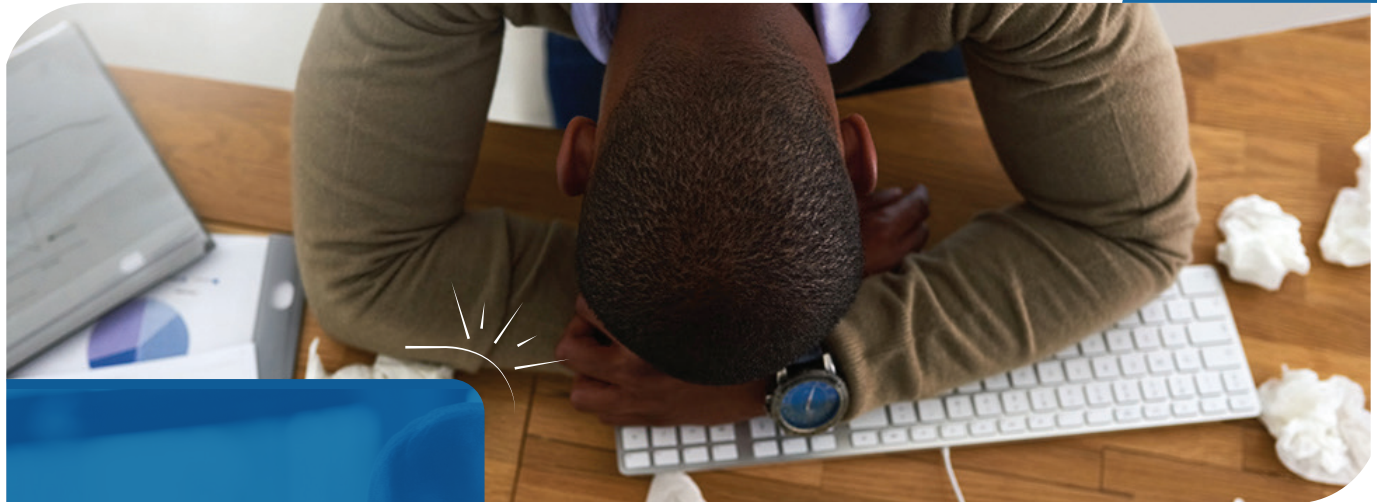




ELEVATE!

Mental health and Well-being e-newsletter

2nd Edition



About ELEVATE!

Is a mental health and well-being news-letter developed and distributed by **Occupational Health and Wellness Services Ltd (OHWS)**.

This news-letter aims to improve the reader's knowledge of mental health and thus reduce the stigma associated with mental illness while providing practical tools to improve mental health and wellbeing in the workplace and in our society at large.

STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE

HSE England defines stress as “The **adverse** reaction people have to **excessive pressure** or other types of demands placed on them.” Everyone experiences some level of stress at work, so stress is not necessarily a bad thing. Work pressure has been found to push up performance and encourage growth but when these pressures become excessive and/or prolonged, performance begins to decline and the adverse effects of stress begin to manifest, the extreme end of this spectrum is burnout.

While stress is not an illness in itself, it can exacerbate ill-health and has been linked to conditions such as hypertension, stroke, gastric ulcers, diarrhea, etc. People experience stress in

different ways, some people may experience headaches, sleep difficulties, fatigue, poor concentration/poor performance at work. Work related stress may be due to one or more of these factors: A lack of role clarity, an excessive work load, poor supervision, lack of training or resources, poor work relationships, lack of control over work, poor change management etc.

What is the cost of stressed employees?

- Reduced performance and productivity
- Increased sickness absence
- Increased Medical costs
- Increased Staff Turn Over
- Increased rates of work related accidents
- A poor safety record

Addressing stress in your workplace

Primary Prevention: This involves identifying and addressing all the organizational causes of stress.

The most efficient way to uncover all possible organizational causes of stress is to carry out a stress risk assessment. Once these sources are identified, they can be addressed usually in collaboration with employees. Examples of primary preventative actions include job redesign and the institution of ergonomic interventions, equitable compensation, mandatory breaks, paid maternity leave, consistent enforcement of bullying and harassment policies etc.

Secondary Prevention: This involves modifying the employee's response to stress through interventions that improve their ability to cope such as Resilience

building, Assertiveness Training, Stress Management training for employees and management, Wellbeing Promotion Programs etc.

