

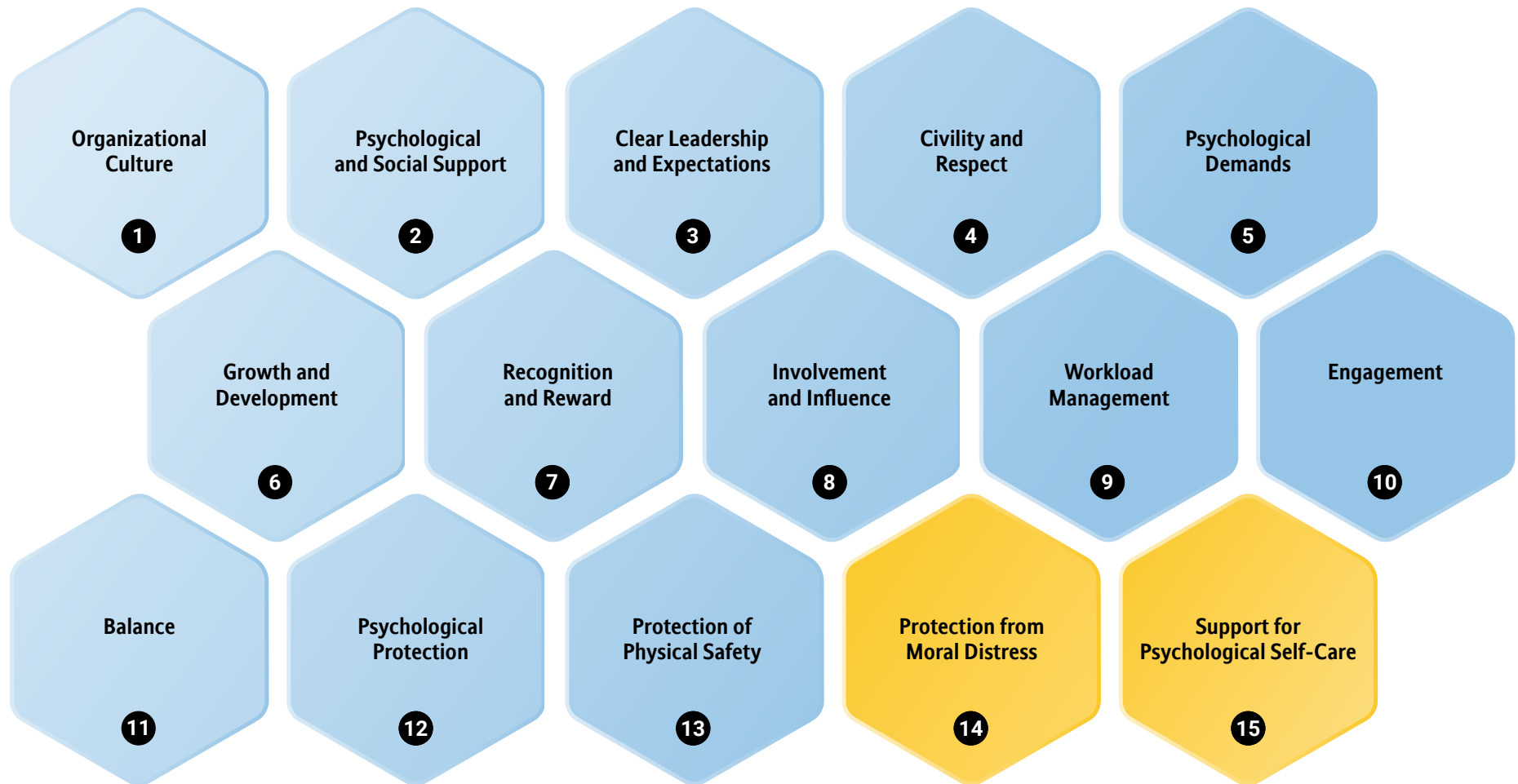
# Healthcare Workplaces: Factors Influencing Psychological Health and Safety

Psychological health and safety at work goes beyond preventing harm. It means building a workplace where people support mental wellbeing and help each other thrive. It's about creating a culture of respect, inclusion, and open communication that strengthens mental health and builds stronger teams.



In healthcare, there are 15 factors that can have a positive or negative impact on mental health. These are things like reasonable workload, teamwork, communication, and support.

Two of these factors are unique to healthcare: protection from moral distress and support for psychological self-care.

These factors come from the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace. They help highlight areas of strength and show where action can make a difference. Learning more about the factors helps everyone—employers, leaders, committees, and workers — build safer, healthier workplaces.





