

Mental Health America of WI

Workplace Mental Health:

Taking Wellness Programs to the Next Level

January 16, 2018

Shel Gross, Dir. of Public Policy

History

- **Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (circa 2008)**
 - Trainings, survey, manager training modules
- **Wisconsin Partnership Program (UWSMPH)**
 - Development Grant (2011-2012): survey, key informant interviews, focus groups
 - Implementation Grant (2013-2016): Manager training, employee communications.



**Wisconsin
Partnership Program**

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Partners

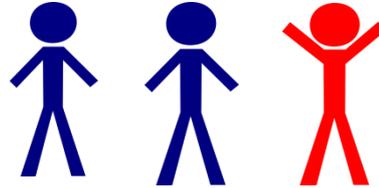
- Wisconsin United for Mental Health (WUMH)
 - Anti-stigma coalition
- The Alliance 

THE ALLIANCE
Employers moving health care forward
- The Business Health Care Group 

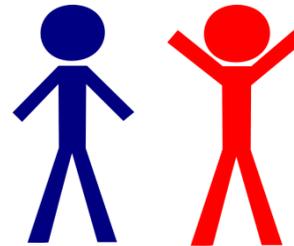
Business Health Care Group
Driving Meaningful Change
- Wisconsin Initiative for Stigma Elimination

MIG Grant Survey Findings

- Almost 2/3 of respondents believed behavioral health issues are “somewhat” or “very” prevalent in their workplace.



- Yet almost half reported that their workplace does not have a specific plan in place to address employee mental health or wellness.



MIG Grant Survey Findings

- Roughly a third report that supervisor/managers in their workplace are ‘not at all prepared’ or ‘poorly prepared’ to effectively deal with employees who have behavioral health issues that affect their work performance.



MIND THE GAP

Development Grant Findings

- Key Barriers
 - Stigma, Distrust of Management, Privacy Concerns
- To the degree manager training is provided it often does not cover mental health
- While many employers offer EAPs, there is a sense that what is provided is fairly minimal and underutilized.

Development Grant Findings

- Employers often feel constrained by the legal issues surrounding privacy, confidentiality and potential discrimination concerns related to HIPAA and the ADA.
- Legal departments may dictate what a supervisor or manager can or cannot do.



Development Grant Findings

People with mental illnesses don't get casseroles



Key Recommendation

Implement Manager Training

Most employers responded favorably to the supervisor/manager training but offered a variety of suggestions for improving it to make it more useful in their work settings



Implementation Grant

- Modify and implement training
 - Built around stories of three pairs of employees/supervisors
- Employee communications
- Strong evaluation component (including employee and manager surveys)
 - most initiatives measured only change in contacts to EAP, etc.

Employee Communications

- Landing pages for each employer
 - general resources, organization specific resources
- Employee messaging
 - Talking about MH at work;
 - Recovery and resilience;
 - Stress
- WISE Resources

<http://rogersinhealth.org/resources/resilience-and-recovery-workplace>

Findings

- Challenge working with employers over the long term
 - Lost 7 of our 10 employers
- Found a reduction in perceived sadness, anxiety and depression and the effect of these on performance
 - Despite manager participation not being especially robust

Findings

- Managers who did complete training showed distinct improvement on self-efficacy. Also positive changes with regard to stigma.
- At final, managers were more likely to be “extremely sure” they could identify an employee who would benefit from referral to HR/EAP and that they would refer.

Findings

- Overall culture shift but difficult to pinpoint source.
 - May be that these are highly motivated organizations
 - Communications over an extended period of time: letters from management, surveys, videos.
- Lack of control group per se but did not see similar changes for substance abuse.

Contact

Shel Gross

Mental Health America of Wisconsin

Ph: 608-250-4368

Email: shel@mhawisconsin.org