



# Mental Health during COVID-19

**It is natural to feel stress, anxiety, grief, and worry during and after a stressful situation.**

Everyone reacts differently, and your own feelings will change over time. Notice and accept how you feel. Self-care during a stressful situation will help your long-term healing. Taking care of your emotional health will help you think clearly and protect yourself and your loved ones.

## For Managers of Essential Businesses

- Managers and team leaders are facing similar stressors as their staff, and potentially additional pressure in their role. It is important that the strategies are in place for both workers and managers. Keeping all staff protected from chronic stress and poor mental health during this response means that they will have better capacity to fulfil their roles.
- Keep in mind that the current situation will not go away overnight. Focus attention on longer-term occupational capacity rather than repeated short-term crisis responses.
- Promote preventative measures. Advise employees with symptoms to stay home and seek medical advice. Encourage hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Make 60 per cent alcohol-based hand sanitizers readily available when there is no access to soap and water.
- Provide good quality communication and accurate, up-to-date information to all staff.
- Rotate workers from higher-stress to lower-stress functions.
- Partner inexperienced workers with their more experienced co-workers. The buddy system helps to provide support, monitor stress, and reinforce safety procedures.
- Initiate, encourage, and monitor work breaks to make sure employees are taking needed breaks. This is vital to employee physical and mental health.
- Implement flexible schedules for workers who are directly affected or have a family member affected by illness or other stressful events.
- Build in time for co-workers to provide social and emotional support to each other.
- Make staff aware of how to access mental health support and help them access this support when needed.

**Reaching out for help is not a sign of weakness; it is a sign of strength.**

**CHIMO Helpline - Help is just a phone call away: 1-800-667-5005**

**Hope for Wellness Helpline – The Hope for Wellness Helpline offers immediate mental health counselling and crisis intervention to all Indigenous people across Canada: 1-855-242-3310**

**Kids Help Phone - Text TALK to 686868 or call 1-800-668-6868 to chat with a volunteer Crisis Responder 24/7.**