



Worker Wellness Guidebook:

Employee and Employer Roles and Responsibilities



Thunderbird
Partnership Foundation

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Section A – Background

1.0 Introduction

In 2007 the Assembly of First Nations, Health Canada, and the National Native Addictions Partnership Foundation (NNAPF*) began a process to carry out a comprehensive, community-driven review of substance use-related services and supports for First Nations. The work of this partnership led to the development and endorsement of *Honouring Our Strengths: A Renewed Framework to Address Substance Use Issues among First Nations People in Canada* (2011). The HOS Framework outlines a strength-based, systems approach to addressing substance use and associated mental health issues among First Nations people and identifies the need for a strengthened approach to support worker wellness as a key priority of a renewed continuum of care.

The front-line staff of the National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program (NNADAP) and National Youth Solvent Abuse Program (NYSAP), both in communities and treatment centres, engage in work that can often be complex, demanding, and may involve addressing client issues such as loss and grief, stigma, vicarious trauma, history of substance use and abuse, and physical and emotional burnout. Safeguarding and supporting the mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being of these care providers is essential to providing stable, culturally-competent services and supports to First Nations. A workforce that is certified with the appropriate skills and knowledge, supported by a healthy working environment, and offering competitive wages/benefits/opportunities for worker development is the foundation of quality care for clients.

The need for a *Worker Wellness Guide* had been documented in a range of recent surveys, needs assessments, and

reports produced by stakeholders and is associated with the renewal of NNADAP/NYSAP programming. These consistently emphasized the work demands on addictions workers and the critical need to ensure a healthy balanced work environment. Consistent with the vision of *Honouring Our Strengths*, the objective of this guide is to support Employees and Employers in their respective roles in communities and treatment centres, to create a positive and supportive work environment through better worker wellness care. Research notes that successful approaches to worker wellness are comprehensive in scope, integrated with other human resource programs, and have well

designed implementation strategies based on strong leadership, good communication, and extensive participation.

There is also an increasing recognition that workers in the health and human services field often experience a high level of work-related demands and stressors which mean that they are particularly vulnerable to stress and burnout. The factors that impact on stress, burnout, and job satisfaction are

complex and likely to vary between organizations, teams, and individual workers.

The challenging nature of the work makes supporting workers' wellbeing a priority; healthy workers in a healthy workplace will provide a number of benefits to the Employer including reduced turnover, improved performance, and better outcomes for clients. While addressing issues within the work environment is part of the solution, some aspects are difficult or impossible to change (e.g., transient client populations, unpredictable clients, and heavy client loads). It makes good business sense to ensure Employers and Employees have access to effective strategies to deal with these demands and to assist workers in adopting positive self-care strategies.

"..the objective of this guide is to support Employees and Employers in their respective roles in communities and treatment centres."

2.0 Methodology and Outcomes

There are strengths and opportunities nation-wide that are consistent with competencies described in *Honouring Our Strengths: A Renewed Framework to Address Substance Use Issues among First Nations People in Canada* including services, partnerships, the reflection of cultural practices, and/or the engagement of leadership to support NNADAP/NYSAP's workforce. This *Worker Wellness Guide* is designed to inform both Employers and Employees of their roles and responsibilities in helping to maintain the mental, emotional, and physical health of addictions workers; all staff, whether counsellors or managers, can fall victim to vicarious trauma at some point in their career. This guidebook is meant to strengthen the NNADAP network by helping communities and organizations identify what is needed to address system gaps and worker wellness, especially psychological safety and self-care which were both identified as priorities.¹

The development of the *Worker Wellness Guide* engaged First Nations community workers, NNADAP and NYSAP treatment centre workers and directors, NNAPF's Workforce Development Committee, and was overseen by the NNADAP Renewal Leadership Team. Resources as well as models of worker wellness programs, practices, and policy within treatment centres and communities were requested in the fall of 2012 and these were compiled and incorporated into the document with draft versions of the *Worker Wellness Guide* circulated to stakeholders for feedback.

The guide's development also included dialogue with a range of key partners and drew upon a balance of Indigenous and Western knowledge in order to inform a strategic, system-wide approach (e.g., programming, policy, and others supports) to the promotion of workforce wellness. Dialogue with key partners, including treatment centre and community-based workers, ensured that practices are reviewed for relevance and accuracy. The project's methodology included a process for collecting and sharing strategies that promote worker wellness as well as encouraging key informant interviews with committees in workforce development (e.g., NNAPF, First Nations Health Managers Association), completing a broad environmental scan, a standard literature review, and search relevant to the wellness of health workers. All of this has served to identify strategies, aligned with the *HOS* Framework, that support:

- developing culturally-competent wellness plans for Employees and Employers;
- developing and reviewing healthy workforce policies;
- providing regular events/awards to recognize Employees;
- ensuring Employees and Employers have formal ways to provide and receive feedback; and
- creating plans for Employee and Employer self-care development.

¹ - *Honouring Our Strengths: A Renewed Framework to Address Substance Use Issues among First Nations People in Canada*, Health Canada, Assembly of First Nations and the National Native Addictions Partnership Foundation, November 2011, pg. 67.



Section B – Employee Roles and Responsibilities

3.0 Workforce Self-Care

Honouring Our Strengths provides opportunities for workforce development that speak to many efforts nationwide taking place specific to accreditation, certification, and professional development. The taxing demands on addiction workers make it critical that a healthy work environment exists. Enhanced networking among workers is a means for regional information exchange and networking forums to share effective approaches, enhance service coordination, and encourage formal and informal supportive professional networks between NNADAP and NYSAP Employees nation-wide.

It is not surprising that an organizational culture that takes proactive measures to retain gifted Employees also invests in retention planning – a key factor that supports worker wellness from an Employee perspective. The cost of not supporting worker wellness from an absenteeism perspective has been long documented within Canada², reinforcing the need for progressive human resource planning measures. It influences whether an organization can create a positive and supportive work environment that lends itself to Employee health (both physical and mental) and happiness (emotional) within their job. Although many factors can have a direct impact on retention rates, staff satisfaction with their job, a healthy relationship with a supervisor, and competitive wages are often said to be the most important factors by the Employees within the NNADAP/NYSAP workforce. Supervisors paying recognition to staff and engaging workers in policy development/-decision is also said to encourage retention.³ Other Employer-offered benefits such as an Employee Assistance Program can provide worker wellness support that will help with the stresses of providing complex services at the community level and can reduce Employee burnout. Organizations with a track record of staff-turnover make for less attractive investments by career-minded people.

Specific to personal wellness, *Honouring Our Strengths* identifies two components that differentiate between those responsibilities associated with the Employer and that of self-care, which is described as a responsibility of both the Employer and Employee in the following section.

2 Work-Life Conflict in Canada in the New Millennium - A Status Report, Dr. Linda Duxbury, Professor, Sprott School of Business, Carleton University, and Dr. Chris Higgins, Professor, Richard Ivey School of Business, U.W.O., Final Report, October 2003, pgs. 33- 38

3 Ibid.

3.1 What Is Self-Care?

Self-care is described in *Honouring Our Strengths* as a responsibility of both the Employee and Employer. As the evidence demonstrates, it is critical for staff to manage stress and it is essential that all Employees have a self-care plan. A good self-care plan considers the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs of a worker. As the following sections describe, many treatment centres within the NNADAP/NYSAP network use yearly personal wellness plans in annual performance appraisals to ensure that self-care is part of the workplace. Workshops, training events, and professional development opportunities can promote self-care for staff and is all part of the continuum of human resource management to retain and maintain the health and wellbeing of the addictions workforce.



3.2 Why a Self-Care Guide?

Workplace wellness is a term used to describe workplace health promotion activities and organizational policies designed to support healthy behaviour and worker wellness in the workplace.⁴ Generally speaking, health promotion is defined as “the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve their health.” There is increasing recognition that workers in the health and human services field often experience high levels of work-related demands and stressors; they are particularly vulnerable to stress and burnout.

NNADAP/NYSAP Employers need to build up a level of trust and openness with their staff through good communication to increase Employee morale and commitment to the addictions services. Staff should be involved in helping determine and review organizational and business strategies, ultimately be engaged in the decision-making within the organization, and valued as a contributing member to the goals set by the team. In the rare instance where treatment centres may be too large to accommodate all staff, NNADAP/NYSAP services may choose to defer to having a representative committee engaged in the development of organizational policies and to assist in avoiding and resolving conflict between Employers and Employees. A successful organization uses communication to build constructive employment relations – this includes improved conciliation within the workplace to keep problems from getting out of hand and avoid the need for litigation.

