

APTIA CONFERENCE
4 NOV 2020

NIKKI BRITT

**ADDRESSING THE
PSYCHOSOCIAL
IMPACTS OF COVID
19 IN OUR BUS
COMPANIES**

PSYCHOSOCIAL HAZARDS IN THE WORKPLACE

- Psychosocial hazards are aspects of work which have the potential to cause psychological or physical harm.



2020 PSYCHOSOCIAL HAZARDS IN BUS COMPANIES

- New forms of employment contracts and job insecurity
- Fatigue/shift work
- Ageing workforce
- Workplace Change
- Workplace Violence or customer aggression
- Mental Stressors
 - role overload
 - role ambiguity or conflict
 - mental and emotional demands of the job
 - conflict arising from tasks or relationships/bullying
 - **Anxiety related to COVID 19**
 - Poor work-life balance

RISK MANAGEMENT TO MITIGATE INFECTION AND ANXIETY OF INFECTION FOR YOUR STAFF

- Physical screens
- Masks
- Hand sanitizer/gloves/cashless
- Rear exits
- Social distancing in the crew/lunch/driver's rooms
- Temperature checks
- Working from home
- Innovation

RISK MANAGEMENT TO MITIGATE PSYCHOLOGICAL HAZARDS OF COVID

- Causes of distress specifically related to COVID 19
 - Infection
 - Uncertainty (e.g. where will Christmas be this year, borders open)
 - Social isolation
 - Health concerns for self and loved ones
 - Changes to work practices/organisational change
 - Relationship/communication with supervisor
 - Job insecurity
 - ??????

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|---|---|
| ■ Infection | Addressed |
| ■ Uncertainty (e.g. where will Christmas be this year, borders open) | EAP |
| ■ Social isolation | EAP |
| ■ Health concerns for self and loved ones | Health literacy/strong supervisory skills |
| ■ Changes to work practices/organisational change | Good communication of supervisors |
| ■ Relationship/communication with supervisor | Strong supervisors /addressed |
| ■ Job insecurity | Strong communication |
| ■ ???? | EAP |

CURRENT APPROACHES TO ADDRESSING PSYCHOSOCIAL DISTRESS



THE SECRET SAUCE TO ADDRESSING PSYCHOSOCIAL HAZARDS

- Pre employment personality tests:
 - RISC: Resilience, Integrity, Neuroticism, Sociopathy
- Strong on the ground supervisor skills
- Strong engagement of staff across all depots
- Clear action/intervention plans to address distress
 - CAREKINNECT

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- Confidential
 - Provision of utilisation rates, not details or trends
 - Very much based on pre COVID view that “personal problems” are not the direct responsibility of employer
 - Limited evidence of their effectiveness and frustration of poor transparency of issues
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- 2-3 % utilization in construction (male) : unable to find rates for Passenger transport
 - 5 % Utilization in Australia
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- When 50% of all Australians will experience anxiety or depression at some stage in their life
 - When mental health condition affect 20-25% of our workplaces at any time
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EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

PROACTIVE OPTIONS TO ADDRESSING PSYCHOSOCIAL RISKS

- InjuryKINNECT: 24/7 injury notification line, access to Dr and certification and assessment of risk of ongoing work absence.
- Injury Notification lines and risk rated early access to recover at work services reduces the **mean lost days by 50%** and has **30% lower claims costs** in Australia (Nicholas and Linton,2019)
 - <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31414346>

What if we shift it upstream....what if rather than when there is an injury or notification, there was a service to assess psychosocial concerns and connect with the right service. A health concierge service

CAREKINNECT

- 24/7 manned by health professionals
- Identifies, assesses and mitigates the risk of psychological distress
- Sits costs of interventions with community services and management plans with employer and worker
- Increases health literacy and locus of control of worker
- Ties back to work
- Normalises concern by connecting with services and action plans
 - GP and local health resources
 - On line resources (Black Dog)
 - Competency based training
 - EAST: Easy Attractive Social Timely

SUMMARY

- Psychosocial hazards are high in passenger transport
- As essential workers your staff will have a more direct relationship to COVID 19 distress
- Working from home and COVID 19 has fast tracked removal of the distinction between work related and personal related distress
- Consideration of a telehealth approach to identifying assessing and mitigating these risks



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