Stigma
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Psychological Health and Safety in the Occupational Therapy Workplace
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The companion video provides an introduction to stigma towards people with mental illness in the workplace. This is a very important topic because "20% of Canadians will personally experience a mental illness in their lifetime" (CMHA, 2015).

Have you ever felt judged for superficial reasons? Have you ever judged someone before getting to know them? This video will get you thinking about times when you may have been contributing to, or impacted by stigma.

The 2 types of stigma are external and internal stigma. External stigma can manifest as negative judgements, opinions, comments, assumptions etc. made by others about a person. Internal stigma is the internalization of external stigma, or, a person's application of the judgement to themselves (Shepell FGI, 2015).

Stigma can happen in subtle ways that are unexpected; it is not always obvious. For example, a recent study showed that people can feel stigmatized by the process of getting a "fit note" from a doctor (for the purpose of enabling return to work). This study also showed that people preferred to obtain a "fit note" from their own general practitioner who knew their history and understood them better.

Research shows that there are various programs to reduce workplace stigma, but there is limited research on which programs to use, when, with whom, and in what context. One current theory is that there is more workplace stigma towards mental illness in healthcare professions than there is in other professions. This is explained by the fact that learning about mental illnesses and treatments is part of healthcare providers' training and this results in a higher expectation that healthcare workers will attend to their own mental health conditions. Based on this assumption, it would make sense that programs tailored to healthcare professionals are a more appropriate intervention than programs designed for other professions or the general population (Moll et al., 2015).

The outcomes of multiple intervention programs for healthcare workplaces have been utilized to form a comprehensive set of guidelines on how to build the most effective anti-stigma intervention possible, and this document can be found on the Mental Health Commission of Canada website. It is called "Building and Delivering Successful Anti-stigma Programs for Healthcare Providers: Results of a Qualitative Study" (Knaak & Patten, 2014). Specific protocols for existing intervention programs that can be implemented by employers must be purchased, however, general tips on how to reduce workplace stigma from the perspective of different roles can be found on the Morneau Shepell website (Morneau Shepell, 2015). Links to these resources are provided below.

RESOURCES

The Gestalt Project: Stop the Stigma
URL – https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QficvVNIxTI

Removing Stigma - 5 Rs of workplace mental health
URL – http://www.morneaushepell.com/ca-en/insights/removing-stigma-5-rs-workplace-mental-health

Building and Delivering Successful Anti-stigma Programs for Healthcare Providers: Results of a Qualitative Study
URL – http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/document/70611/building-and-delivering-successful-anti-stigma-programs-healthcare-providers-results-

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