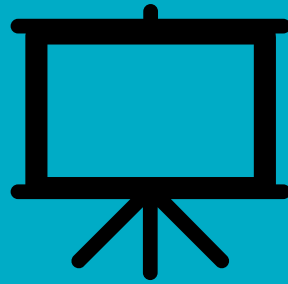


# Welcome to the webinar

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Test your audio before we begin. Directions are in the handout section.



The presentation is in the handout section. Please download during the webinar.



Use the chat/question feature for commentary and questions.



# Assessing the Psychological Safety of Your Workplace

Cathy Barrett Brinson  
Senior Health and Safety Advisor  
Prevention Services

January 26, 2024

Small steps can lead to big changes in your organization

# Psychological Health and Safety

Virtual Learning Series  
January 22 - 26, 2024

Join us for a series of webinars focusing on mental health  
and psychologically healthy and safe workplaces

**WorkplaceNL**



Suicide Crisis Helpline

Get Help

Understanding Suicide

Menu

# You deserve to be heard. We're here to listen.

A safe space to talk, 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

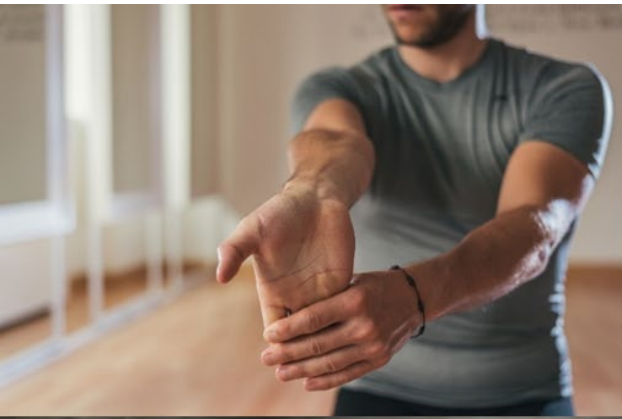
Call 9-8-8

Text 9-8-8

What happens when you call or text

*If your safety is at risk, call 9-1-1 right away.*





# Housekeeping Items



# Today's Topics

- The responsibility to create a psychological safe workplace
- What are psychosocial hazards
- Common psychosocial hazards
- The assessment process
- Common control measures
- Tools to help



# Psychological Safety

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Demonstrated when workers feel safe to ask questions, seek feedback, report mistakes or propose an idea without fearing negative consequences





**Psychosocial hazards** are elements of the work environment, organizational and management practices that pose a risk to an employee's mental health and well being.





All professions and workplaces  
have psychosocial hazards.

## Poll Question

Does the process for hazard identification and control in your workplace include assessing psychosocial hazards?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Employers are responsible to have a system in place to identify, assess and control workplace hazards.





Organizations and workers have a shared responsibility for health, safety and well-being at work.

To effectively manage psychosocial risk:

- Leaders must be committed and participate to be successful
- Needs and expectations of workers must be understood.



