

Platinum Healthy Award Winner

The Canadian Mental Health Association, Windsor-Essex County Branch (CMHA-WECEB) recognizes that the path to a healthy workplace starts with happy, well employees. The creation and maintenance of a mentally healthy and safe work environment which fosters positive lifestyle choices benefits employees, their families, clients and the community at large.

To encourage the development of overall physical and mental well-being, the agency created a joint union-management Wellness Committee in 2007. The Wellness Committee provides information and opportunities to promote and encourage positive lifestyle choices for employees. Over the years the Committee has organized numerous exciting opportunities and events for employees such as Yoga and Zumba lessons on-site during lunch or after work, Weight Watchers at work and an annual summer walking contest. The committee also organizes regular information sessions for employees on a variety of work-life balance topics presented by the Employee Assistance Plan (EAP).

The highlight event from the past year was the health screening assessment for CMHA employees at the agency's community health center's annual health fair. Employees were given the opportunity to have three health readings taken: blood pressure, blood sugar levels, and their spirometry read which measures a person's breathing capacity. Of the staff who participated over 50% recorded either a systolic blood pressure over 130 or a diastolic blood pressure over 90 which puts them at risk for developing hypertension. Employees were encouraged to speak to their individual health practitioners to review their personal readings. The Wellness Committee has used this information to plan events and sessions for the upcoming year in an effort to reduce and normalize staff blood pressure readings. The committee is hoping that these sessions along with other annual events will help reduce the agency blood pressure readings at the next annual health fair.

The agency also continues to have a strong focus on health and safety. Protection of employees from injury, occupational disease and workplace violence is a major continuing objective of the organization. This past year the agency introduced a Workplace Violence policy, conducted an organization wide risk assessment and delivered several training sessions focused on a variety of safety issues.

The agency has developed several policies over the years that support the organization's commitment to a healthy workplace. This past year the agency approved an overall Healthy Lifestyle Policy that solidified CMHA-WECEB's commitment to its employee's physical and mental well-being.

CMHA-WECEB is honoured to be a recipient of the **Working Toward Wellness Healthy Workplace Award- Platinum Level**. This accomplishment is a result of the organization's employee dedication to a healthy and safe workplace. The agency looks forward to another great year of Workplace Wellness!

For more information on how to develop and implement a wellness program in your workplace or to find out more about the WTW Healthy Workplace Awards process, contact the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit at (519) 258-2146 ext. 3100.