

Bringing Mental Health Services to the Workplace

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The business field is a sector in social institutions where mental health professionals interact (Comer, 2016). The business field influences and is influenced by clinical practice and study by helping to prevent and correct problems such as alcohol abuse and other substance use disorders (Comer, 2016). Among the ten leading categories of work-related disorders and injuries, untreated psychological disorders are among them (Comer, 2016). “Almost one-third of all employees are estimated to experience psychological problems that are serious enough to affect their work (Comer, 2016, p. 546). Absenteeism from work, industrial accidents, and work terminations are contributed by psychological problems by more than fifty-nine percent (Comer, 2016). To prevent psychological problems from interfering with work performance and by reducing employee insurance claims, employee assistance programs and stress-reduction, or problem-solving seminars are two common means of providing mental health care in the workplace by businesses who believe this will save them money in the long run (Comer, 2016).

Employees with mental health problems can affect the productivity of the employer’s business. This is because the high cost of mental healthcare increases the total human resource expenditure and hence reduces profits. This means that employers who are affected much with such cases cannot compete effectively with their competitors at the global business level unless the competitors are also faced with the similar and equal challenges. Therefore, employers are apprehensive about the increasing cost of mental health. They would like to be informed if their spending in healthcare in enhancing the worker’s healthcare or not and if there are any productivity benefits from offering mental healthcare to employees (Goetzel et al., 2002).

Depression is one of the mental health problems that pose a threat to workplace productivity. Individuals who are depressed present the considerable burden of cost for

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employers who have the responsibility of their employee's healthcare. The extra cost includes absenteeism, compensation claims for workers, safety events, turnover for employees among others. Evidence shows that depression in workers might have a significant effect on losses of productivity in addition to more absenteeism and even disability which are short-term in nature. It can also have an impact on the higher turnover as well as sub-optimal work performance (Goetzel et al., 2002).

The outcome of the former hero's study reported the most shocking result concerning mental health. In this study, the factor of risk anticipating the highest increase in medical cost was reported to be depression where the report of depression by employees stood at 70 percent more on cost in comparison with those employees who were not affected by depression. The employees who were affected by both depression and a high degree of stress accounted up to 147 percent more. The effect of this study was huge for employers (Goetzel et al., 2002).

Both the individual and the organization barriers act as the stumbling blocks to the effective management of depression at the place of work. Some of the personal barriers include stigma, insufficient motivation to look for health care, shortcomings of the healthcare system, ignorance concerning treatment in sufficient confidence by the individual's physicians as well as the deficiency in the primary care physician. The organization barriers are comprised of ambiguity regarding the responsibility of employers in the management of depression (Goetzel et al., 2002). Also, insufficient data that can be used to support enhanced investment in mental health including the information gap is ignorance for the employer which may be the greatest barrier to enhanced investment in mental health interactions (Goetzel et al., 2002).

The solution to mental disorders will comprise of management of employee depression with the help of modern methods of treatment for mental illness which is medication or

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psychotherapy, as well as a combination of both methods, can be very much effective in managing the mental health problem like depression and high level of stress. The participation of employers can be very helpful and crucial in the management of mental health for the wellbeing of employees (Goetzel et al., 2002).

The use of education, together with training programs, is significant in teaching employees on how to detect and handle mental health problems as early as possible, and how effectively to react to them. The frequent screening for both stress and depression ought to be carried out as part of the company or organization's plan to health promotion. Employees can also be taught stress management skills for coping with the situation as the primary method of preventing mental stress. The programs related to secondary prevention comprise of the discovery of possible mental health problems plus a referral for treatment by the most suitable healthcare practitioners. The tertiary prevention measures can also be considered which include reduction of severity, reducing discomfort, reduction of long-term harm among others using proper treatment and enhanced compliance with both medications and psychotherapy (Goetzel et al., 2002).

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References

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