**Identify**  
responsibilities for managing  
psychosocial risks



**Empower**  
workers to identify and manage  
psychosocial risk



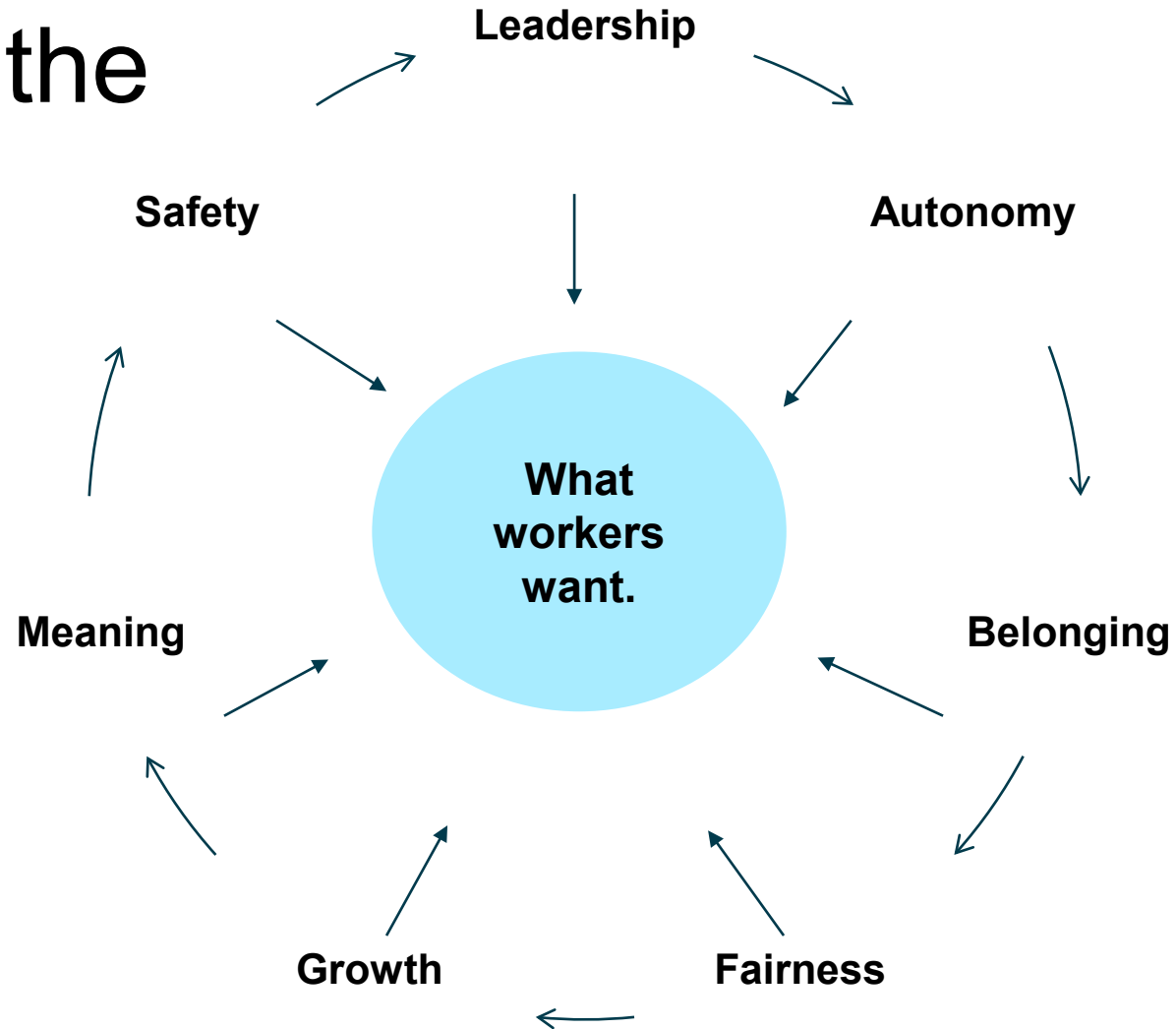
**Commit**  
to managing  
psychosocial risk and  
well-being at work



**Provide**  
resources needed and  
make them available



# Understand the worker



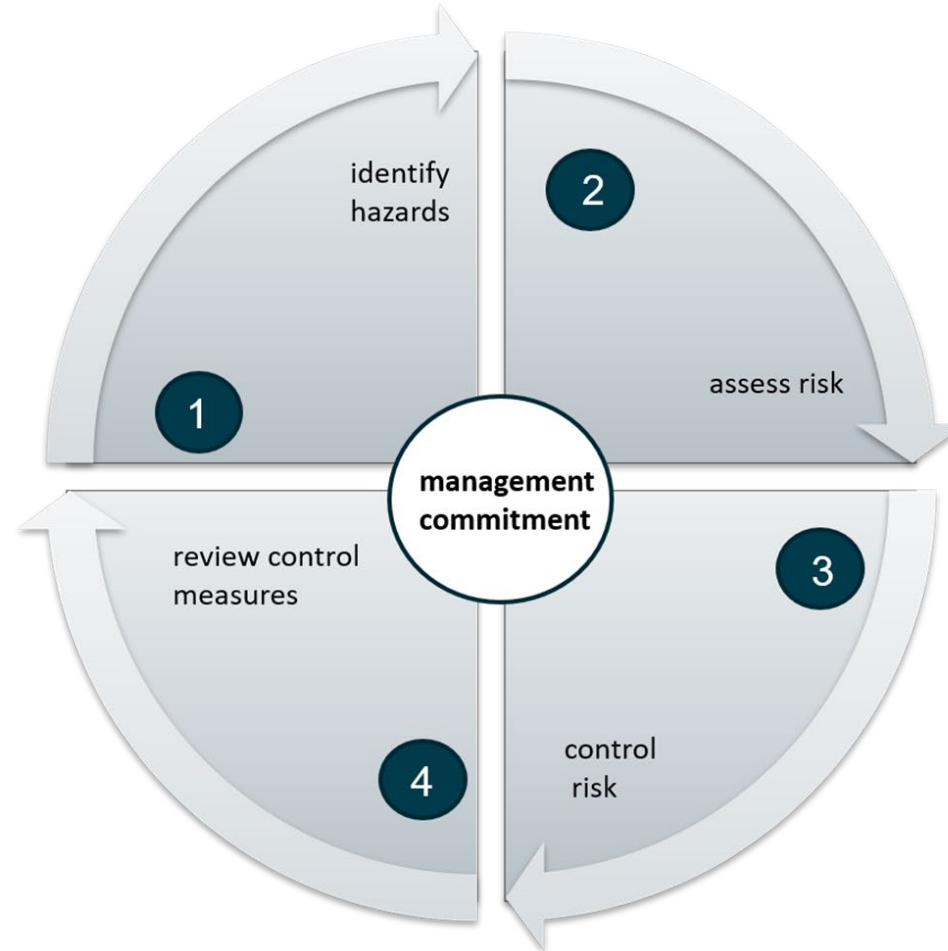


# Consulting Workers

At each step of the risk management process, workers who are or are likely to be affected should be consulted.

