

Psychological Health in the Workplace – Carewest's Journey

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Outcomes

- Understand why Carewest decided to focus on the psychological health of its workforce.
- How we started this work.
- Resources available for any employer.
- Share some of our learnings and experience.

Who is Carewest?

- Calgary's largest public provider of continuing care services
- Wholly-owned subsidiary of Alberta Health Services
- 13 locations, 1,400 beds plus community programs.
- 5000+ clientele every year
- 2,700+ employees

A Definition of Psychological Health

Our ability to think, feel and behave in a manner that enables us to perform effectively in our work environments, our personal lives and in society at large.

Rising Trend


The most common psychological health concerns in the workplace are

- Anxiety
- Depression

Canadian Experience

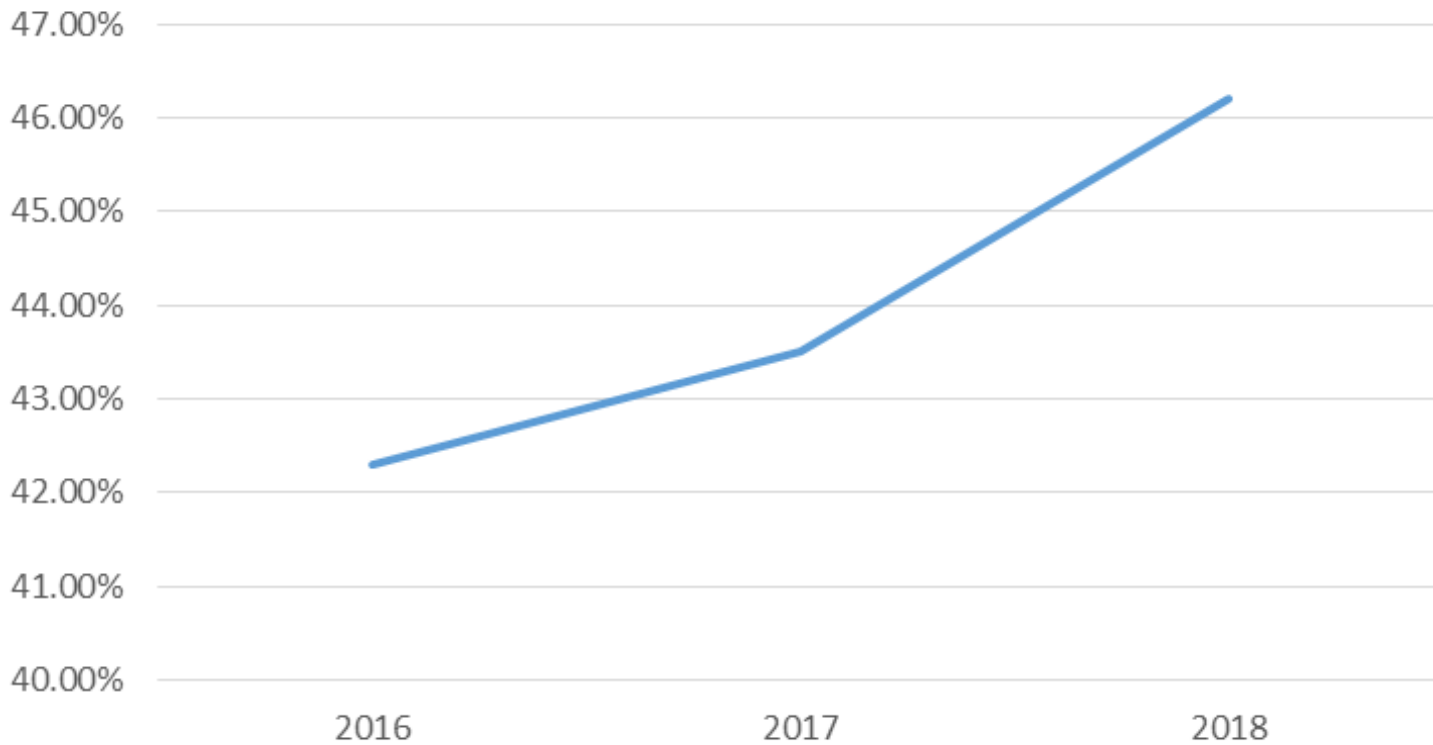
Estimated 1 in 10 Canadians have a diagnosable mental disorder in any given year and 1 in 5 will experience one in their lifetime.