NNADAP/NYSAP services must develop effective policies so that Employees know that they will receive fair treatment for any problems they may experience while at work. HR Policies and Procedures should be developed in consultation with management and staff and reviewed regularly. HR Policies should be considered working documents that are understood and adhered to by all staff, volunteers, and management. Policies and Procedures that are particularly relevant to staff retention are:

- Policies dealing with complaints
- Disciplinary procedures and filing of grievances
- Equal opportunities
- Lateral violence in the workplace
- Drugs and alcohol in and outside of the workplace
- Supervision
- Performance review and appraisal

⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Workplace_wellness

⁵ World Health Organization. Health Promotion Glossary. <http://www.who.int/healthpromotion/about/HPR%20Glossary%201998.pdf>



3.3 Stress and Burnout, Vicarious Trauma, Compassion Fatigue

Professional self-care is an essential underpinning to best practice in the profession of social work. The need for professional self-care has relevance to all social workers in the setting within which they practice. The practice of self-care is critical to the survival and growth of the profession. Yet professional self-care has not been fully examined or addressed within the profession.⁶ The authors of the *Community Team Approaches to Mental Health Services and Wellness Promotion* report present the findings of a review of the evidence base regarding collaborative approaches to community wellness and service provision for mental health and addictions in Indigenous communities. The report notes, “at the local community level, local governance is important to insure engagement but external networking and supervision are essential to avoid burnout and management potential conflicts of interest or ethical issues that arise from working in small communities”.⁷ Specific to burnout, the report notes, “one problem facing people in community wellness teams is ‘burn out’ due to the constant demand for their time and expertise. This can be countered by ongoing training and support programs, as well as by giving appropriate compensation for services rendered.”⁸ Some organizations have specifically developed workplace policies in order to address vicarious trauma and the resulting lateral violence that can follow. These can be helpful to Employees who are seeking recourse or assistance through their respective Employers.

In *Stress and Burnout amongst Indigenous Peoples*⁹, author Crow provides an understanding from an Indigenous perspective regarding stress, burnout, and how these phenomena exist within an Aboriginal worldview and environment. The document also provides a participant perspective, which is supported by statistics on the prevalence of stress or burnout in front line workers, especially supervisors and managers. For example, “Attendance goes

down, personal problems increase such as alcoholism, work avoidance, and people tend to be more irritable or less communicative”. As the analysis of the interviews continued, it became apparent that many causes of stress, as voiced by the respondents, were unique to working in an Indigenous environment. Causes listed by Crow include Skill & Education, Residential School, Organization Vision, Spiritual Leaders, Policies & Procedures, You KNOW the People, Services, Less Pay, Politics, Nepotism, Racism, Indian Time, Culture, and Jealousy with individual descriptions provided for each of these in an Indigenous context.¹⁰ Crow’s work also provides coping strategies in the form of the Medicine Wheel, family support, humour, and future orientated policy and program which are considerations of interest to the individual as well as the entire community. For example:

At the Individual level

- Lifestyle techniques, personal improvement, and other health related activities such as regular exercise, diet, relaxation techniques, time management, getting sufficient rest and sleep, and trying a new hobby are the most frequently mentioned stress reduction approaches

At the Workplace level

- Staff development, changing jobs and role structures, management development, organizational problem solving and decision making, and agency goals and guiding philosophies

At the Organizational, Community, and Reserve level

- Planning for better work environments, providing opportunities to develop special interests, making it easier to work with difficult clients, increasing organizational negotiation skill, relying more on the quality of previous work experiences in selection for professional training, provide more career counseling and professional development, and giving professionals a greater role in the planning of change¹¹

There are also other organizational strategies such as flex time, fitness facilities, improved communication, team building, sabbaticals, day care facilities, stress coaching, stress workshops, Employee assistance programs, and culture sensitivity training and awareness. The culture sensitivity training and awareness would be beneficial to non-Indigenous organizations that are interested in attracting and retaining Indigenous Employees.

6 Professional Self-Care and Social Work, *Social Work Speaks*, pgs. 268-272, 2007.

7 Community Team Approaches to Mental Health Services and Wellness Promotion, *A Report Prepared for Health Canada, First Nations and Inuit Health Branch*, Kirmayer, L. J., et al, *Culture and Mental Health Research Unit, Institute of Community & Family Psychiatry, Jewish General Hospital*, 2003, pg. 6.

8 Ibid, pg. 79.

9 Crow, R., *Stress and Burnout amongst Aboriginal Peoples: Quantitative and Qualitative Inquiries*, School of Graduate Studies, University of Lethbridge, Alberta, September 2004, pg. 13

10 Ibid, pgs. 51 to 54.

11 Ibid, pg. 86.

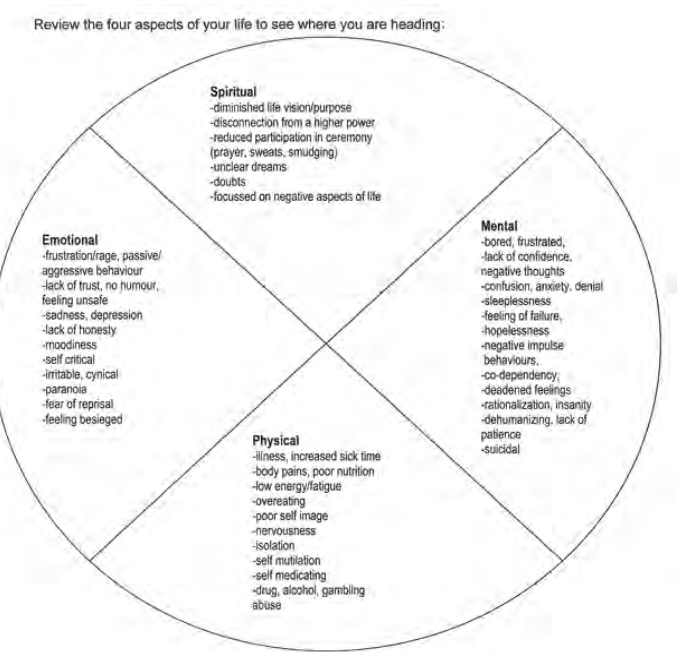
12 With credit to the Ontario Regional Addictions Partnership Committee (ORAPC) NNADAP Worker Guidebook, authored by Nora Bressette and edited by ORAPC committee members.

3.4 How to Recognize Stress and Burnout

Maintaining Personal Wellness

There are times when working with clients or families can be the most rewarding and fulfilling experience of your life. At other times, your job can be the most challenging or frustrating experience and these situations cause stress. Research says that stress is the most common reason that staff leave their employment.

Table 1: Stress and Burnout Signs in the Context of the Four Elements of Wholistic Well-Being¹²



It is absolutely necessary to maintain a personal wellness plan in order to prevent health problems, to be effective in your job, and to prevent work burnout. However, learning how to take care of yourself and maintaining your own personal wellness is your responsibility and your gift to yourself. Here are some tips that you might use in your workplace as you develop your personal wellness plan:

- Laughter is medicine: use it appropriately;
- Deal with feelings appropriately when they come up;
- Take personal responsibility for yourself: be honest;
- Detach when detachment is needed in situations;
- Set boundaries and maintain them;
- Negotiate conflict: try to separate your issues from the other person, do not expect perfection, try to find a win-win solution;
- When you want to control that which you cannot control: let go. Instead, strive for peace and manageability by owning your own power to be who you are;
- Do not tolerate abuse and do not abuse or mistreat anyone else;
- Work at letting go of your fears and developing self-confidence. When you learn from your mistakes and forgive yourself, you have personal growth;
- Choose a job that is right for you;
- Learn what your responsibilities are and stick to them, unless another agreement is made. Make room for great days and not so great days;
- Be kind and caring to people whenever possible, but be assertive and firm when needed;
- Acknowledge your strengths and build on them. Accept your weaknesses and limitations, including the limitation of your power;

