

April 7, 2017 is World Health Day, So Let's Talk About Depression



April 7, 2017 is World Health Day. This year's theme is 'Depression: Let's Talk.'

Depression is an illness characterized by persistent sadness and a loss of interest in activities that you normally enjoy, accompanied by an inability to carry out daily activities, for at least two weeks.

In addition, people with depression normally have several of the following symptoms:

- A loss of energy;
- A change in appetite;
- Sleeping more or less;
- Anxiety;
- Reduced concentration;
- Indecisiveness or restlessness;
- Feelings of worthlessness, guilt or hopelessness; and
- Thoughts of self-harm or suicide.

Depression causes mental anguish and impacts people's ability to carry out even the simplest everyday tasks, including the ability to earn a living. At worst, depression can lead to suicide, now the second leading cause of death among people ages 15-29.

But depression can be prevented and treated. A better understanding of what depression is, and how it can be prevented and treated, will help reduce the stigma associated with the condition, and lead to more people seeking help.

What can employers do? The World Health Organization has posters you can display in the workplace and handouts you can give workers on various aspects of depression. The WHO also has a guide to the essentials of the campaign that you

can use if you want to get your workplace involved.

In addition, consider training managers and workers in mental health first aid so they can spot problems early and provide initial help. (Learn more about mental health first aid officers and whether your workplace needs them.)

The OHSInsider.com has resources, articles and tools that you can use to address depression and other mental health issues, including:

- An infographic on depression in the workplace
- A discussion of a study on mental health issues and workers
- A handout for workers on workplace stress
- Tips for improving workers' mental health.

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