corporation to address over the next ten years. The City recognizes that mental health is fundamental to overall health, and that the workplace has an important role to play in maintaining and promoting mental health and wellness.

On May 19, 2016, Human Resources presented the Audit, Finance and Administration Committee with the Workplace Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which was subsequently approved by Council on May 25, 2016.

The goals of the Workplace Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy are to:

1. Raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing and reduce stigma associated with mental illness

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2. Align with our People and Performance Plan
3. Provide people leaders with the skills, knowledge, tools and supports needed to create a workplace that supports positive mental health and wellbeing
4. Provide employees with the skills, knowledge, tools and supports needed to improve personal resilience and achieve optimal mental health and wellbeing
5. Create a sustainability plan

The following are highlights of efforts made to date to advance the strategy.

### **Workplace Mental Health Advisory Committee**

The City of Hamilton's Mental Health Advisory Committee (MHAC) has been established to guide the implementation and evaluation of the Workplace Mental Health Strategy. The 24 members on the committee are comprised of leadership from across the organization including union representatives. The committee is accountable to Senior Leadership Team through the Executive Director of Human Resources & Organizational Development.

The MHAC has met four times in 2017, spending most of their efforts on comparing City programs against the national standard on psychological health and safety in the workplace. Once the gap analysis is complete, the MHAC will forward its recommendations to the Senior Leadership Team for improving the effectiveness and availability of programs, policies and resources that will help create psychologically safe workplaces and protect the mental health of our employees.

The group is also working on a communications plan that will address mental illness stigma, promote our Workplace Mental Health and Well-being Policy and connect employees to key resources that are available to help them improve workplace mental health and their personal resiliency.

### **Employee and Family Assistance Program**

The Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) is available through Homewood Health to all full-time and part-time employees and their dependents. This free service is confidential and connects employees to a variety of professionals who are available to help 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The assistance program provides short-term counselling when people need it along with health and wellness services for those everyday challenges and demands we all face in life.

There have been 615 new EFAP cases from January 1 – June 30, 2017. The cases are divided between Counselling Services, Life Smart Coaching Services and E-Services.

	Jan 1 – June 30, 2017	Projected 2017 Annual usage	2016 Annual usage	Comparator Annual usage
Utilization	8.79%	17.58%	14.96%	15.33%

Our utilization rate indicates a high need for support amongst our employees, the effectiveness of our awareness campaigns at reaching employees and a willingness from employees to get the right support when needed. Of the clients using the EFAP, 66.3% were females and 33.7% were male.

Overall, the top concerns for those using EFAP services are:

- mental health (127 cases or 20.6% of EFAP cases), - representing the most utilized service of EFAP
- relationship (99 cases or 16.1% of cases),
- legal (78 cases or 12.7% of all cases).

For Counselling Services cases, psychological is the highest presenting category with 43.0% of all counselling cases. Within psychological counselling, the highest number of cases were for:

- stress (11.5%)
- anxiety (9.0%)
- depression (8.1%)
- self-esteem (3.2%)
- grief/bereavement (2.7%)
- life transition (2.7%)

For Life Smart Coaching Services, the highest number of accesses were for:

- Legal Advisory Services (47.9%), with most of these being for family/divorce/custody concerns
- Childcare and Parenting Services (9.8%)
- Financial Advisory Services (9.8%)
- Nutritional Counselling (8.6%)
- Career Counselling (6.7%)

Homewood Health also offers online information through its [www.homeweb.ca](http://www.homeweb.ca) web site. This resource includes articles, podcasts, videos and learning modules on understanding mental health issues, building personal resiliency, reducing stigma, dealing with loss and reducing stress. The web site also includes information specific for

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people leaders to help them to create healthy workplaces and respond to challenges in leading teams.

### **Drug Benefit Utilization**

The City of Hamilton provides prescription drug and health benefits to its full-time employees and their dependents. Depression related drugs are the second highest drug type paid for by our plan (high blood pressure is #1). This is consistent with other organizations covered by our benefit plan administrator (Manulife). When combined with prescriptions for other mental disorders, depression is the primary indication for 13% of our drug plan usage.

### **The Working Mind**

In 2017, trained instructors began delivering deliver the Mental Health Commission of Canada's The Working Mind (TWM) program to staff across the organization. TWM is an education-based program designed to address and promote mental health and reduce the stigma of mental illness. Delivery of the program began in 2017 and will become a foundational piece of our Workplace Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The goals of TWM are:

- To support the mental health and wellbeing of employees
- To enable the full productivity of employees
- To ensure the workplace is respectful and inclusive of all employees, including those with mental health problems and mental illnesses
- To encourage employees to seek help for mental health problems and mental illness

The Working Mind Program has been delivered to 150 People Leaders and 339 front-line employees across the organization. Feedback from both groups has been overwhelmingly positive: 92% of supervisors and 90% of workers reported that the training had a positive impact on their knowledge and skills; 90% of both groups were satisfied with the delivery and content of the training.

### **Mental Health@Work Certificate Training for Leaders**

This certificate program was arranged through Queen's University and Mourneau Shepell and aligns with the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace. Over the course of three modules, participants explore the business case for mental health in the workplace while improving their understanding of relevant legal, ethical and business concerns. The program helps develop empathetic and

solution-focused leadership skills that can be used at work. To date, 166 people leaders across the organization have been certified through the program.

### **Lifespeak**

Employees and their families are provided free access to on-demand, on-line video-based resources through Lifespeak. The library of titles includes a number of modules that assist with mental health issues. From physical and mental health, to finance and relationships, to parenting and eldercare, all of life's challenges are addressed. Employees and their families can watch videos, download action plans, and interact with world-class experts in real time.

From January 1 to July 24, 2017, there have been 1,123 Lifespeak sessions completed by City of Hamilton's employees. City of Hamilton is on track to exceed usage in 2017 compared to 2016.

The top subject accessed in 2017 so far is Emotional Intelligence. Also high on the list are subjects related to addiction and building personal resilience.

### **Sprout**

The City's online Sprout Health and Wellness Platform is a wellness portal that connects employees in their journey to better wellbeing. A social component provides opportunities to connect with others and supports overall mental health. Social, physical and mental wellbeing are the focus of the challenges, goals, groups and community events.

Since Sprout was launched in 2012, there have been:

- 987 participants sign up
- 107 groups created
- 281 events organized
- 116 challenges offered

### **Our Employee Survey**

The City recognizes that people are our greatest asset and we want to understand what our employees need to be supported and engaged in the workplace. The *Our People Survey* was launched on September 22, 2017 and is intended to provide important insights that will help us promote employee mental health and the creation of psychologically safe workplaces. The survey will be an important resource to guide and evaluate our Workplace Mental Health and Well-being Strategy and as such, specific questions addressing these key areas have been included in the survey. It will also

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provide information at the team, division and department levels to help employees and management to be more engaged and supportive at work.

**Appendices and Schedules Attached**

None