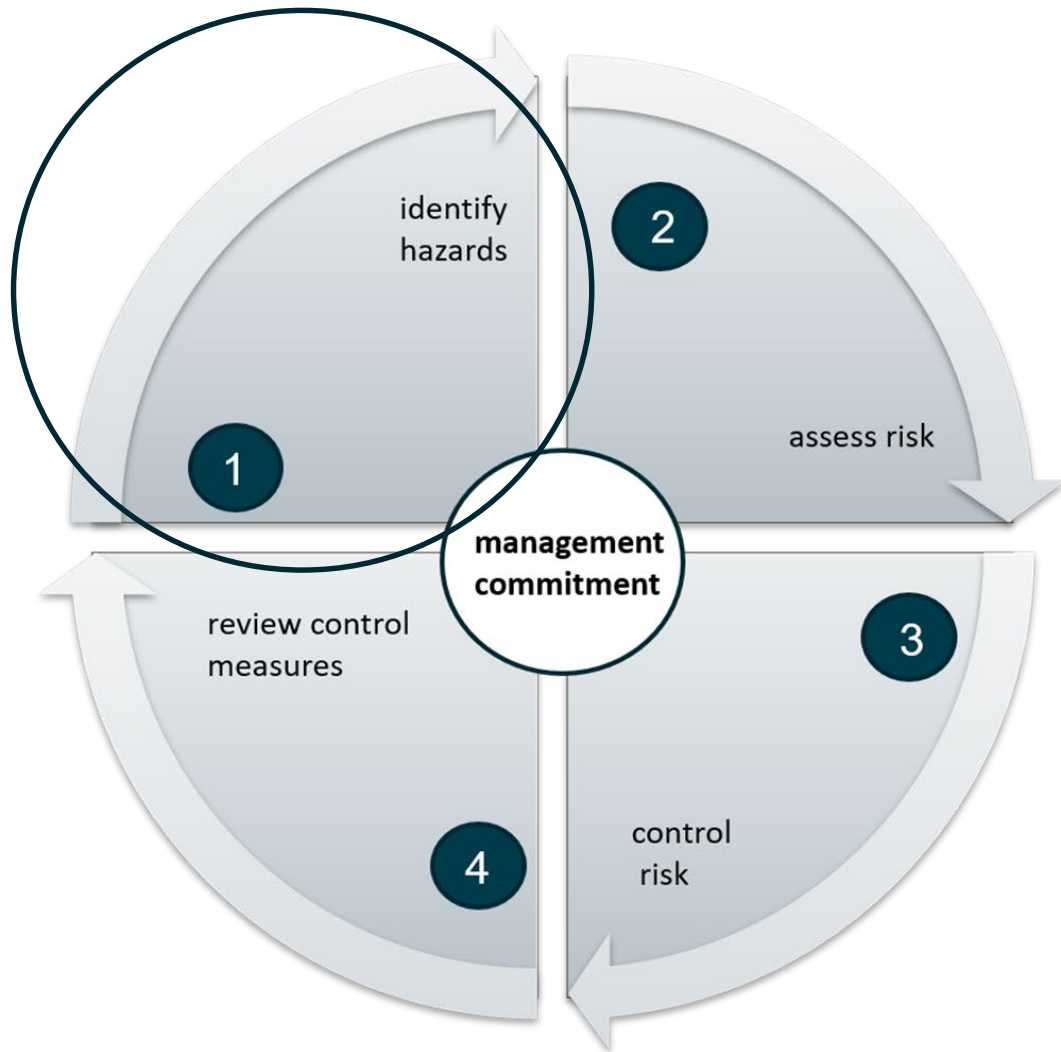


# The Process of Assessing Psychological Safety



# Step 1: Identify the Hazards





## What can cause harm

- Identify all psychosocial hazards
- Consider aspects of work and situations that could potentially harm workers
- Identify hazards for less common but potentially serious situations

## Methods to identify hazards:

- Surveys and risk assessment tools
- Observe work and behaviour
- Review relevant information and records
- Worker reports or feedback
- Look at trends

AND THE  
SURVEY  
SAYS...