Tertiary Prevention: Involves providing support to individuals who are already overwhelmed by stress from home or work, it is a reactive approach to tackling stress but is important in quick resolution of an ongoing episode as well as relapse prevention. Interventions under this category include Counselling services provided through an Employee Assistance Program, other talking Therapy such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Referral to a psychiatric facility for treatment with medication etc.

In order to successfully manage work related stress, all three components of prevention must be incorporated.

DID YOU KNOW?

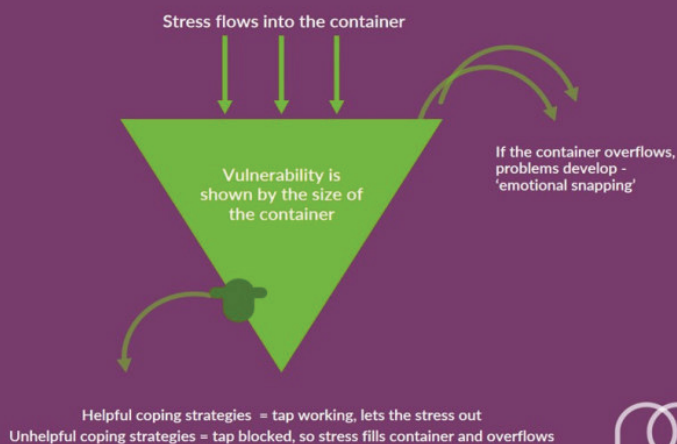
Chronic Stress weakens the immune system!

WHAT'S IN YOUR STRESS CONTAINER?

Our experiences and overall make-up make us more or less susceptible to stress; this is the basis of the concept of the "stress container." People who are more vulnerable to stress have smaller stress containers and people who are less vulnerable to stress have larger stress containers. Whenever our stress containers fill up and start to overflow,

we manifest the symptoms of stress. By relying on helpful coping mechanisms, we create taps in our containers, that act as outlets for pressure and ensure our containers never overflow. Unhelpful coping mechanisms on the other hand clog our taps and our stress containers fill up faster.

What's in your Stress Container?



ACTIVITY

Draw your stress container- Identify the things that are filling it up. Do you feel very stressed i.e. Is your container empty, full or half full?

What can you change?

What can you do to change things?

What can't you change?

How can you live with the things you can't change?

Do you need outside help or support?

If yes, how can you access this?

POSITIVE REFRAMING

Do you see the glass half full or half empty? The statement describes the same thing, the difference is the perspective. "Positive reframing" focuses on looking for the good in experiences that appear negative. This will not change the situation but it will keep us hopeful and help us cope better with the challenges we face. Here's an example: I just lost my job so while I am

searching for a new one I can finally find time to complete those certifications I have been hoping to obtain, get some much needed rest, bond with my children and look for a job in that field I am passionate about. There is good in every challenge if you look hard enough, positive reframing helps you find it. Try it today...



Your Mental Health **Tool kit**

The American Institute of Stress developed a simple questionnaire which you can use to self assess your stress- levels and how you are responding to stress:

[CLICK HERE](#)



ATTENTION MANAGEMENT!!!!

Do you want to measure and manage stress in your workplace? Leave us a message, we have the tools and expertise you need.

WELLBEING DAYS IN JUNE

World Blood Donor Day- 14th

June. The theme for this year is "Safe blood saves lives."

REFLECT

"Life is **10%** what happens to me and **90%** how I react to it."

- **Charles Swindoll**

STAYING SAFE DURING THE PANDEMIC

Are you using your mask the right way?



Wash your hands before donning your mask.



Ensure it covers your nose, mouth and chin.



Take it off by the straps only



Dispose in a covered bin if disposable or wash after daily use if it is a cloth mask



Wash your hands after taking your mask off



Don't share masks

Next Time on

ELEVATE!

Tackling stress in the Workplace Contd

We are an occupational health service provider focused on optimizing mental health and wellbeing in the work place through the delivery of a variety of evidence based interventions including resilience building, mental health first aid and awareness training, employee psychological support services, organizational wellbeing program design and implementation .

For more information, send an e-mail to info@ohws.ng



OccuHealth & Wellness Services