**Assessment and Consultation for Psychological Health and Safety**

Element 14 - Workplace Violence, Harassment, and Psychological Health and Safety

14.6 Assess the workplace for psychological health and safety (PHS) hazards, in consultation with workers.

Consultation:

Consultation and worker participation are crucial to the success of assessing psychosocial hazards in the workplace. Meaningful involvement of all workplace parties is an important factor for the management of psychosocial risks in any organization.

Workplaces should:

a) provide workers opportunities to offer feedback to help the organization determine what hazards exist

b) encourage participation and engagement in the process of assessing PHS hazards

Consultation should take place at all stages of identifying, evaluating and managing PHS hazards.

Both management and workers should have specific roles and responsibilities.

There are a number of ways that organizations can engage their employees in identifying psychosocial risk factors. The approach that is selected will be based on a variety of factors, including the readiness of the workplace parties to participate meaningfully in the process.

1. Employee Surveys

An anonymous questionnaire that employees can complete may be used. There are several, well-recognized and respected surveys are available and free for organizations to use.

1. General Awareness

During staff meetings, tool box talks or other team meeting, hold a discussion with employees on the psychosocial risk factors and what PHS hazards exist.

Regardless of the approach that is used to consult with employees, the questions that should be posed (with the answers documented) regarding identification of psychosocial risk factors are:

* What hazards are present in the workplace?
* What workers could experience harm because of this hazard?

Identifying hazards

Some considerations for identifying hazards:

The organization should identify hazards of a psychosocial nature. These can include:

a) aspects of how work is organized

b) social factors at work

c) work environment, equipment and hazardous tasks

Controlling hazards

14.7 Support workers psychological health and safety by implementing control measures for the identified PHS hazards.

There is a variety of strategies to manage psychological hazards. Strategies for eliminating hazards, reducing risks and promoting well-being should be developed in consultation with workers and the implementation should be documented.

When managing psychosocial hazards, a combination of interventions should be used:

a) organizational level controls to prevent or reduce harmful effects and promote well-being at work

b) resources that address psychosocial hazards, effective training and other appropriate measures;

c) reducing the harm when an exposure to psychosocial hazards occurs

This is an example of an assessment tool for PHS hazards:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Psychosocial hazards and factors | Job Duties | Consequences (possible outcomes) | Injury risk potential (likelihood vs consequences) | Action required |
| **Job Demands**  Related to the demands placed on workers.  Can include:  High levels of time pressure and role overload can include:  • tasks that are beyond the workers level of training or experience  • excessive expectations workers  • unreasonable deadlines for work tasks or asked to complete work tasks outside of work hours  • lack of resources required to complete tasks  • extra work due to absence of team members beyond a short duration  **Poor support**  The lack of practical assistance and support.  Situations that may lead to workers experiencing poor support:  • Not being provided access to tools, resources, information, or coaching needed to do the job  • workers who work in isolation or in geographically dispersed teams.  • where managers are required to manage large numbers of workers and it is difficult to provide adequate support to individuals  • workers who do not have time or opportunity within work hours to speak with their colleagues or managers (e.g. highly regimented workplaces such as call centers, medical practices). |  |  |  |  |

The following is an example of documenting the implementation of controls for PHS hazards:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Priority | Identified Hazard | Existing Control | Additional controls to be implemented | Responsible person | Completion date |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
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The following are great resources for the identifications, evaluation and management of PHS hazards:

* ISO 45003:2021
* <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0025/104857/managing-the-risk-of-psychosocial-hazards-at-work-code-of-practice.pdf>
* <https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/>
* <https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/resources/guarding-minds-at-work>
* <https://www.ccohs.ca/workplace-mental-health-toolkit>
* <https://www.csagroup.orgarticle/can-csa-z1003-13-bnq-9700-803-2013-r2022-psychological-health-and-safety-in-the-workplace/?srsltid=AfmBOorENxb0INdxdNmrs7ZLxUJD3ekJOtFswWnrIJ-jv2XZ8PstcZxH>