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- Strive to stop trying to control and change what is not your business to change. Focus on what is your responsibility and what you can change;
- Provide time for yourself to have gripe sessions to let it all out, but do that appropriately in a way that is meant to take care of yourself and release your feelings, not to sabotage yourself;
- Always work to avoid malicious gossip and other self-defeating behaviours;
- Keep away from competition: strive to be cooperative with a loving spirit. Understand that you may like some people that you work with and dislike others but work to find harmony and balance with everyone;
- Give your best to maintain good working relationships with all your co-workers;
- If you don't know, say you don't know. If you need help, ask for help directly. If panic sets in, address the panic as a separate issue and try not to let your work and behaviour be controlled by your panic;
- Go all out to take care for your work needs by appropriately asking for what you need to fulfill your responsibilities;
- Make every effort to contribute to a healthy teamwork approach and use it as an opportunity to learn how to work cooperatively with others;
- When work feels hectic or you find yourself working with a person who is troublesome, do not make yourself crazier by denying the problem. Accept the situation and work towards peace by figuring out what you need to do to take care of yourself;
- Release your need to be a martyr or rescuer at work: you do not have to stay in situations that make you miserable;
- Instead of sabotaging a system or yourself, plan a positive solution, understanding you need to take responsibility for yourself along the way;
- Don't see yourself as a victim and do work at believing you deserve the best. Practice acceptance, gratitude, love, and faith;
- Do all you can to enjoy what is good each day, solve the problems that are yours to solve, and give the gift of yourself at work;
- Pray and ask for help every day: it is up to you to reach out and ask for help;
- Believe that Creator will guide you through troubled times and trust your inner strength;
- Use your tobacco to ask for direction and pray for others;
- Use your culture, faith, and spirituality to be your guide; and
- When needed, see a traditional healer or psychotherapist.

It is your responsibility to maintain your own health to ensure that you are always present for work with your clients in the healthiest manner possible.



3.5 Strategies to Deal with Stress and Burnout

The Australian government has also produced a number of useful products to assist health workers. In *Surviving Stress with Self-Care: A Guide for Remote Health Workers and their Families*,¹³ authors describe the importance of recognizing an “Indigenous specific response to trauma, and that within this context, trauma can re-open existing wounds from previous events, trigger larger issues / reactions. In these situations, support can be used as an opportunity to heal.” This is critically important to ensure that programs for Employees are representative: “Workplace wellness needs to take a holistic approach to program delivery where by Employers have a mutually beneficial partnership that allows both parties to take and accept responsibility for wellness in the workplace (Hillier et al., 2005)”. The first step in program delivery is to research the specific wellness and culture needs and interests of the target Employee population. Well planned and comprehensive programs are cost effective when the program is matched to the specific health issues of the specific Employee population (Makrides et al., 2007). The World Economic Forum (World Economic Forum, 2007) notes “Employee engagement, a targeted and ongoing communication strategy and the use of incentives/rewards and tailored interventions as critical components to workplace wellness promotion.”¹⁴

In countries such as Australia, the financial impact on hospital-related costs encouraged national policy known as the Implementation Plan for the Healthy Workers initiative. The plan’s objective is engaging and supporting AOD workers to make positive and sustainable behaviour changes that reduce lifestyle-related health risk factors and improve their health with a focus on chronic diseases.¹⁵ Likewise, Australia’s National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA) has launched its new *Indigenous Worker Wellbeing Resource Kit*. The kit is an extension of a broader program of work undertaken by

NCETA on alcohol and other drug (AOD) workers’ stress, burnout, and wellbeing. This resource addresses the specific needs of Indigenous workers in the AOD sector. It identifies high levels of demand and sources of stress, but it also notes the commitment of Indigenous workers and the rewards associated with the work they do. The resource provides practical strategies to improve Indigenous worker wellbeing at the individual, group, organisational, and community levels.¹⁶ However as noted by PricewaterhouseCoopers, “Although the imperative for supporting workplace health is clear, the benefits are harder to quantify for Employers. A suite of collaborative and interdependent actions is therefore required to enable effective workplace wellness. Ultimately, the sustainability of workplace wellness programs at an organisational level will depend on demonstrating a return on investment.”¹⁷

On an international level, work by the World Health Organization¹⁸ provides frameworks and models for workplace health concepts to be discussed along with the interrelationships between work, health, and community. The WHO’s Healthy Workplace Framework and Model includes both content and process, providing reasons for businesses/organizations to care about having a healthy workplace. These reasons are divided into sections on business ethics, business case, and the law.¹⁹ One example is provided by G.S. Lowe writing for Health Canada who “differentiates between the concepts of a ‘healthy workplace’ and a ‘healthy organization’.” He sees the term healthy workplace as emphasizing the physical and mental well being of Employees, whereas a healthy organization has “...embedded Employee health and well-being into how the organization operates and goes about achieving its strategic goals.”²⁰

13 *Surviving Stress with Self-Care - A Guide for Remote Health Workers and their Families*, Third Edition, Bush Support Services, CRANAPLUS, PMB 203, Alice Springs, NT 0872 - Australia, pg. 13.

14 Machen, Roxanne, Cuddihy, Thomas F, Reaburn, Peter, & Higgins, Helen C. (2010) Development of a workplace wellness promotion pilot framework: a case study of the Blue Care Staff Wellness Program. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Health, Sport and Physical Education*, 1(2), pp. 13-20.

15 Implementation Plan for the Healthy Workers initiative, National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health, Queensland Workplaces for Wellness Program Version 4, November 2010.

16 The Resource Kit contains three separate documents plus a CD ROM with electronic copies of the documents. It includes: 1) Indigenous Alcohol and Drug Workforce Challenges: A literature review of issues related to Indigenous AOD workers’ wellbeing, stress & burnout; 2) Indigenous AOD Workers’ Wellbeing, Stress and Burnout: Findings from an online survey; and 3) Stories of Resilience: Indigenous Alcohol and Other Drug Workers’ Wellbeing, Stress and Burnout. For copies of the resources, visit: <http://nceta.flinders.edu.au/workforce/whoare-the-aodworkforce/indigenaod-workers/>

17 Workplace wellness in Australia: Aligning action with aims: Optimising the benefits of workplace wellness, PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2010.

18 Burton, J., WHO Healthy Workplace Framework and Model: Background and Supporting Literature and Practices, Submitted to Evelyn Kortum, WHO Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland, February 2010.

19 Ibid., pg. 13.

20 Ibid., pg. 23.

Research indicates there are four major areas of work-family conflict that all have varying effects on Employee health, organizational health, families, and society. These four broad areas are role overload, caregiver strain, work-family interference, and family-work interference. In general, workers who report high levels of work-family conflict experience up to 12 times as much burnout and two to three times as much depression as workers with better work-life balance.²¹ An enterprise/organization should consider addressing content in four avenues of influence based on identified needs in order to create a workplace that protects, promotes, and supports the complete physical, mental, and social well being of workers. Through these four ways an Employer, working in collaboration with Employees, can influence the health status of not only the workers but also the organization and community as a whole in terms of its efficiency, productivity, and competitiveness. These four avenues are:

- 1 - Physical work environment,**
- 2 - Psychosocial work environment,**
- 3 - Personal health resources in the workplace, and**
- 4 - Community involvement.²²**

Closer to home and specific to community involvement, the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres speaks about the issues around hiring and retaining staff and provides a suggestion of “offering creative benefits. Despite low sector wages, many organizations have found other ways to compensate staff such as flexible work arrangements and wellness planning (for example, supporting an Employee’s personal healing journey through offering paid leave while an Employee attends drug and alcohol treatment). Some agencies noted that they are committed to offering professional growth opportunities such as space for lateral and vertical succession, and annual performance evaluations.”²³

²¹ Burton, J., WHO Healthy Workplace Framework and Model: Background and Supporting Literature and Practices, Submitted to Evelyn Kortum, WHO Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland, February 2010.

²² Ibid., pg. 13.

²³ Advancing the Aboriginal Non-Profit Workforce: Report for the 1st Indigenous HR Gathering, BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, February 2011, pg. 10.

