

What is Psychological Safety & Health?

There's a new idea in occupational health: this idea is *psychological safety and health*. Psychological safety and health is about safeguarding the psychological health of employees.



**DID YOU
KNOW?**

A psychologically safe and healthy workplace is one that promotes employees' psychological well-being and does not harm employee mental health in negligent, reckless or intentional ways.

Psychological health consists of our ability to think, feel and behave in a manner that enables us to perform effectively at work, at home, and in society at large. **Psychological safety** is a bit different – it deal with the risk of injury to mental well-being that a worker might experience. **Improving the psychological safety of a work setting involves taking precautions to avert injury or danger to employee psychological health.**

It is important to note that psychological health problems occur on a *spectrum*, from mild psychological difficulties on one end (low mood, sleep difficulties, excessive worry) to severe psychological disorders on the other (schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, severe depression). Because milder psychological health problems are far more common in the workplace, they account for a larger proportion of the negative impacts on employees and employers. So when we speak of protecting psychological safety and health we're not talking only of trying to reduce the impact of severe mental disorders – we're primarily talking about reducing the level of less severe psychological problems that have large cumulative effects on the workplace.