Canadian Experience

- 1998 - cost of mental health problems to the Canadian economy = \$14.8 billion/year.
- Current estimates \$35 billion/year. 
- 1/3rd \$ come from public health care; 2/3rd from employer benefit plans.
- Mental health problems are the fastest rising cause of disability claims & are expected to be 50% of all disability claims over the next 5 years.

Carewest Experience – Employee & Family Assistance Counselling

Rise in Psychological Factors Claims



Carewest Experience

Top areas of EFAP counselling (3 year average)

Depression	7.8%
Anxiety	8.8%
Stress	12.4%
Family	15.2%
Marital	19.1%

Carewest Experience – Disability Claims

DI claims for Mental Health:

38 claims of this nature in 2018

Average lost time from work 80 days (16 weeks)

Call to Action

LEGAL

- Current & emerging legal & regulatory mandates
- Every reasonable effort principle
- Changing legal tolerance

BUSINESS

- Sick time costs
- Premium costs
- Costs of treatment
- Productivity - presenteeism

ACTION

HEALTH

Evidence of the impact of workplace factors on employee mental health

Common Causes in the Workplace

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Personal conflict
- Unreasonable work demands
- Lack of even minimal control over workload and work pace

Common Behaviours in a Positive Workplace

- Fairness
- Civility
- Respect – regardless of power status

The Carewest Journey

- We knew some of this data & context.
- In the “wondering what to do phase.”
- Low priority.
- Unclear path forward.
- A hidden issue so not a lot of support for action.

The Happenstance for Carewest

- Trend draws the focused attention of Great West Life
- Convergence of COO, HR, EH&S and site operational leadership's interest.
- Most employers unaware of resources available and the steps to action seem daunting.
- Opportunity for a pilot project.

Pilot

Led by GWL and using mostly Guarding Minds @ Work Resources.

- 1 urban hospice
- 1 urban primary care network
- 1 rural acute care health center
- 2 urban continuing care operators

3 year pilot – assess; create, strengthen & implement; evaluate.