²⁴ Mathieu, E., Transforming Compassion Fatigue into Compassion Satisfaction: Top 12 Self-Care Tips for Helpers, Compassion Fatigue Specialist, WHP-Workshops for the Helping Professions, March 2007

3.6 Self-Care Plans

Stress and burnout are not limited to the health sector. However, specific types of stress can be associated with the work of Employees within the addictions workforce. As described by Mathieu, compassion fatigue is:

“...characterized by deep emotional and physical exhaustion, symptoms resembling depression and PTSD and by a shift in the helper’s sense of hope and optimism about the future and the value of their work. The level of compassion fatigue a helper experiences can ebb and flow from one day to the next, and even very healthy helpers with optimal life/work balance and self-care strategies can experience a higher than normal level of compassion fatigue when they are overloaded, are working with a lot of traumatic content, or find their case load suddenly heavy with clients who are all chronically in crisis.”

In *Transforming Compassion Fatigue into Compassion Satisfaction: Top 12 Self-Care Tips for Helpers*²⁴, author Mathieu notes 12 self-care tips for those who can relate to the above self-diagnosis of compassion fatigue. “The best strategy to address compassion fatigue is to develop excellent self-care strategies”, with a dozen self-care tips for health sector Employees, including:

- 1 - Take stock of what is on your plate to ensure demands for your time and energy are balanced.
- 2 - Start a self-care collective by being proactive in the promotion of self-care amongst your peers.
- 3 - Find time for yourself every day and rebalancing your workload to ensure commitment.
- 4 - Delegate and learn to ask for help at home and at work to ease pressures.
- 5 - Have dedicated transition time from work to home.
- 6 - Learn to say no (or yes) more often.
- 7 - Assess your trauma inputs and conscientiously manage and minimize.

8 - Learn more about Compassion Fatigue and Vicarious Trauma to recognize symptoms and address with proactive solutions.

9 - Consider joining a Supervision/Peer Support Group.

10 - Attend Workshops/Professional Training regularly.

11 - Consider working part time (at this type of job).

12 - Exercise is a key stress reliever as the evidence demonstrates.

Authors Roche and Pidd note in their summary and implications for a National Workforce Development Strategy as it relates to workforce support and worker wellbeing, “the support of co-workers, supervisors and the work organisation can positively influence worker wellbeing and worker effectiveness. Workforce support is crucial in a work environment such as the AOD field within which high workloads and high levels of work stress are evident. Two important areas for supporting the AOD are effective information management and the provision of adequate infrastructure. A national strategy needs to contain initiatives that provide overall support to the workforce and assist individual organisations to support their workers. These initiatives need to focus, in particular, on worker wellbeing among the AOD specialist workforce.”²⁵

²⁵ Roche, A. M., Pidd, K., Alcohol & Other Drugs Workforce Development Issues and Imperatives: Setting the Scene. National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA), Flinders University, Adelaide, 2010.

²⁶ Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL): Compassion Satisfaction, Burnout & Compassion Fatigue, Secondary Trauma Scales. There are also a number of measures for family caregivers e.g. Caregiver Burden Scale at <http://www.mywhatever.com/cjfwriter/content/41/pe1278.html>

²⁷ Psychological Health and Safety – An Action Guide for Employers, Gilbert, M., and Bilsker, D., Mental Health Commission of Canada and the Centre for Applied Research in Mental Health & Addiction, January 2012.

3.7 Stress Self-Audits

Stress and burnout can be prevented or reduced in the individual worker through such resources as career development opportunities, supportive relationships with colleagues, availability of high quality and supportive supervision, autonomy/opportunity for control, opportunity to use skills, task variety, remuneration, reinforcement, and rewards.

One such self-audit tool is the Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL)²⁶, which assesses your level of compassion fatigue. While therapists were the original target, the measure is used widely with other groups including medical health professionals (particularly nurses), teachers, lawyers, humanitarian workers, social service Employees, public service Employees such as law enforcement, reporters and journalists, juries at trials, and even soldiers and peace keepers. The key to the ProQOL is the possibility of being exposed to another’s potentially traumatizing material as a result of paid or volunteer work. If this relationship can exist, the measure is likely appropriate.

The Mental Health Commission of Canada also has several tools to assist with self-audits.²⁷ *Psychological Health and Safety – An Action Guide*, provides steps for planning and implementing workplace interventions to protect psychological health and safety and is intended for Employers and personnel who are considering programs and policies to improve psychological health in their organizations. Links are also provided to useful tools (e.g. web-based, primarily Canadian, and at no or minimal cost) for supporting its implementation.





Section C – Employer Roles and Responsibilities

4.0 What Kind of Organizations Support Work Wellness and How Do They Support It?

The Worker Wellness Guidebook is an identified priority (Supporting Component – “Workforce Development”) in *Honouring Our Strengths*, which describes how a qualified workforce plays a vital role in the quality of care clients receive. A workforce development strategy can ensure the right mixes of staff with appropriate qualifications and that training is on hand to provide supports and services on an ongoing basis. Key components of an effective strategy includes critical elements to Employee wellness, including Cultural Knowledge and Skills, Education and Training, Worker Certification, Wages and Benefits, and Personal Wellness (Psychological Safety and Self-care).

The hiring and recruitment of qualified staff sets the stage for addressing Employee satisfaction and retention – a key element of Worker Wellness. When an Employer begins recruitment the process involves attracting, screening, and selecting qualified people for employment. The ability of an Employer to attract qualified candidates is often directly linked to how candidates view the organization’s approach to Employee wellness, pay, and benefits provided. In addition, *Honouring Our Strengths* further notes how it is easier for organizations to attract staff if they have well administered and culturally safe/sound HR policies and practices, and decision-making practices that involve staff in decision-making.

4.1 Psychological Safety

As described in *Honouring Our Strengths*, an Employer demonstrates *psychological safety* by encouraging a workplace culture that promotes Worker mental wellness.²⁸

Developing a reputation as an Employer of choice involves having healthy workplace policies, a trusting atmosphere, and resources for Employee assistance that encourages psychological safety and allow Employees to feel comfortable

in the workplace setting, regardless of the day-to-day challenges. Standard additions organizations practices involve using Employee surveys and feedback to enhance Employees’ perception of psychological safety.

Part of promoting worker wellness is acknowledging and addressing vicarious trauma – in this way an organization can promote and sustain the psychological safety of their staff. This is particularly pertinent to NNADAP/NYSAP worker safety due to their personal exposure to vicarious trauma with the frequent exposure to the traumatic

experiences of First Nations clients. This is especially the case when the discussions involve violence and physical abuse, all of which can be linked to the post-traumatic impact the residential school legacy. This demands vigilance on the part of Employers because vicarious trauma generally happens over time and, if it is not addressed, can have a negative impact on the Employee's work and personal life and ultimately their contribution to workplace wellness.

28 Honouring Our Strengths: A Renewed Framework to Address Substance Use Issues among First Nations People in Canada, Health Canada, Assembly of First Nations and the National Native Addictions Partnership Foundation, November 2011/28

4.2 Staff Retention – Becoming an Employer of Choice²⁹

It is important to any organization and community that the right staff are recruited and offered training and opportunities to expand their skills. This will help them retain experienced and skilled addictions worker in the NNADAP/NYSAP program. The cost of recruiting new staff and training is prohibitive for small organizations and a high turnover can affect an organization's image and work culture: they can either be viewed as a place of excellence to seek opportunity and advancement, or as a community overshadowed by nepotism where advancement is limited. The key to workplace wellness and staff retention is to address the primary reasons that surface for Employee dissatisfaction with the workplace which can include boredom with the position, limited opportunities for advancement, lack of appreciation, ineffective co-workers, lack of leadership or poor supervision, unreasonable workload and work hours, and most importantly: insufficient pay.

NNADAP/NYSAP realizes that it is vital to retain staff that remains working in NNADAP, although the increase in certification amongst workers has provided opportunities for advancement and the migration of NNADAP staff as a predictable outcome. To address this challenge, NNADAP/-NYSAP human resources planning efforts should strive towards four goals:

- **Be a model Employer** – offering good working conditions, the ability to balance life at work and outside of the work place, job security, lifelong learning, and fair pay based on the job rather than the classification level of the position.
- **Offer a model career and give staff a range of options** for developing and extending their careers.
- **Improve staff morale** – provide flexible working arrangements and effective policies on issues such as sexual harassment and equal opportunities.
- **Build people's management skills:** improve and strengthen the organization's human resources planning and management approach.