## Things to look for:

- Leave patterns
- Shifts and hours of work
- Incident records
- Grievances
- EAP usage
- Hazard reports
- Meeting minutes



# Common Psychosocial Hazards

## High or Low Job Demands

- Tasks beyond workers level of competence or capacity
- Being pressured to complete work outside of work hours
- Lack of resources required to complete tasks
- Absence of team members due to illness or leave
- Too little to do



Psychosocial Hazards



## Low job control

- Workers not involved in decisions that affect them or their clients
- Work that is tightly managed and timed
- Lack of opportunities to learn and develop new skills
- Little say in the way work is done
- Excessive monitoring and scrutiny of low level tasks



Psychosocial Hazards

## Poor support

- Not being provided practical support to carry out the job
- Working in isolation
- Supervisors leading large numbers of workers and it is difficult to provide adequate support
- Inadequate opportunity within work hours to speak with their colleagues or managers



Psychosocial Hazards

## Low role clarity

- Being asked to do a task with no instructions
- Lack of clarity about task, priority or deadline
- Changing responsibility without consultation
- Allocating the same task to two different workers, resulting in duplication of effort and confusion
- Workers with multiple supervisors and competing demands



Psychosocial Hazards

## Poor change management

- Disorganized, unplanned change
- Change without sufficient consultation or engagement
- Failure to communicate key messages, updates, or reasons for change



Psychosocial Hazards

## Lack of reward and recognition

- Lack of positive feedback about work performance
- No process for regular performance discussions, planning and goal setting



Psychosocial Hazards

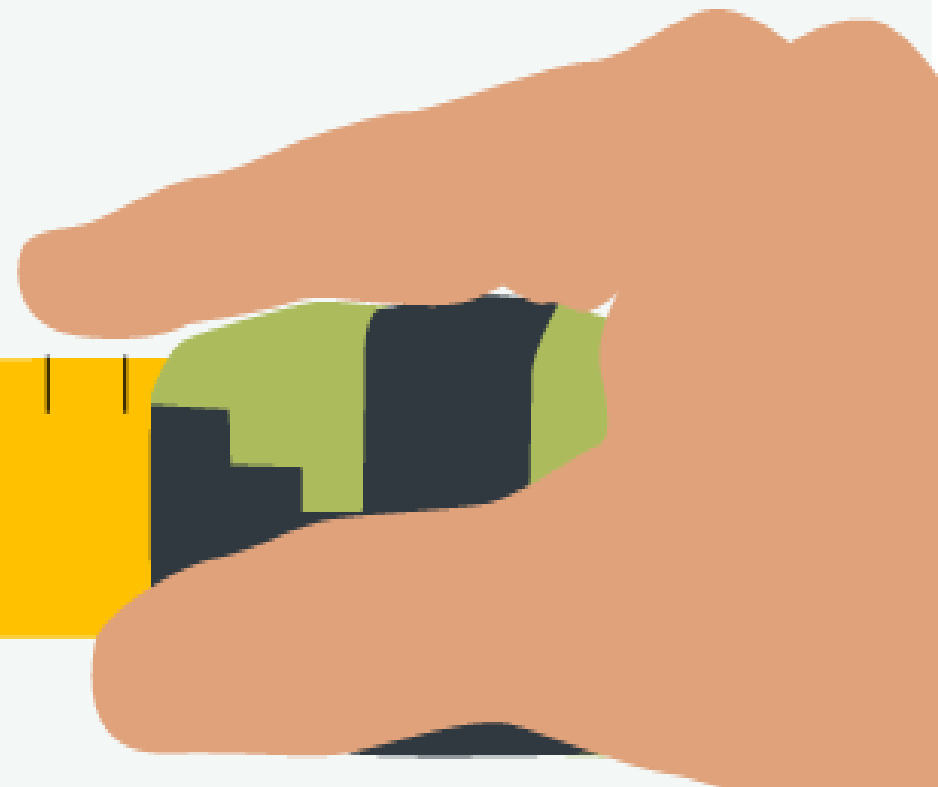
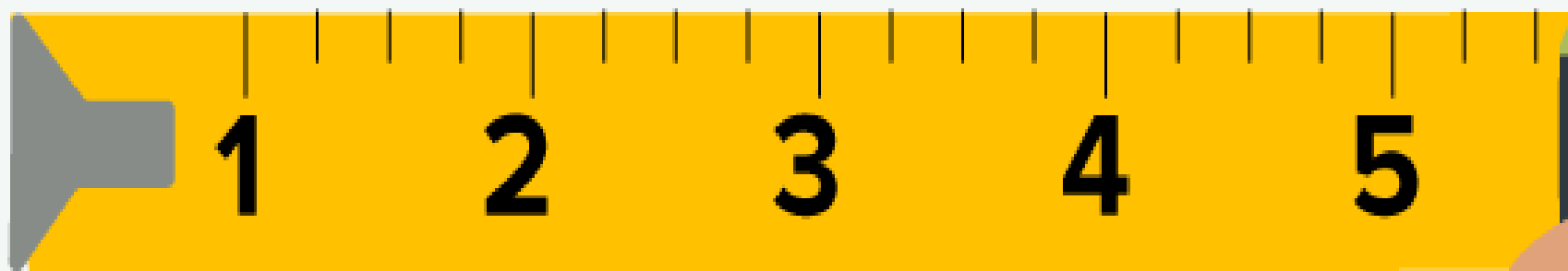