Carewest pilot at 3 of 13 work sites

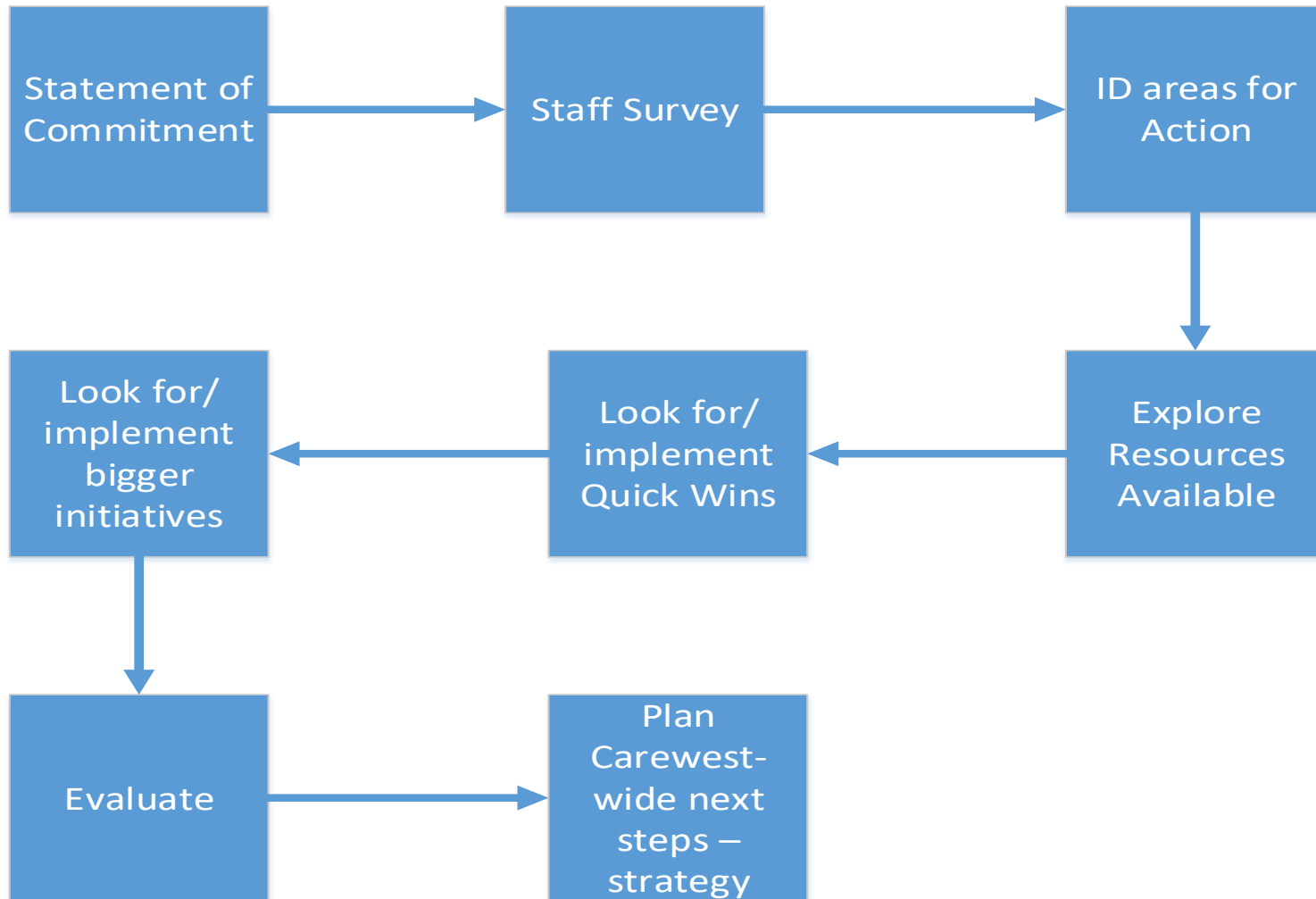
Guarding Minds @ Work

- Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health and Addiction (CARMHA) within the Faculty of Health Sciences at Simon Fraser University
- Based on extensive research, including data analysis of a national sample and reviews of national and international best practices, as well as existing and emerging Canadian case law and legislation.
- Guarding Minds at Work is available to all employers - large or small, in the public or private sector - at no cost.

13 Psychosocial Factors

1. Psychological Support
2. Organizational Culture
3. Clear Leadership & Expectations
4. Civility & Respect
5. Psychological Competencies & Requirements
6. Growth & Development
7. Recognition & Reward
8. Involvement & Influence
9. Workload Management
10. Engagement
11. Balance
12. Psychological Protection
13. Protection of Physical Safety

Steps to our process



Employee Health, Safety and Wellness Statement of Commitment



At Carewest, we believe in the importance of the health, safety and psychological well-being of our most valuable assets, our employees. Management is committed to creating a healthy work environment, supporting appropriate training, fostering a positive attitude towards physical health, psychological health, safety and wellness. Each of us share the responsibility to be aware of and comply with Carewest health and safety policies, procedures and relevant government legislation and regulations. Everyone, including volunteers and contractors has a responsibility for their own personal wellness, personal safety and the safety of their co-workers which contributes to a healthy, safe and respectful workplace. Achieving a healthy and safe environment can only be achieved through the collaboration, co-operation and action of all.