This sets the stage for good HR practices against which NNADAP/NYSAP Employers and staff can measure their organization's HR management approach, and against which NNADAP Employers are being accredited relative to the HR component, which directly influences compensation levels. Achieving a reputation as an Employer of choice means that every staff member will belong to an organization that is:

- **Investing in their training and development**
- **Tackling discrimination and nepotism**
- **Applying zero tolerance toward harassment/lateral violence in the workplace**
- **Improving diversity**
- **Reducing workplace accidents and absenteeism due to sickness**
- **Providing better occupational health and counselling services**
- **Conducting annual staff satisfaction surveys and acting on the feedback**

29 Adapted from Attraction and Retention Human Guidebook for NNADAP/NYSAP Program Managers and Treatment Centre Directors, National Native Addictions Partnership Foundation, January 2012

4.3 Induction and Orientation to the Culture of the Organization

The induction and orientation process helps to settle new and even current Employees in their job and organization. Without an orientation process new Employees can be slow to progress, can make mistakes, and ultimately leave the organization after a short period – this doubles the investment of the organization in wasted time and resources to find a replacement. Typically, all new and existing Employees should have a robust orientation program covering the organization's work culture, philosophy, and the core skills and knowledge that are expected in the workplace. Pre-planning (with the Employee's input) in terms of access or equipment modification may be necessary for an Employee with a disability. Although the provision of training (including orientation training) is not subject to federal or provincial legislation, all Employees must still receive training in health and safety in the workplace. Likewise, Employees should be encouraged to request further orientation and induction training where they feel it is needed.

4.4 Training and Development to Keep Workers Current

Treatment centres and communities can develop training and development strategies, which include a competency-based analysis of the skills for the individual's position as well as the staff team as a whole. Competency-based staff training is a useful tool for organizations to improve staff retention rates as well as their motivation, quality of work, and productivity. Key elements that are promoted include life-long learning and professional development work to provide a model career path for NNADAP staff and a unique opportunity for a treatment centre/community to strengthen local health and education partnerships.

4.5 Improving Work-Life Balance for the Sake of the Family

It is important to recognize that NNADAP workers increasingly want to find a balance between their personal and work lives. Parents with young children, for example, may need flexibility in their work schedules and proactive Employers will recognize this as an opportunity to offer flexible working practices for all Employees for other reasons as well, including pursuing higher education, training, cultural days, and other interests outside of the workplace. Flexible working practices include working part-time, career breaks, flexi-time, job sharing, and working from home. Promising practices of individual and organizational champions through a call to NNADAP/- NYSAP Treatment Centres can be noted under Appendix A.

4.6 Staff Performance Management

Regarding the health and ongoing improvement of the organization/community worker, it is important for all Employees to have regular appraisal and supervision sessions. Performance management systems allow supervisors and Employees to discuss all aspects of the Employee's role in the organization, their past achievements, and their plan for the future. Performance appraisals and supervision should be supportive and developmental, so that any work issues that could lead to an Employee leaving can be addressed and resolved with the mutual interests of both parties in mind. Staff performance management can also be an opportunity to recognize success since job satisfaction and personal recognition are considered important elements to most Employees and often produce greater levels of commitment. For more information concerning performance management and appraisal, see Appendix B and/or refer to *NNAPF'S Human Resources Planning Guidebook* available at www.nnapf.com

4.7 Remuneration or Salary/Wages

Attraction/retention of an Employer's complement of staff and becoming an Employer of choice requires the Employer to assess and determine the level of pay, benefits, and a salary structure that is comparable to not only other organizations but also the region as a whole. Otherwise, once certified, NNADAP treatment centres and First Nations communities may find that they are competing to recruit the same staff as their mainstream counterparts. Demonstrating that the treatment centre/community is paying the going rate according to established salary scales and in comparison with similar jobs elsewhere in your region is important for staff retention. Remuneration should also follow the principle of equal pay for equal work of equal value across the community/treatment centre and, although addictions services may not be able to pay NNADAP staff above pre-set pay scales, Employers can look at other forms of compensation such as extra days off, internal loyalty, and other creative benefits. For more information concerning Salary and Pay Equity, please refer to NNAPF'S *Wage Parity Review of NNADAP – Addictions Counsellor Level I-III & Case Manager/Program Manager* available at www.nnapf.com

4.8 Monitoring Data for Feedback

Recruitment and retention strategies can be informed by numerous opportunities within the organization to monitor its practices and ensure that it is treating everyone fairly. Employers can collect information on almost every aspect of the job/work environment regarding staff satisfaction. This enables Employers to use feedback from an Employee's from the time they are hired until they leave the organization. The information can include Employee satisfaction as it relates to their orientation, opportunities to work flexibly within the organization, training and development opportunities, the promotion of staff, and leaving the organization (this includes critical quality-improvement information that can be gained through initiatives such as conducting exit interviews).

However, in order to be useful the data needs to be regularly collected, analyzed, and the results used to review and improve the processes being used! An example of this is demonstrated in the following short video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7TNxZclJPr4>

A. Intro: A young professional provides a very candid look at the reasons an Employer must be realistic and practical when trying to get the right people on board. Regardless of how thorough your selection process might be, how do you keep the staff that you've attracted from being lured away by competitors? What values will your organization instill that will capture their loyalty?

B. Debrief: What did you find most inspiring about the speaker in terms of his hiring practices and values? What values can you relate to regarding the implementation of your staff retention strategy?





5.0 Best Practices to Retain Effective Workers³⁰

In summary, the evidence supports eight (8) strategies as best or promising practices to retain effective staff:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) Maintaining good supervisor-worker relationships which allows for open communication | 6) Supporting workers' capacity to balance work and family life |
| 2) Providing professional development opportunities to give workers the chance to develop their knowledge, skills, and abilities | 7) Providing new or potential workers with realistic work expectations in regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promotion opportunities• Professional development opportunities• Career mobility |
| 3) Providing challenging and varied work to workers | |
| 4) Ensuring adequate supervision and, specifically, clinical supervision | |
| 5) Offering rewards and recognition for good work | 8) Conducting exit interviews to identify organizational issues or problems ³¹ |

A useful exercise for an organization is to analyze turnover patterns to identify the extent to which turnover results from controllable or uncontrollable factors, while considering organizational strategies to address avoidable turnover.

30 Adapted from Duraisingam, V. (2005) Retention. In N. Skinner, A.M. Roche, J. O'Connor, Y. Pollard, and C. Todd (Eds.), Workforce Development TIPS (Theory into Practice Strategies): A Resource Kit for the Alcohol and Other Drugs Field. National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction (NCETA), Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia.

31 Ibid.

Checklist for Retention Best Practices

Retention Best Practices	Past practices or experience using best practice	Present practices or policies used by the organization	Future policy and procedural consideration
Maintain good supervisor-worker relationships, which allow for open communication.			
Provide professional development opportunities to give workers the chance to develop their knowledge, skills, and abilities.			
Provide challenging and varied work to workers.			
Ensure adequate supervision and, specifically, clinical supervision. Offer rewards and recognition for good work.			
Support workers' capacity to balance work and family life.			
Provide new or potential workers with realistic work expectations in regard to: Promotion opportunities Professional development opportunities Career mobility			
Conduct exit interviews to identify organizational issues or problems.			



5.1 Establishing and Maintaining a Good Supervisor-Worker Relationship

The relationship a worker has with his/her supervisor is one of the most important elements that impacts on retention. Supervisors are considered the 'human face' of the organization and a worker's view of the organization is strongly influenced by their relationship with their supervisor. This includes their commitment to staying with the organization. Workers are less likely to leave an organization and to be more engaged if they have a good relationship and communicate openly with their immediate supervisor.

5.2 Provide Professional Development Opportunities & Balanced Wages

Opportunities for professional development are highly valued by most people. Organizations that provide workers with opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills, and abilities are more likely to retain valued workers. Organizations can use a range of strategies to support workers' professional development (e.g. mentoring, committee or working groups, conference attendance), all of which is best determined through regular performance appraisal scheduling. Refer to Appendix B for sample.

Factors contributing to staff turnover and retention are worth special attention from a policy perspective, given that poorer staff retention at treatment centres is due to very valid reasons. For example, workers that have greater access to training and certification are more likely to have greater career advancement and upward/lateral mobility opportunities, most of which are outside the NNADAP/NYSAP system. The more south the treatment centre, and/or the closer the treatment centre is to an urban centre where greater access to training and supervision is readily available, the greater the likelihood of increased

mobility. Remote community-based and/or treatment centre workers have less opportunity for advancement due to size of staff, supervision, low turn-over due to lack of available jobs to move out to, less access to professional development and training opportunities, and location being relevant variables. Improving access with more resources for either on-site training/supervision through video-conferencing or allocating more resources for off-site training and supervision are steps in the right direction.