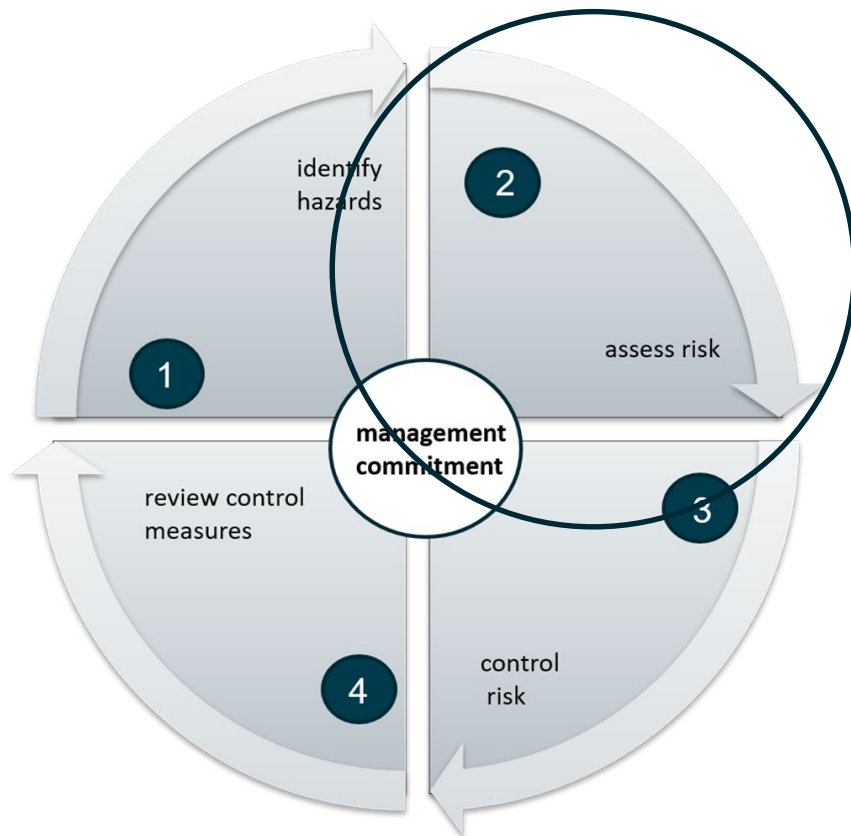
Health | Safety | Compensation

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Step 2: Assess the risk

RISK





How likely or serious is it

- Identify the workers affected
- Look at the duration, frequency and severity of exposure
- Consider psychosocial hazards collectively rather than in isolation
- Examine the systems of work and design of work







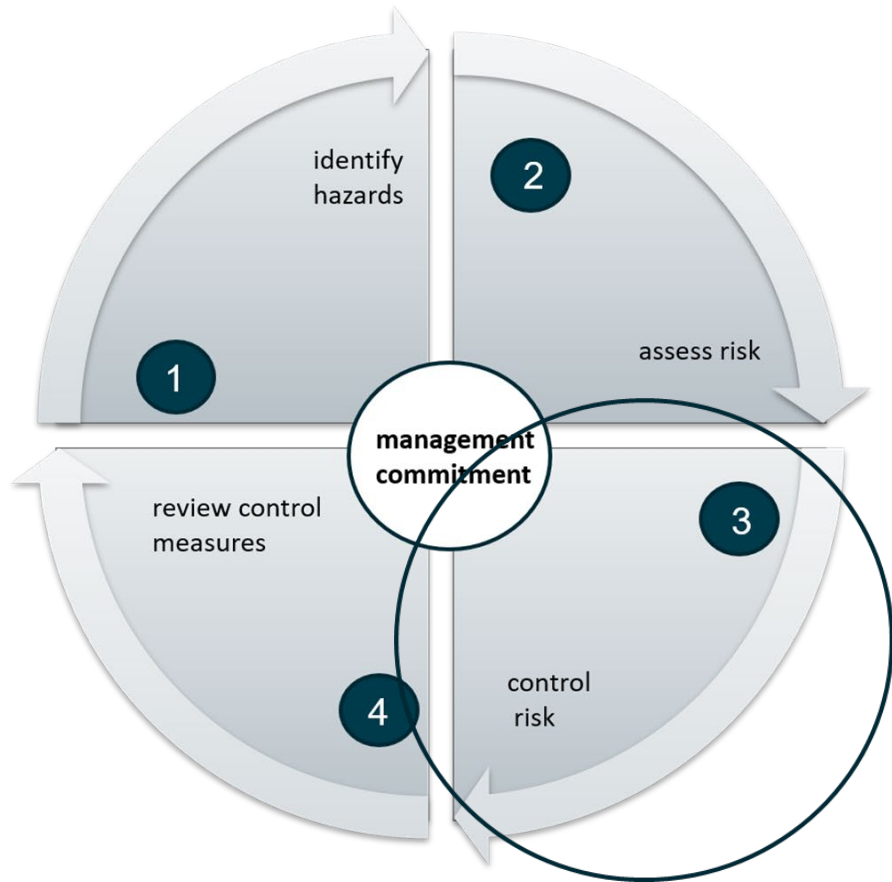
- Have a reporting process
- Encourage reporting
- Allow reporting to be anonymous
- Protect the privacy of workers who report
- Take hazards reported seriously



REPORTING



Step 3: Control the risk



What are the most effective controls

- Identify control measures
- Eliminate hazards or minimize risk of psychological harm

# Determining what is reasonable.

- 1 Identify as many possible control measures as you can.
- 2 Consider which are most effective.
- 3 Consider which controls are most practical, given size and resources of organization.





