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CANADIAN
ARMED FORCES

Assessment-to-Solutions Approach to Psychological Health and Safety in Defence

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Introduction

- Strong, Secure, Engaged – Canada’s Defence Policy
 - Emphasizes the importance of personnel to Defence
 - Commits to a comprehensive approach to care referred to as Total Health and Wellness
- The Total Health and Wellness Strategic Framework
 - Our focus is on the Psychosocial Domain
 - Reflects a growing body of knowledge related to workplace well-being
 - negative workplace factors linked to adverse outcomes, including psychological and physical disturbances
 - in turn, poor employee health accrues costs to the organization



Psychosocial Work Environment

- *Canada's National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace*
 - framework to help organizations identify, control and eliminate psychosocial hazards, and proactively set conditions for psychological health
 - 13 factors to consider



Positive Psychology Approach

- Complete mental health:
 - a state where individuals feel high levels of positive emotion, rather than the mere absence of mental illness
- Focus on interventions to:
 - increase the positive experience of work
 - instead of solely reducing stressors



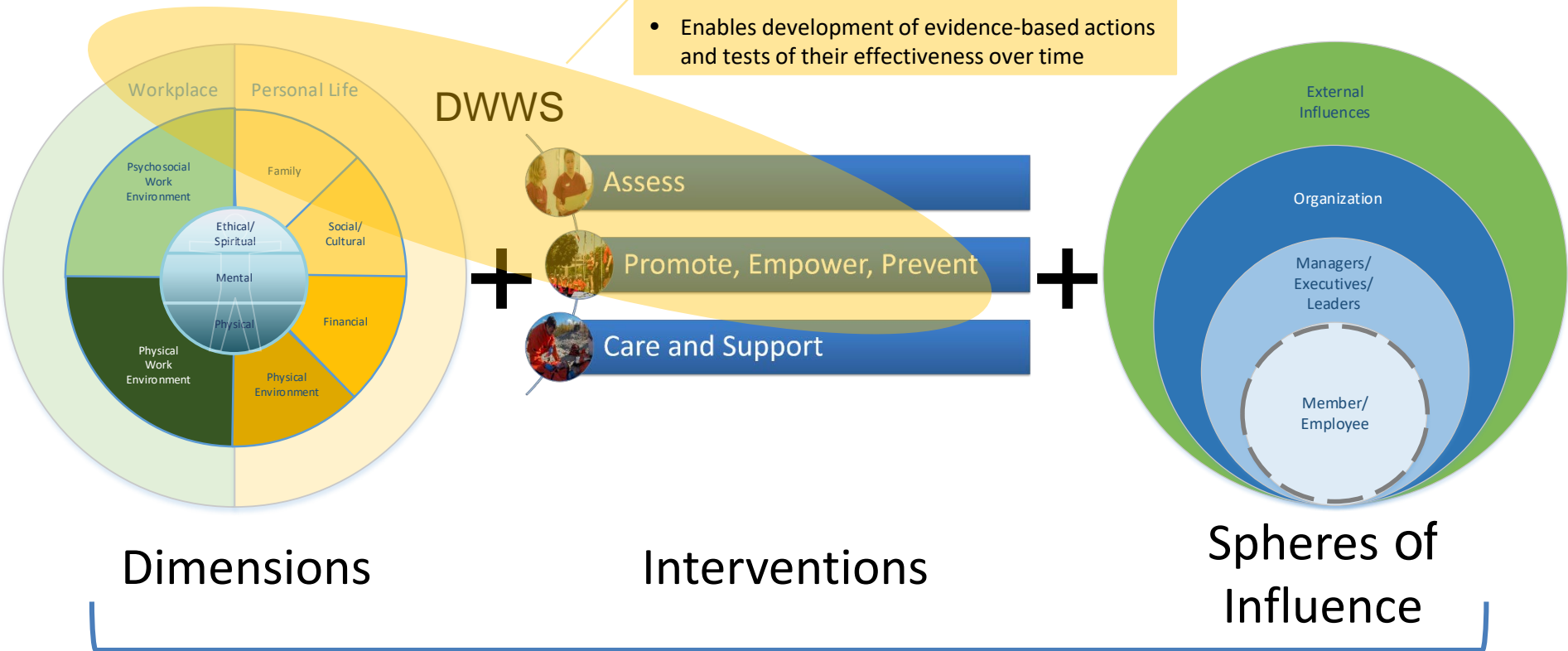
The Defence Workplace Well-being Survey (DWWS)

- A scientifically rigorous tool that aligns with Canada's national standard for psychological health and safety in the workplace
- Equivalent in English and French
- Will provide a baseline for psychological health and safety across the Defence Team and by organization
- Will enable organizations to engage key stakeholders and change agents in initiatives focused on the wellbeing of their members



From assessment to solutions in health and wellness

- Precise measurement provides accurate results
- Key influence areas derived empirically
- Enables development of evidence-based actions and tests of their effectiveness over time



Total Health and Wellness



The DWWS measures workplace psychological health and safety



Resilience Factors

- Meaningfulness
- Autonomy
- Impact
- Competence
- Role clarity
- Transformational leadership
- Physical safety
- Psychological safety
- Relatedness
- Civility & respect
- Organizational support
- Group culture
- Recognition & reward



Risk Factors

- Work overload
- Work-family balance
- Job stress
- Abusive supervision



Indicators of Well-being

- Morale
- Engagement
- Job burnout
- Psychological distress
- Intentions to leave



Stakeholder Engagements

- Commenced 8 months prior to survey administration
- Solicited commitment to post-survey action to support well-being in the workplace and prevent harm
- Endorsed by senior leaders and bargaining agents
- Sought engagement from Occupational Health and Safety stakeholders (e.g., Unions, Bargaining Agents), and Total Health and Wellness stakeholders



The Solutions Space

- Primary interventions: target the source of the stress (i.e., stressor reduction)
- Secondary interventions: target individuals' abilities to cope with their stress
- Tertiary interventions: focused on treating problems that have progressed beyond prevention
- We will focus on *primary interventions* that:
 - target stressor reduction; and
 - increase the level of positivity experienced at work



Discussion

Summary

- Benefits of the assessment-to-solutions approach include its ability to address the “*so what*” question for the organization
- We will work with organizational stakeholders to formulate action plans that are specific and grounded in existing organizational initiatives



Discussion, Cont'd

Next steps

- Use the DWWS results (highlighting areas of strength and concern) to establish the initial baseline for the THW strategy
- Develop programs and tools to help leaders and Defence Team members support and enhance health and wellness in the workplace