The accreditation of the majority of treatment centres has been an important development as standards have pushed organizations towards improved quality of work life. For example, the work force is typically strained by a lack of support for clinical supervision and other requirements needed by many for certification or to stay relevant to clients' changing needs such as knowledge of concurrent disorders and pharmacology. Strategies such as accreditation, core competency training, clinical supervision, support for certification, and networking are all important components for improving the quality of work life and improving the competency of the workforce.

Addictions, mental wellness, and other para-professionals working in First Nation communities and treatment centres all face challenges in attracting and retaining a certified workforce – this speaks to the commonalities that are unique to their circumstances. For example, it is important to acknowledge these critical factors:

- **The cost to First Nations communities and treatment centres with limited budgets when losing Employees that the Employers would prefer to keep**
- **The risk to client and staff safety, relative to treatment outcomes, when downsizing staff is necessary in order to meet salary increases**
- **A First Nation person's on-reserve tax free earnings may be wrongly viewed as a criteria for determining wage parity**
- **The many studies that point to salary and benefits as a critical factor in high staff turnover³²**

32 - Zeytinoglu I. U. et al., Survey Results of the New Health Care Worker Study: Implications of Changing Employment Patterns, McMaster University, 2004.

This last point is worthy of note given the cost of staff replacement. Industry experts note that, on average, an organization can spend a minimum of \$2,500 per Employee in staff exit and recruitment costs alone! Add to this the relative cost of bringing new Employees up to speed with training and other investments in their first year and an occupational group that faces high turnover is doubly impacted with equally high replacement and training costs. Likewise, NNADAP centres have also typically stated that their organizations have or continue to be used as

‘training centres’ for other community programs, with workers who have obtained training moving on to better paying jobs (i.e. child welfare, education, or mental health).

Hence, the money that First Nations treatment centres and communities have to invest tends to lead to ‘crisis hiring’; they have no other practical option but to hire whoever might be available (which may mean minimally qualified individuals), all the while running an ongoing loop of training and orientation sessions at a substantial cost. The end result is a drain on organizational money. A substantial percentage of that money could be put into staff salaries if these organizations were able to stabilize their work force/attraction strategies.

The same principle of competency informed scope of practice and qualifications to match holds true for developing a standardized national salary scale: one that is on par with provincial counterparts and which maintains a balance between minimum wage and professional status and differences in duties/responsibilities between counsellor and management roles. Adequate funding of resources to community based and treatment centre addictions programs are essential to implementing a standardized salary scale. Improving NNADAP wages has been identified as a top priority in all regions for attraction and retention. It is critical to address wage parity in order to:

- **Support job laddering and incentives to advance**
- **Increase the quality of services**
- **Increase the number of evidence-based programs**

- **Reach service levels (and wage parity levels) that are comparable to the provinces**

Regional efforts should be applauded for their efforts to roll out a standardized salary scale that would make the salaries of NNADAP workers comparable with that of the provincial addictions workforce. A lack of funding within regions to support the full implementation of this initiative is noted as a barrier to the implementation of the standardized scale in many regions.

For example, back in 2004 Alberta developed a standardized salary grid to provide First Nations communities and treatment centres with a streamlined approach to salaries within the addiction workforce. A committee composed of people from FNIHB, NNADAP Treatment Centres, and community-based programs developed an incentive-based salary-funding model by streamlining job-descriptions into a single, standardized wage scale. Due to this work, extra funds were given to treatment centres based on staffing levels, salaries, and a remoteness factor. Funding to community-based programs was based on the CWIS (Community Workload Information System) and worker certification and accreditation rates were used as funding incentives.



Proposed salary standardized scales could include features such as:

- A baseline salary for experienced workers with accredited training
- 3% annual salary increase based on satisfactory annual performance reviews
- Statements of qualifications (SOQs) and Job Descriptions (JDs) for all identified levels
- Accreditation, certification, remoteness, and A-based funding criteria helped determined eligibility relative to a community-based (using CWIS) and the treatment centre setting
- Developing a standardized scale and complementary measurement strategies must be done in partnership with the Regional Addictions Partnership Committees and is comparative from region to region

Recommended Strategies to Achieve Wage Parity:

- FNIHB engage all regions to develop recommended scales and complementary measurement strategies in partnership with Regional Addictions Partnership Committees
- Salary scales developed in partnership with Regional Addictions Partnership Committees should include an agreed upon five-year measurement strategy
- National standardized Statements of Qualifications (SOQs) and Job Descriptions (JDs) developed by Thunderbird need to be endorsed and developed for both treatment centre and community-based workers
- Where salaries are comparable to industry standards or have been validated by an assessment of duties and responsibilities, funds could be applied to parity funding supporting attraction and retention strategies such as: Employee benefits/pension, Employee/family assistance programs in the workplace, recognition and reward programs, certification, training to meet core competencies, etc.³³

- Resources for such strategies need to be committed to implementation of the standardized salary scales

33 - Addictions Wage Parity – Regional Consultant Meeting, Power Point presentation, First Nations and Inuit Health Branch, Health Canada, Winnipeg, May 29-30, 2007.

5.3 Provide Challenging and Varied Work

Opportunities to work on important, challenging tasks and projects that can be clearly linked to the success of the organization are valued by most workers and have been linked with increased staff retention. This engages Employees who strive to excel in their positions and who seek out opportunities for learning and advancement. It provides an opportunity for professional development that should be encouraged in the workplace and, in many cases, is without additional remuneration considerations. Clinical and/or program supervision is key to ensuring that demands placed on this eager element of the workforce do not exceed the individual's capacity to do their basic workload and any additional challenges they may be assigned.

5.4 Ensure Adequate Clinical and/or Program Supervision

Particularly relevant to Thunderbird's and NNADAP's focused efforts, adequate clinical supervision has many benefits including job satisfaction and worker retention. Clinical supervision can be a valuable tool for addictions and mental wellness workers to develop professionally under the guidance of a more experienced practitioner. For more information on supervisory skills within NNADAP, please refer to Thunderbird's *Guidebook for Supervisors, Program Managers, and Clinical Supervisors* available at www.thunderbirdpf.org.

5.5 Offer Rewards and Recognition for Good Performance

Providing appropriate rewards and recognition for good performance is crucial in keeping workers satisfied and motivated. If financial rewards are not possible, giving praise and other forms of appreciation may be just as effective. Ultimately, workers want to be appreciated and recognized for the work that they do. While developing a valued and effective Employee reward system can be a challenge, alternatives to financial rewards can help develop team spirit and cohesive management that can benefit the organization in several ways:

- **Public recognition for effort and contribution**
- **Opportunities to work on preferred activities (and/or break from less desirable work)**
- **Time off or flex-time**
- **Support for professional development activities (e.g. financial contribution, time off to attend)**
- **Opportunities to act in higher duties**
- **Attendance of workshops and conferences**

Keep in mind to also ask the ‘experts’ – the staff themselves. Reward systems that are based on workers’ needs and preferences are more effective. Remember though that what one person finds rewarding and satisfying may not appeal to another. The following staff retention strategies have been developed based on good evidence aimed within NNADAP to prevent burnout and to also mitigate the impact of vicarious trauma. The strategies also partner with staff through shared responsibility for personal wellness and preventative health care maintenance:

- **Education Leave – partnership with the Employee equals a maximum of 6 days off with pay for scheduled shifts**

- **Cultural Leave – 5 days per year to attend Traditional Native Ceremonies such as Sweat Lodge, Memorial Feasts, Healing Ceremonies, and Fasting Ceremonies**
- **Employee and Family Assistance Program**
- **Overtime Days – 12 per year whether they are worked or not (factored into shift schedule and agreed to with a modified work schedule – allows for post shift work that is required for managing reporting duties and client care under 4 hours. All time over 4 hours post shift is counted as overtime)**
- **Performance Appraisal system that includes: Employee Self-Assessment, Peer Performance Appraisals, and Supervisor Performance Appraisal**
- **Professional Development – determined by Core Competency Assessments, 3 days allotted per year for Addictions Counsellor, and built into modified work schedule**
- **Annual Staff Satisfaction Survey**
- **Annual Addictions Counsellor Core Competency Assessment**
- **Cultural Competency Assessment**
- **Clinical Supervision – bi-weekly meetings**
- **Staff Recognition Awards – annual presentation of certificates**
- **Staff Service Awards – annual presentation of plaques, key chain, and certificates**
- **Staff Social Activities – annual picnic and Christmas dinners**
- **Employee of the Month Award**
- **Employee Gifts – bereavement and births**
- **Staff Meetings – monthly, with chair rotating to all staff**