**EXAMPLES**

of controls

## Controls for low reward and recognition

- Implement a performance review process
- Recognize workers for good work
- Provide leaders with strategies to recognize and reward workers
- Provide feedback that is timely, practical and specific to work tasks





## Controls to address conflict and interpersonal relationships

- Organize work to promote team communication
- Provide opportunities for workers to build relationships
- Educate workers in appropriate work behaviours and respect
- Promptly deal with inappropriate workplace behaviours and disrespect



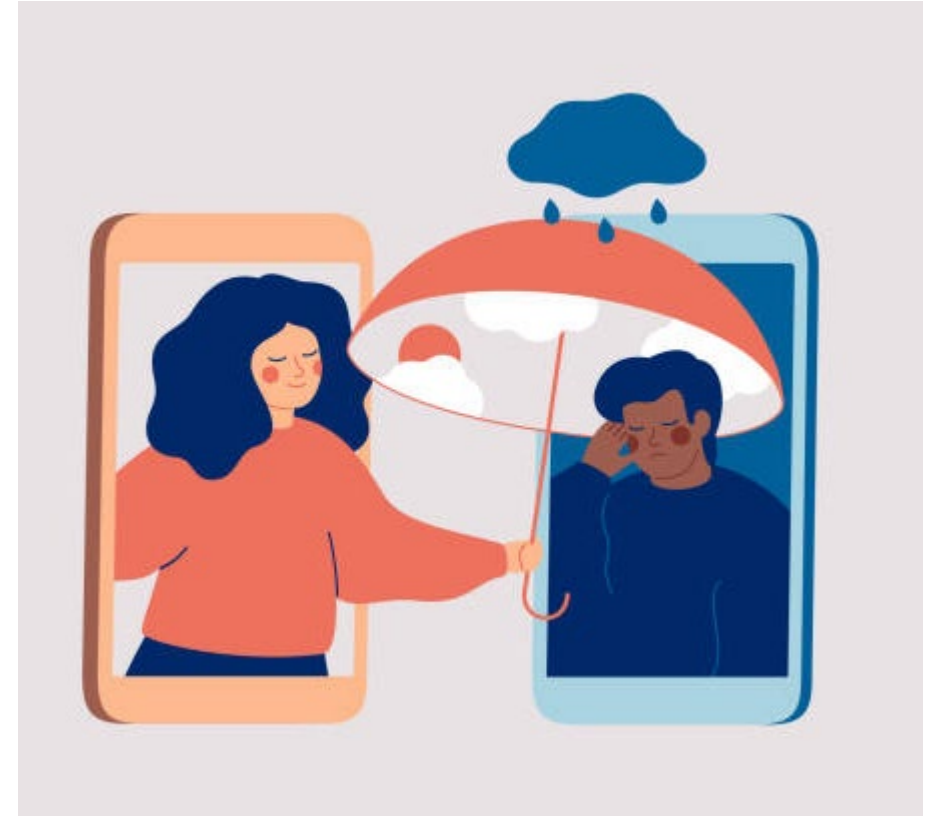
## Controls for time pressure and role overload

- Design manageable workloads, especially during periods of peak demand.
- Rotate tasks that are time pressured or excessively demanding
- Provide workers with sufficient time, resources, and equipment to perform tasks assigned
- Schedule work so workers have adequate breaks for rest and recovery
- Implement flexible working arrangement policies and practices



## Controls for poor support

- Establish clear reporting lines
- Provide leaders with soft skill development that includes both task and emotional support
- Provide practical solutions for concerns, such as backfilling vacant roles
- Establish procedures to support workers affected by a negative work event



# General controls

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- Create procedures
- Train leaders
- Provide clear expectations
- Build capability of workers, educate on mental health

# General controls

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- Psychological support for traumatic events
- Process to reporting psychosocial hazards
- Respond promptly and appropriately to concerns
- Educate about early warning signs of stress and fatigue

# General controls

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- Manage performance
- Promote balance and use of leave
- Support recovery from periods of high demand
- Provide an EAP

