

Appendix M

Memorandum of Understanding Between Treasury Board and the Public Service Alliance of Canada with Respect to Mental Health in the Workplace

This Memorandum of Understanding is to give effect to the agreement reached between the Employer and the Public Service Alliance of Canada regarding issues of mental health in the workplace.

As a result of the work done by the Joint Task Force on Mental Health (JTF), the parties agree to establish a Centre of Expertise on Mental Health in the Workplace (COE). The COE is established to pursue the long-term focus and to reflect the commitment from the senior leadership of the parties on the importance of mental health issues in the workplace. The COE will focus on continuous improvement and the successful implementation of measures to improve mental health in the workplace.

As determined by the JTF in its reports, the COE will:

- Be co-governed by PSAC (the Alliance) and Employer representatives
- Have a central, regional and virtual presence;
- Have a mandate that can evolve based on the needs of stakeholders within the federal public service;
- Perform its work neutrally and at arm's length; and
- Have dedicated and long-term funding from Treasury Board.

The parties agree to establish a formal governance structure that will include an Executive Board (previously named Steering Committee) and an Advisory Board (previously named Technical Committee).

The Executive Board and the Advisory Board will be comprised of an equal number of Union and Employer representatives. The Executive Board is responsible for determining the number and the identity of their respective Advisory Board representatives.

The Executive Board shall approve the terms of reference of the Advisory Board by January 30, 2019. This date may be extended by mutual agreement of the Executive Board members. The Advisory Board's terms of reference may be amended from time to time by mutual consent of the Executive Board members.

The Executive Board will be responsible for the establishment of a central location for the COE, ~~as well as~~ and will determine how it will establish a regional presence. The virtual presence will be administered by the Employer with the participation of the Union. Additional administrative support services for the COE shall be determined by the parties.

The ongoing responsibilities of the COE include:

- Continue to build upon the overall Federal Public Service Workplace Mental Health Strategy;
- Continue to identify ways of reducing and eliminating the stigma in the workplace that is too frequently associated with mental health issues;
- Continue to identify ways to better communicate the issues of mental health challenges in the workplace
- Assess various tools such as existing policies, legislation and directives available to support employees facing these challenges;
- Monitor practices on mental health initiatives and wellness programs from within the federal public service, from other jurisdictions and from other employers that might be instructive for the federal public service;
- Continue to drive towards the implementation of the [National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace \(the Standard\)](#) and identify how implementation can best be achieved within the public service; recognizing that not all workplaces are the same;
- Promote the participation of joint health and safety committees and health and safety representatives;
- Promote the participation of the joint employment equity committees;
- Continue to identify challenges and barriers that may impact the successful implementation of mental health best practices; and
- Continue to identify areas where the objectives reflected in the Standard, or in the work of other organizations, represent a gap with existing approaches within the federal public service. Once identified, make ongoing recommendations to the Executive Board on how those gaps could be addressed. The National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace should be considered a minimum standard that the Employer's occupational health and safety program may exceed.

In addition to these responsibilities, the COE will play a key role in:

- Providing a roadmap for alignment to the National Standard.
- Providing expert support and guidance to all key stakeholders
- Establishing a best practice repository
- Developing a whole-of-government communications strategy in collaboration with various stakeholders
- Establishing partnerships and networks with key organizations
- Convening communities of practice