Initial Scan

- Short – 6 questions to get a basic temperature check on your organization
- We did it with our managers at our pilot sites.
- Could do it with all employees.
- We skipped to larger survey for 600 employees

Psychological Factors	About	Assessment	Action		Evaluation
Fillable PDF		Organizational Review Worksheets	Suggested Responses Documents*	Action Planning Worksheets*	Evaluation Worksheets*
PF1: Psychological Support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PF2: Organizational Culture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PF3: Clear Leadership & Expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PF4: Civility & Respect	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PF5: Psychological Competencies & Requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PF6: Growth & Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PF7: Recognition & Reward	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PF8: Involvement & Influence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PF9: Workload Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PF10: Engagement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PF11: Balance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PF12: Psychological Protection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PF13: Protection of Physical Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sample of questions – Civility & Respect

Please answer the questions below with respect to your workplace:

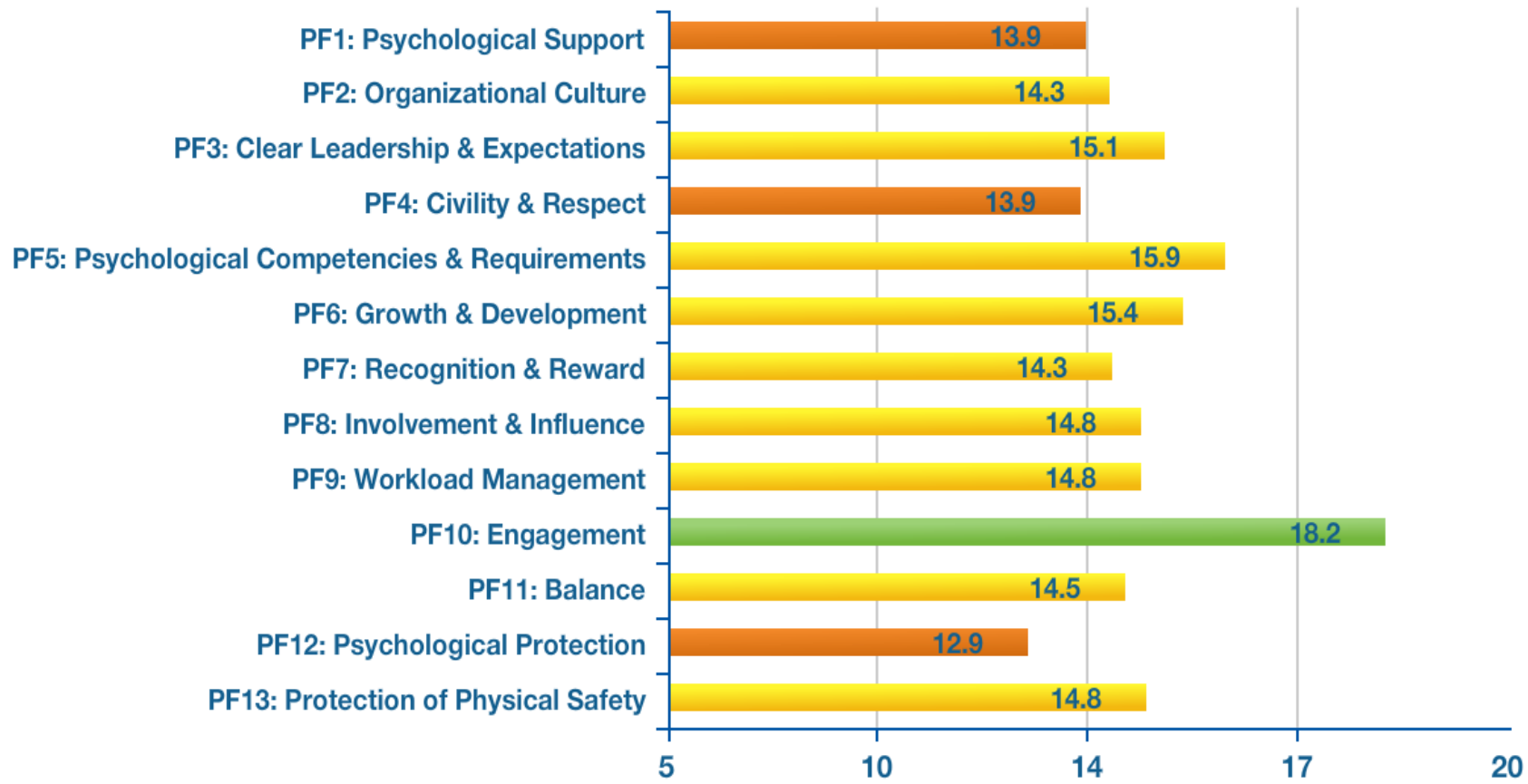
	Strongly Agree 4	Somewhat Agree 3	Somewhat Disagree 2	Strongly Disagree 1
1. People treat each other with respect and consideration in our workplace.				
2. Our workplace effectively handles “people problems” that exist between staff.				
3. People from all backgrounds are treated fairly in our workplace.				
4. Unnecessary conflict is kept to a minimum in our workplace				
5. Our workplace has effective ways of addressing inappropriate behaviour by customers or clients.				