# Effectively Implementing Control Measures

Information



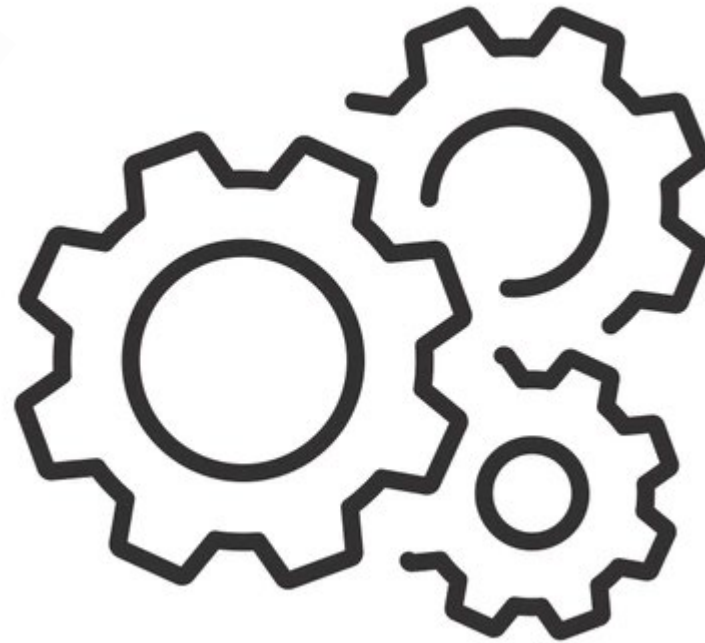
Training



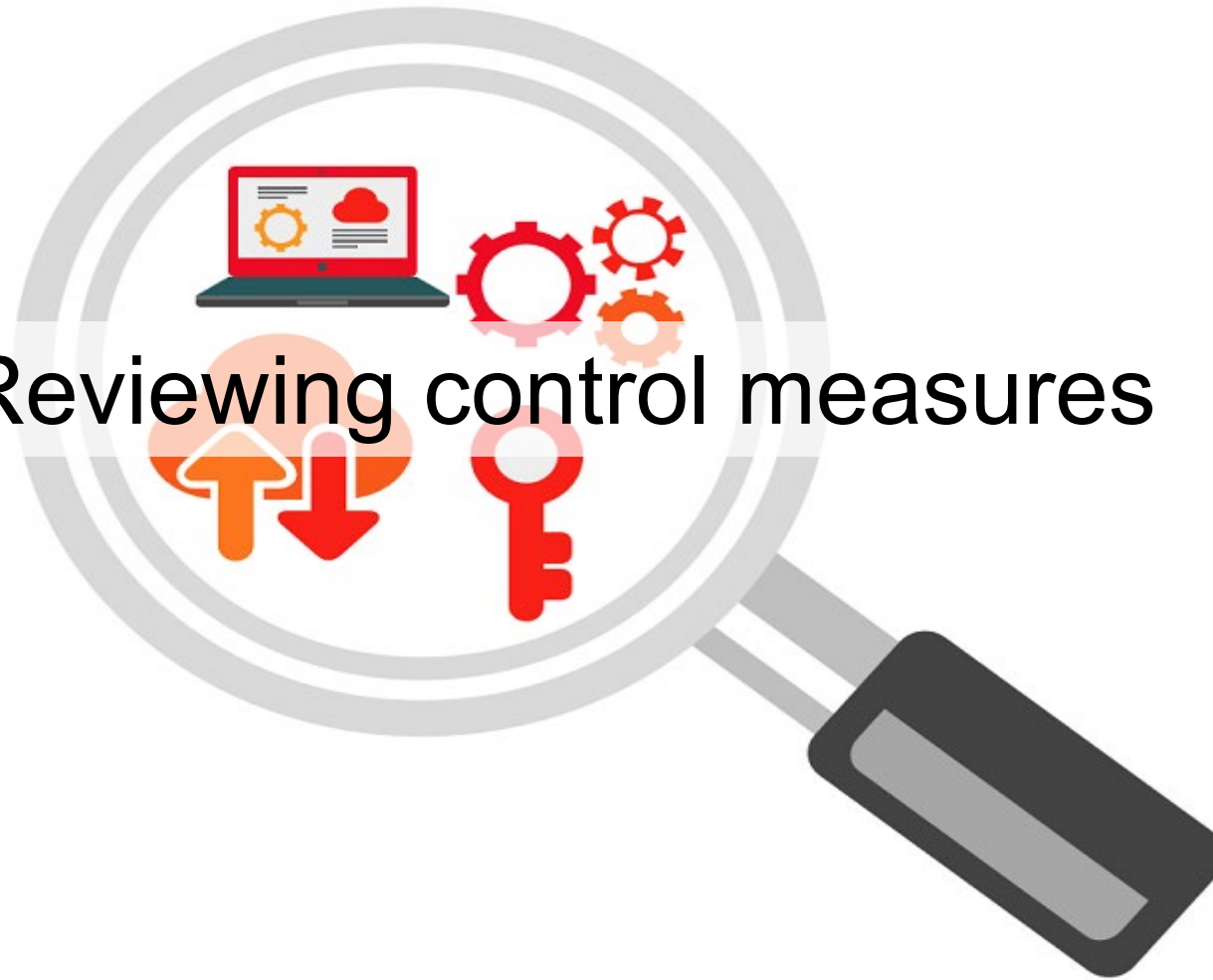
Instruction



Supervision

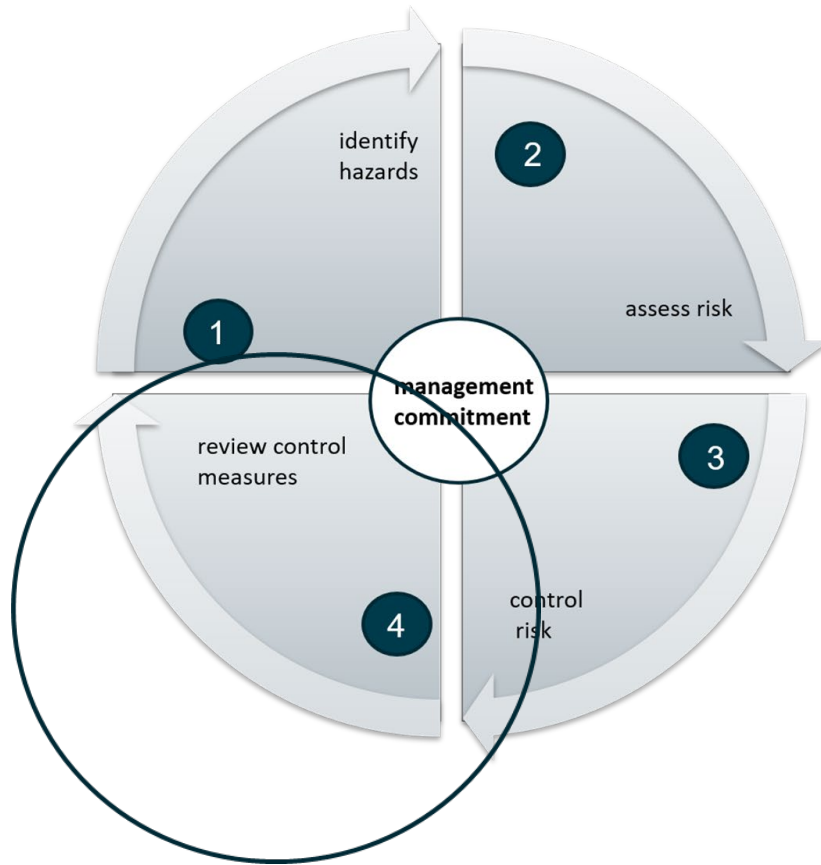


## Step 4: Reviewing control measures





# Review control measures- review the effectiveness of implemented controls



- Must be done regularly and when the control measure is not eliminating or minimizing the risks appropriately
- Before a change at the workplace is made
- If a new hazard or risk is identified







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# Assessments

Effective assessments help organizations identify strengths and areas for improvement. Each of these assessments are evidence-based and free to use.

# ISO 45003

The first global standard giving practical guidance on managing psychological health at work





CAN/CSA-Z1003-13/BNQ 9700-803/2013  
National Standard of Canada  
(reaffirmed 2022)

## Psychological health and safety in the workplace —

Prevention, promotion, and guidance  
to staged implementation

Disponible en français  
*Santé et sécurité psychologiques  
en milieu de travail —  
Prévention, promotion et lignes  
