Promoting Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace: Evidence-Based Initiatives

The Alberta Continuing Care Association (ACCA) is inviting grant applications from eligible organizations to participate in round two of the Care for Staff Grant Program (Care for Staff 2.0). Application intake will begin on October 15, 2025 and close on December 15, 2025.

To support organizations in choosing evidence-based initiatives, ACCA has developed the following list of tangible examples derived from ongoing research conducted by the Mental Health Commission of Canada and the Workplace Strategies for Mental Health (workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com).

This list is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather to serve as a starting point in choosing appropriate interventions likely to promote psychological health and safety in the workplace. Unique ideas not included in this list may be considered if applicants demonstrate that they are evidence-based and linked to the National Standard.

To be eligible for funding, projects must be evidence-based and aligned with one or more of the 15 factors included in the Mental Health Commission of Canada's National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace (mentalhealthcommission.ca).

What we fund:

1. **Training and professional development workshops for leaders and/or front-line staff.** The Workplace Strategies for Mental Health website (workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com) includes a broad range of free tools and workshop materials that can be used free of charge by individuals and organizations. However, these tools and workshops still require time and resources to implement. Through the Care for Staff grant, organizations may apply for funding to offer training and workshops that align with the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace. Eligible costs may include a combination of facilitator fees, food and refreshment, space rental, and/or backfilling staff positions to support full participation in workshops and training opportunities.

2. **Resources, programs or services** that support psychological health and safety

3. **Staff recognition and appreciation**

4. **Team-building experiences** such as retreats or workplace events

5. **Enhancements to physical spaces**

6. **Innovation and technology** to improve workplace practices or staff experience

7. **Policy and prevention strategies** to eliminate or mitigate risks

Evidence-based actions for Workplace Psychological Health and Safety

Type of initiative	Examples of evidence-based actions for psychological health and safety in the workplace
1. **Training and professional development opportunities for leaders and/or front-line staff**	- Building stronger teams - Building trust for leaders - Change management training - Choose your words - Communication training - Conflict response for leaders - Conflict resolution training - Discrimination prevention and inclusion - Emotional intelligence, communication, and collaboration training - Guarding Minds at Work - Helping employees manage change - Implicit bias, microaggressions, and intersectionality - Inclusion strategies for leaders - Just culture training - Leader support for newcomers - Leadership self-awareness and continual improvement - Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) - Mindfulness training to reduce reactivity and promote respectful behaviour - Protecting ourselves against bullying - Psychologically safe interactions workshop - Psychologically Safe Leader Assessment - Putting workload management on the agenda - Resolving personal conflict - The Working Mind (TWM) training - Trauma-informed training Other evidence-based training aligned with one or more factors for psychological health and safety in the workplace.
2. **Resources, programs or services** that support	• Offer mindfulness programs • Offer the employees' role in psychological health and safety program

psychological health and safety	• Provide access to dispute resolution services (e.g., ombudsperson, mediation) • Provide mentorship and peer coaching to foster community and inclusion • Provide services for psychological protection, like peer support programs, debriefing and trauma-informed care. • Use psychologically safe orientation strategies • Use task improvement processes to clarify job responsibilities. • Other resources, programs or services that support psychological health and safety in the workplace.
3. Staff Recognition and Appreciation	• Recognition strategies for leaders • Building Stronger Teams • How to express respect and appreciation • Use the Recognition preferences form to understand how each employee prefers to be acknowledged (e.g., privately, publicly, team-based). • Putting recognition and reward on the agenda: creating awareness • Create visible appreciation initiatives like a Wall of Gratitude • Incorporate a combination of monetary (e.g., gift cards) and non-monetary (e.g., days off, flex time) rewards into an overall staff recognition and appreciation strategy.
4. Team building experiences	• Staff and/or leadership retreats • Workplace events (e.g., lunches, celebrations, team building activities) • Wellness events, guest speakers, etc.
5. Enhancements to physical spaces	• Create safe spaces for confidential conversations and conflict resolution • Design inclusive environments that support diverse employee needs • Ensure physical spaces promote respectful interactions and psychological safety • Create welcoming environments with plants, artwork and natural lighting • Designate a common staff room where employees can gather to connect and collaborate • Create physical or digital spaces to showcase employee achievements (e.g., bulletin boards, intranet shout-outs) • Adjust environmental factors (e.g., lighting, noise, foot traffic) to reduce disruptions • Ensure physical spaces support psychological safety (e.g., secure access, quiet zones)