Sample questions – Psychological Support

Please answer the questions below with respect to your workplace:

	Strongly Agree 4	Somewhat Agree 3	Somewhat Disagree 2	Strongly Disagree 1
1. Our workplace offers services or benefits that adequately address employee psychological and mental health.				
2. Our supervisors would say or do something helpful if an employee looked distressed while at work.				
3. Employees feel supported in our workplace when they are dealing with personal or family issues.				
4. Our workplace supports employees who are returning to work after time off due to a mental health condition.				
5. People in our workplace have a good understanding of the importance of employee mental health.				

Carewest Benchmark Survey Results



Serious Concerns = 5 to 9 Significant Concerns = 10 to 13 Minimal Concerns* = 14 to 16 Relative Strengths** = 17 to 20

Focused on 3 areas with lowest scores

- **Psychological Support** – a work environment where coworkers & supervisors are supportive of employees psychological & mental health concerns, and respond appropriate as needed.
- **Civility and Respect** – a work environment where employees are respectful and considerate in their interactions with one another, as well as with customers, clients and the public.
- **Psychological Protection** – A work environment where employees' psychological safety is ensured

This file includes fillable form fields. You can print the completed form and save it to your device or Acrobat.com.

Highlight Existing Fields

Fill & Sign Tools

- Add Text
- Add Checkmark
- Place Initials
- Place Signature

- ▶ Send or Collect Signatures
- ▶ Work with Certificates



Organizational Review Worksheet

PF1: PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT

OBJECTIVE: A work environment where coworkers and supervisors are supportive of employees' psychological and mental health concerns, and respond appropriately as needed.

What are the benefits of effectively addressing Psychological Support?

- ✓ Improved overall psychological health of employees
- ✓ Increased productivity
- ✓ Reduced costs from work absence (e.g., sick time, disability costs)
- ✓ Successful/sustainable return-to-work

What information may be helpful to refer to or collect?

- Absenteeism/leave data (e.g., sick leave, short- and long-term disability duration and rates)
- Data on costs, reasons and rates for benefits utilization (e.g., on psychiatric drug prescriptions, Employee and Family Assistance Programs [EFAP], psychologists or other regulated mental health professionals), including comparison to previous years
- Existing employee survey data (e.g., on stress/mental health concerns)
- Return-to-work and accommodation policies and procedures

How would you describe your workplace/work unit? (select all that apply; this will help you answer questions below)

Mental Health Awareness

- Supervisors/managers trained to identify and/or support employees with mental health concerns
- Employees provided with education and/or information on mental health issues

This file includes fillable form fields. You can print the completed form and save it to your device or Acrobat.com. Highlight Existing Fields



Training & Development

- Provide education and training to all staff to heighten mental health awareness (i.e., mental health literacy)
- Provide additional education about mental health issues to all staff whose role involves leading, supporting or managing (e.g., human resources teams, health and safety representatives, union representatives)
- Create opportunities for training and/or mentoring to enhance interpersonal and people management skills
- Provide training and/or mentoring to help deal appropriately and supportively with employees who have possible mental health concerns
- Supply the tools and supports (including time and incentives) needed to succeed in supporting employees with mental health concerns
- Review third-party providers of psychological services to ensure adherence to evidence-based practices and focus on work function
- Train or engage peer-support workers focused on mental health issues