- **Staff Trainers – 2 Prevention and Management of Aggressive Behaviour, Cultural Program, 2 ASIST, Resiliency Theory, Reality Therapy Practicum instructors, Emotional Intelligence, CBT**
- **Promotion of staff skills through community presentations**
- **Creative Solutions – staff create proposals for any program/policy changes they see relevant, which are then discussed by all staff before decisions are made for change**
- **Holistic Health Performance Assessment – annually by choice of the staff**
- **Staff Preventative Health Care Maintenance – annual plan**
- **Annual Bonus of 5 vacation days for engaging in preventative health care activities and using 2 or less sick days per year**
- **Emotional Intelligence Core Competency Scale – annual assessment for staff, for board members, and a client specific scale is used at pre and post treatment**
- **Policy Review for Personnel, Treatment, and Health and Safety – reviewed annually by staff through specific committees and ratified by all staff before final approval**
- **Extended Health Care Benefits – 70% paid by the organization and 30% paid by staff**
- **Pension Plan Program – 100% match to Employee contributions, equal to CPP rates**

5.6 Support Work / Family Balance

Balancing work and family commitments is an important priority and a significant challenge for many workers. Organizations that support workers' capacity to balance work and family life are more likely to retain valued

workers. A range of strategies is available to provide individuals with greater flexibility in their working hours. Common strategies include flextime, compressed or extended working weeks, job sharing, and working from home.

5.7 Ensure New (or Potential) Workers Have Realistic Expectations

Providing new or potential workers with specific and detailed information regarding employment conditions is also likely to enhance retention. It is important that NNADAP workers have realistic expectations regarding their work. Discrepancies between actual and expected working conditions and arrangements can result in dissatisfaction and may contribute to turnover. Presenting realistic job previews is one strategy that can be used to ensure new workers have realistic job expectations. Realistic job previews can be given during selection interviews with potential workers and can include information such as:

A description of a typical day on the job

Aspects of the job that have been rewarding and/or difficult for others

Opportunities for advancement and professional development

Unique requirements of the job such as travel, physical demands, shift work, and overtime

Promotion and professional development opportunities

Career mobility

Remuneration, benefits, and pay increases

Organizational policy in regards to recruitment and equal opportunity

Providing a realistic preview is likely to provide a range of benefits that support worker wellness including improved

job satisfaction, increased job performance, reduced voluntary turnover, enhanced communication through honesty and openness, and reduced burnout due to unrealistic job expectations. An example of this is demonstrated in the following short video:

A. Set-up/Intro: View this awe-inspiring video that shows how modern organizations are becoming proactive in order to retain quality staff. As you view the video, consider what values from this team-building scenario you could apply to your workplace.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wg-e75-weVo>

B. Debrief: A key concept of the video is the value of the team – it is only when working together that the goals of the organization can be met with minimal stress and maximum reward. Consider this organizational value as the next lesson plan looks at some of the best or promising strategies to retain effective staff.

Summary Observations

For Employees to be well, Employers must also take a healthy approach to the workplace and its practices. It is no wonder that attracting, recruiting, and retaining staff is a skill as much as it is a science. Becoming an Employer of excellence is a matter of necessity as NNADAP and NYSAP competes with the mainstream for limited health human resources.

With the increased certification of workers and the accreditation of treatment centres, NNADAP/NYSAP community and treatment centre workers are becoming equally eligible for opportunities that may involve both lateral and upward mobility. Such opportunities being made available to NNADAP/NYSAP workers should be lauded as an exceptional step forward in recognizing the potential they can contribute to the addictions field. In order for NNADAP/NYSAP Employers to remain competitive, they need to continue to demonstrate that they are 'Wellness champions and Employers of choice' (Appendix A) by offering opportunities for training and advancement both within the NNADAP system and mainstream.

Likewise, the key to retaining a 'Healthy and Well' Employee is to proactively address the primary reasons that surface for Employee dissatisfaction with the workplace, which can include boredom with the position, limited opportunities for advancement, lack of appreciation, ineffective co-workers, lack of leadership or poor supervision, unreasonable workload and work hours, and (most importantly) insufficient pay. A wellness champion would address this challenge and be a model Employer by offering good working conditions, the ability to balance life at work and outside of the work place, job security, lifelong learning and fair pay based on the job rather than

the classification level of the position. To ensure Employee wellness, it is paramount for the Employer to offer a model career and give staff a range of options for developing and extending their careers. As the evidence demonstrates, such proactivity would improve staff morale by providing flexible working arrangements and effective policies on issues such as sexual harassment and equal opportunities. The above techniques identified in this guidebook are indeed simply skills that, with practice, will serve the organization in both recruiting and retaining staff and, ultimately, being seen as an Employer of choice. We hope this workbook has provided a useful background for better understanding 'wellness' planning for both Employers and Employees alike in a culturally competent and mentally well Indigenous work setting.

For more information concerning the topics in this guidebook, please contact the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation by phone at 1-800-7634714, 519-692-9922, or by email at info@thunderbirdpf.org. Additional Thunderbird Workforce Development courses in this series: **Human Resources Planning Guidebook for NNADAP/-NYSAP Program Managers and Treatment Centre Directors**

Attraction and Retention Guidebook for NNADAP/-NYSAP Program Managers and Treatment Centre Directors

Guidebook for Supervisors, Program Managers, and Clinical Supervisors in NNADAP/NYSAP

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Appendix A - Treatment Centre Responses - Personal Wellness & Champions of Wellness

Treatment Centre, Region	Category 1: Personal Wellness	Category 2: Champion of Wellness
Louis-Georges Fontaine, Centre Miam Uapukun, QC	For my personal wellbeing, I like simplicity because it makes me feel power in my life.	I think the Centre of Maliotenam Uapukun Yum is a champion for wellness, as they encouraged the Accreditation Canada system for all customers, Employees and C.A. and well First Nations of Quebec and Labrador
Marlene, Isaac, Round Lake TC, BC	For my personal wellness, I enjoy gardening because it makes me feel peaceful.	I think Leah Louis, Program Director, Round Lake Treatment Centre is a Wellness Champion, because she has built a strong program team by mentoring and supporting them and through her focus on client wellness. Over the last year she has also focused on her own health and has increased her exercise and healthy food intake.
Ed Azure, Nelson House Medicine Lodge, MB	For my personal wellness, I enjoy participating in traditional Cree ceremonies and like observances because it makes me feel a greater sense of connectedness to my ancestors and this fuels my overall sense of wellbeing.	I think Ms. Carol Hopkins is a Wellness Champion, because she has encouraged active pursuit of culture as "the" means to recovery for Indigenous Peoples. Too, Carol not only promotes this belief through presentations to a host of entities but she has instituted these practises in the Treatment Centre she oversaw for many years. Finally, Carol walks the talk; she lives what she believes and does so not at the expense of contemporary (Western) measures, which provide relief to the suffering alcoholic and drug/solvent addict.
Yvonne Howse, Ekweskeet Healing Lodge, SK	<p>For my personal Wellness I enjoy reviewing the four quadrants and assessing my prognosis and understanding the diagnosis of this assessment tool.</p> <p>I totally enjoy sweats and ceremonies, I feel renewed and replenished and ready for the week or sometimes a month.</p> <p>I totally enjoy smudging; it gives me clarity and helps me to understand the processes I may encounter with other people I come in contact with.</p> <p>I am a firm believer of living the traditional natural laws we are given as Neyho (Cree) people.</p>	<p>My champions are my children and grandchildren, and my sister Danielle, she is a determined loving human being who sees the beauty in all people and loves life, she is intelligent, patient and lives a good life. She is a model for all our grandchildren, Danielle will take all the grandchildren to the ceremonies ad enjoys being there with them.</p> <p>Danielle Ewenin works at the Kawacatoose First Nations, I love and respect her dearly. Danielle stands for what she believes in and walks her talk.</p>