directrices pour une mise en  
œuvre par étapes*



Commissioned by the  
Mental Health Commission of Canada



# How WorkplaceNL can help.

- ✓ Provide in-house education sessions on respectful workplaces, harassment prevention and mental health in the workplace
- ✓ Conduct or assist in conducting a PHS assessment in your workplace

# Summary

Worth it

- Responsibility for a psychologically safe workplace
- Psychosocial hazards
- Common psychosocial hazards
- Assessment process
- Common control measures
- Tools to help





## The Signal: WorkplaceNL's Health and Safety Podcast

By WorkplaceNL Health and Safety Podcast

Workers have a right to healthy and safe workplaces. Occupational health and safety (OHS) practices and principles help protect workers from injuries and illnesses while working. Join us as we explore current OHS topics that can improve the health and safety of workplaces.

Listen on  Spotify

### The Three Pillars of Mental Health

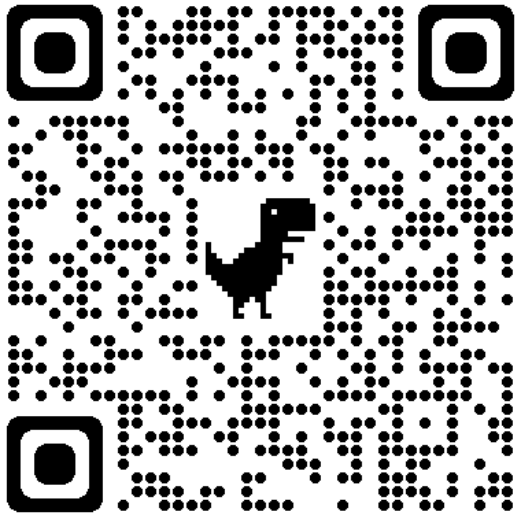
- Nutrition
- Movement
- Sleep

WHERE TO LISTEN



<https://anchor.fm/workplacenlhspodcasts>

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**THANK YOU!**