Communication

- Encourage respectful workplace communication where psychological health concerns can be discussed safely and openly
- Ensure widespread awareness of company benefits and programs that employees can access to address their psychological health concerns
- Share community or online resources to help with psychological health concerns
- Maintain regular and supportive communication with employees who are off work due to mental health concerns

Formal Policies & Programs

- Provide comprehensive benefits that support employee mental health (i.e., coverage for the following: psychologists or other regulated mental health professionals; Employee and Family Assistance Programs; prescription drugs; and short-term and long-term disability plans)
- Provide or link to early intervention supports and programs for employees who may have psychological health concerns. Note that Employee and Family Assistance Programs are well-positioned to provide early intervention.
- When appropriate, help employees to obtain assessment of psychological function to determine treatment and accommodation needs
- Create "stay at work" policies and programs to assist those who remain at work while dealing with mental

Fill & Sign Tools

- Add Text
- Add Checkmark
- Place Initials
- Place Signature
- Send or Collect Signatures
- Work with Certificates

Some of our actions so far

- Leadership commitment statement
- Standing agenda item for executive meetings
- Additional mental health materials available to staff
- Articles in our internal newsletter, intranet etc.
- Piloted a wellness app - Ikkuma



How are you feeling today?

A green rectangular button containing five mood selection options, each with a white circular icon and a text label below it:

- VERY NEGATIVE (Sad face icon)
- NEGATIVE (Frowning face icon)
- NEUTRAL (Neutral face icon)
- POSITIVE (Smiling face icon)
- VERY POSITIVE (Grinning face icon)



Dashboard (3 notifications)

CHALLENGE JOURNAL ACADEMY

YOUR ACTIVITY	LEADERBOARD	ACHIEVEMENT
2	11	705
HABITS	RANK	POINTS

Tune It Up! (Lightning bolt icon)

Listen to soothing music or nature sounds (at work) to eliminate noise distractions. Apps such as Relax Melodies provide the variety you need.

Done

Habit 1: I consume green leafy vegetables on a daily basis. (6 days left)

Habit 2: I eat a nutrient-rich, low-sugar, and high-fiber breakfast. (3 days left)

100

SUPERHUMAN ZONE

Newsfeed NOTIFICATIONS

What would you like to share today?

POST

Happiness (Lightbulb icon)
1/17/19 1:46 PM
Boost your happy hormones!
Depending on the intensity of the your exercise, your body will reward you with happiness boosting hormones.

Ashley (Upward arrow icon)
1/17/19 12:21 PM
Ashley just reached LEVEL 12 and unlocked 3 more habits! One level a time is how you become SuperHuman!

Jana (Lightning bolt icon)
1/17/19 9:41 AM
Jana just put the **Set Expectations** Power-Up on the big board! Ohhh yeahhh 25 more points!
Schedule something significant in the next month that you will look forward to. If you already have something scheduled, consider this Power-Up complete!



Dashboard | CHALLENGE | JOURNAL | ACADEMY

- I consume green leafy vegetables on a daily basis. 6 days left
- I eat a nutrient-rich, low-sugar, and high-fiber breakfast. 3 days left

SUPERHUMAN ZONE

Implemented Habits %

Category	Implemented Habits %
NUTRITION	0
TOXINS	25
SLEEP	45
STRESS	35
FITNESS	5
BRAIN	15
TIME	25
HAPPINESS	38

My Profile | Team Profile | Company Profile

NEWSFEED | NOTIFICATIONS

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Depending on the intensity of the your exercise, your body will reward you with happiness boosting hormones.

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Where are we now – what next?

- 1 year into pilot. Still exploring all of the resources and ideas within Guarding Minds @ Work
- Need to find ways to implement more meaningful supports for staff
- Find supports that staff can use that do not impact on their time undertaking frontline care
- Use what we learn from this pilot to inform a comprehensive strategy and approach – this is still a first/tentative step for Carewest

Questions?