Treatment Centre, Region	Category 1: Personal Wellness	Category 2: Champion of Wellness
Lucie Cleary, Centre de réadaptation Wapan, QC	For my personal wellbeing, I like to change clothes when I arrived at home because it makes me feel better, it makes a break at my work, at home I'm not an advocate. I leave my work at the office and at home I am a mother and wife first.	I think the Native Friendship Centre of La Tuque is a champion for wellness as they have all kinds of activities for wellness. E.g.: screening tests, information sessions, "Création nuits blanches", etc. They have several projects for the well being of urban Aboriginals.
Zelda Quewezance, Saulteaux Healing & Wellness Centre, SK	<p>For my personal wellness, I enjoy golfing because it makes me feel like I have something physical to do now that I am 50+.</p> <p>For my personal wellness, I enjoy learning and teaching traditional medicine gathering & uses because it makes me feel like I have something to share, that I also want to pass on to someone else who can benefit in many ways and in turn pass it on (keeping the knowledge alive).</p>	I think Saulteaux Healing & Wellness Centre Inc. (SHWC) is a Wellness Champion, because they have encouraged the promotion of Cultural & Language as the basis for their "Saulteaux Model" Program, which takes a "Best Practice" translates it to & from Saulteaux Language to teach a way of life that is alcohol & drug free, done by Elders then, made to bridge the gap via computers & available to Youth & others who want to change their way of life &/or learn about their culture & language. (It is easier to prepare boys and girls than to repair men and women.) SHWC won the Sk NNADAP Innovation Award 2010 their "Saulteaux Model" approach.



Appendix B - Employee Performance Appraisal Form (Sample)

Employee Performance Appraisal

Name of Organization/First Nation: _____

Policy reference: _____ Date: _____

Position sample: Addiction Specialist Coordinator

From (date): _____ To (date): _____

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of incumbent: _____

Job Title/Level: _____

Years Experience: _____

Date Started: _____

Assignment is :

Full time: _____ Part-Time: _____ Term: _____

Project/program name: _____

Immediate Supervisor: _____

Date of last evaluation: _____

Date of this evaluation: _____

Additional Information: _____

B. KEY PROJECT/OBJECTIVES/COMMITMENTS BEING WORKED ON:

C. INDICATORS OF PERSONAL QUALITIES

	Does Not Meet Expectations	Needs Improvement	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Not Applicable
1. Is neat and well groomed					
2. Is efficient and well organized					
3. Is punctual and reliable					
4. Maintains an acceptable attendance pattern					
5. Is cooperative and collaborative					
6. Is professional and ethical					
7. Enthusiastic and optimistic					
8. Demonstrates initiative					
9. Is considerate of feelings of others					
10. Is a team builder/player					
11. Seeks Direction as required					
12. Works within allocated budget					

D. COMMUNICATION SKILLS

	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident	Not Applicable
1. Maintains proper lines of communication with staff and members of the community					
2. Able to speak, read, write, spell and listen					
3. Has good problem-solving skills					
4. Provides administrative support to and communicate regularly with the Chief and Council or governing body to keep them well informed on all matters pertaining to the operations of the NNADAP/NYSAP program					

E. SPECIFIC AREAS OF INVOLVEMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Established and maintains good working relationship with Chief and Council/governing body, Band Program Personnel, Community Based Human Resources, and community members to ensure efficient networking:

	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident	Not Applicable
a) by participating in meetings and workshop facilitation					
b) by distributing and interpreting appropriate information					
c) by being aware of other programs, philosophies, objectives and resources					

2. SYSTEMATIC ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM

Maintains systematic administrative system for efficient accessibility to case files, written resource material, administrative reports, correspondence, budgetary information, and reports:

3. DOCUMENTATION AND RECORD KEEPING

Completes necessary documentation as required by Chief & Council/governing body, funding agencies, referral agencies, and regional agencies:

	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident	Not Applicable
a) by assuring completion and authorization by Chief & Council/governing body of financial reports for First Nation and Inuit Health Branch with copies to the Portfolio Councillor and Tribal Council NNADAP Coordinator according to the Contribution Agreement (CA) requirements					
b) maintaining relevant statistics and completing Community Profile of Addictions					
c) by completing and submitting required Activities Report to the Director of Operations and NNADAP/NYSAP Committee					
d) reviewing year-to-date expenditures quarterly and identify projected year-end variance					
e) completing required reports/evaluation and annual work plan on timely basis as per time frame outlined in CA					

4. INFORMATION, PARTICIPATION, FACILITATION AND TRAINING

Participates in information programs which facilitate public awareness and prevention or alternatives to alcohol and drug dependency and problem gambling:

	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident	Not Applicable
a) by keeping abreast with educational material (periodicals, articles, newsletters, kits, etc.)					
b) sessions, etc. within the community membership including youth and the school					
c) by assisting in establishing and maintaining community groups and recreational activities which promote positive and constructive use of leisure time, including the promotion of traditional, cultural values, and Spiritual activities					
d) by promoting by-laws and following procedures to inhibit illicit use of addictive substances, underage drinking, driving while intoxicated, illegal drugs, etc.					

5. COUNSELLING SERVICES

Provide counselling services to individuals and groups:

	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Seldom Evident	Not Evident	Not Applicable
a) by focusing on preventions strategies rather than interventions					
b) by updating counselling skills as needed					
c) by maintaining a work schedule that identifies specific times for availability for 1-1 counselling					
d) by maintaining confidential case files on individuals and or groups					
e) by ensuring clients' confidentiality					
f) by keeping a schedule posted for walk-in appointments					
g) by being sincere, caring, respectful, and honest to client and co-workers					
h) by assessing clients' use of addictive substances – using the SASSI tool and other assessment processes and assisting them in developing a treatment plan					
i) by making proper referrals to treatment centres and ensuring adequate follow-up services to client					
j) by being aware of tradition and spiritual services/resources and of the process of referral in the continuum of care					
k) by working with treatment facility, clients, client's family, and resource team in developing a treatment plan in the continuum of care					
l) by maintaining regular follow-up activities in the continuum of care					

6. ADHERENCE TO RELEVANT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Always Evident
Usually Evident
Seldom Evident
Not Evident
Not Applicable

a) by being a good role model

b) by maintaining an addiction-free lifestyle

7. PURSUES THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES RELEVANT TO HIS/HER RESPONSIBILITIES:

Always Evident
Usually Evident
Seldom Evident
Not Evident
Not Applicable

a) by researching, adapting, and developing a professional training plan for him/herself in consultation with and approval by the Chief and Council/governing body

b) by sharing gained knowledge and skills with NNADAP/NYSAP Committee and with key program personnel and staff of the Band, thereby increasing motivation of healthy lifestyle choices in the community

8. WORKLOAD MANAGEMENT

a) by maintaining a working schedule that reflects priorities and the NNADAP/NYSAP Plan

b) by providing feedback to the supervisor, regional worker, training instructor, and the committee

c) by attending meetings as required

9. OTHER RELATED DUTIES AS MAY BE ASSIGNED, INCLUDING:

a) advising and making recommendations to the probationary and parole personnel on specific cases – upon request by client

b) advising and making recommendations to Chief and Council/governing body on NNADAP/NYSAP Program

c) accessing other available resources (human, monetary, and advisory) as appropriate and making appropriate follow-up

F. INDICATORS OF SUPERVISION EXERCISED

Always Evident
Usually Evident
Seldom Evident
Not Evident
Not Applicable

The NNADAP/NYSAP Coordinator aptly supervises the various positions that report directly to him/her

G. EVALUATOR'S RECOMMENDATION REGARDING EMPLOYMENT STATUS:

1. Continue employment in the same position: _____
2. Continue employment in new or other position (indicate): _____
3. Placed On Notice - From (date) _____ to (date) _____
4. Placed On Second Notice - From (date) _____ to (date) _____
5. Termination of Employment effective (date) _____

EVALUATOR'S SUPPORTING STATEMENTS:

What training or Professional Development Courses do you wish to take this fiscal year? Indicate course title, who is offering it, and the cost:

Indicate what your supervisor/director of operations can do to assist you in reaching your work objectives (be specific):

H. EMPLOYEE'S COMMENTS:

I. SUPERVISOR'S COMMENTS:

J. EMPLOYEE'S SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

K. SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