	• Create spaces that encourage social connection and psychological safety • Provide quiet zones for mindfulness and mental health breaks • Create or support access to on-site fitness spaces • Create safe and quiet spaces for rest, reflection, and self-care • Ensure break areas are welcoming and accessible	
6. Innovation and Technology	• Provide online access to mindfulness, mental health and emotional intelligence resources • Use digital platforms to facilitate recognition, communication, and team engagement • Pilot or use digital platforms to manage workload, shift scheduling or trading • Other innovative uses of technology to support psychological health and safety *Care for Staff funds cannot be used to purchase routine hardware or other necessary tools for basic care.*	
7. Policy and Prevention Strategies	• Use literature reviews (e.g., Evidence for psychological health and safety) to guide policy improvements. • Review human resource practices through a psychological safety lens (e.g., hiring, orientation and termination). • Develop and maintain policies addressing harassment, bullying, discrimination, trauma, violence and suicide prevention.	

Where to find more information

Factor	Where to find more information
Organizational Culture In a work environment with positive organizational culture, there are shared values of trust, honesty, fairness and accountability.	Evidence-based actions for organizational culture
Civility and Respect In a work environment with civility and respect, all stakeholders are considerate and fair in their interactions with each other.	Evidence-based actions for civility and respect
Engagement In a work environment with positive engagement, employees are motivated to do their job well and feel connected to their work, co-workers, and organization.	Evidence-based actions for engagement

Clear Leadership and Expectations In a work environment with clear leadership and expectations, employees know what they need to do, have confidence in their leaders and understand impending changes.	Evidence-based actions for clear leadership and expectations
Recognition and Reward In a work environment with positive recognition and reward, there is appropriate acknowledgement and appreciation of employees' efforts in a fair and timely manner.	Evidence-based actions for recognition and reward
Workload Management In a work environment where there is positive workload management, employees feel supported to complete their assigned tasks and responsibilities successfully.	Evidence-based actions for workload management
Psychological Protection In a work environment with adequate psychological protection, employees are free from bullying, harassment, stigma and discrimination.	Evidence-based actions for psychological protection
Psychological and Social Support In a work environment with positive psychological and social support, all employees feel a sense of belonging and contribution.	Evidence-based actions for psychological and social support
Protection of Physical Safety In a work environment with positive protection of physical safety, management takes appropriate action to protect all employees against injury and illness and ensures they have what they need to do their jobs safely.	Evidence-based actions for protection of physical safety
Protection from Moral Distress A workplace free from moral distress actively supports the psychological well-being of its staff by fostering ethical integrity, resilience, and a culture of safety and inclusion. Organizations and teams can protect staff from moral distress by showing support during adverse situations, ensuring that staff have the human resources and equipment to provide quality care, providing access to bioethics consultations and training, and developing	https://teamhealthandsafety.ca/

policies and guidelines to address morally distressing events	
Support for Psychological Self-Care Organizations encourage staff to care for their own psychological health and safety, including encouraging them to take breaks and vacations. Psychological self-care is promoted and embedded into the organizational and team culture	https://teamhealthandsafety.ca/
Growth and development In a work environment with positive growth and development, employees receive ongoing encouragement and support to enhance interpersonal, emotional and job-related skills.	Evidence-based actions for growth and development
Balance In a work environment with positive balance, employees are supported to manage the demands of work, family and personal life.	Evidence-based actions for balance
Involvement and Influence In a work environment with positive involvement and influence, employees are included in discussions and have input into decisions that impact their respective jobs	Evidence-based actions for involvement and influence
Psychological Competencies and Demands In a work environment where psychological competencies and demands are not a health risk, employees are continuously supported to meet the psychological demands of their position.	Evidence-based actions for protection of physical safety