# Healthcare Workplaces: Factors Influencing Psychological Health and Safety – *Continued*

		 <b>When You Have It</b>	 <b>When You May Not Have It</b>
1	<b>Organizational Culture</b> A work culture built on trust, honesty, fairness, and accountability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People are encouraged to speak up</li> <li>• People trust one another</li> <li>• People show respect for others' ideas, values, and beliefs</li> <li>• People are held responsible for their actions</li> <li>• Problems and conflicts are addressed effectively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People spread rumours or favour certain workers</li> <li>• The organization allows negative behaviours to continue</li> <li>• Worker morale is low</li> <li>• Conflicts are ignored or handled poorly</li> </ul>
2	<b>Psychological and Social Support</b> A workplace where people feel they belong and what they do matter. Coworkers and leaders offer help and support for mental health needs, including when someone is dealing with stress or trauma.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People feel supported by coworkers and leaders</li> <li>• Mental health and wellbeing are valued and treated as a priority</li> <li>• The organization has processes to assist employees who are struggling</li> <li>• Workers returning from mental health leave feel supported</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People feel isolated or unsupported</li> <li>• Workers don't know where to turn when they feel stressed or overwhelmed</li> <li>• There is little help available when people struggle with workload or personal issues</li> <li>• Returning workers feel left on their own after time off</li> </ul>
3	<b>Clear Leadership and Expectations</b> A workplace where people know what is expected of them and understand why their work is important. Changes are discussed openly, and people feel supported by their leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People know their scope of work and what is expected of them</li> <li>• Supervisors provide helpful feedback on performance</li> <li>• Leaders engage workers about proposed changes</li> <li>• Leaders communicate changes clearly as soon as they can</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People are unclear about work, roles, or expectations</li> <li>• Supervisors don't provide support or feedback</li> <li>• Important changes are not communicated in time</li> <li>• Decisions are unclear leaving workers feeling confused and frustrated</li> </ul>
4	<b>Civility and Respect</b> A workplace where people show respect and care for each other, as well as for patients, clients, visitors, and the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People treat each other with respect</li> <li>• Conflicts are resolved constructively</li> <li>• Workers from different backgrounds are respected, and everyone is treated fairly</li> <li>• The organization deals with inappropriate behaviour effectively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People act rudely or are disrespectful to each other</li> <li>• Conflicts are ignored</li> <li>• Workers from different backgrounds are treated unfairly</li> <li>• Inappropriate behaviour is overlooked or accepted</li> </ul>
5	<b>Psychological Demands</b> A workplace where the mental and physical demands of each job are reviewed and assessed. When hazards are found, the organization looks for ways to reduce risks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jobs and work systems match workers' skills and abilities</li> <li>• People have a say in how they organize and complete their work</li> <li>• Workers have enough control and autonomy in their jobs to manage demands effectively</li> <li>• Recruitment, training, and leadership focus on people-related skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jobs or work systems don't match workers' skills</li> <li>• People have little control or input over their work</li> <li>• Lack of autonomy increases stress and frustration</li> <li>• Organizational processes ignore people-related psychological strain on workers</li> </ul>

# Healthcare Workplaces: Factors Influencing Psychological Health and Safety – *Continued*

		 <b>When You Have It</b>	 <b>When You May Not Have It</b>
6	<b>Growth and Development</b> A workplace where people receive encouragement and support in their work. Opportunities are provided for workers to develop people, emotional, or job skills through training, mentoring, and other learning opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervisors help workers develop their skills and grow in their roles</li> <li>Workers are encouraged to try new challenges and take on more responsibility</li> <li>Training and learning opportunities are available both inside and outside the organization</li> <li>The organization values ongoing development for everyone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers feel bored or stuck in current roles</li> <li>There is little guidance or mentoring to improve skills</li> <li>Opportunities to learn or take on new tasks are rare</li> <li>Personal and interpersonal growth isn't a priority for the organization</li> </ul>
7	<b>Recognition and Reward</b> A workplace where workers and leaders are noticed and appreciated for their efforts, and achievements are recognized in a timely way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers are paid fairly for the work they do</li> <li>Efforts and achievements are noticed and appreciated</li> <li>Teams celebrate shared achievements</li> <li>The organization shows it values workers' commitment and contributions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers feel unmotivated or disconnected from their work</li> <li>Teams rarely celebrate or acknowledge achievements</li> <li>Lack of recognition leads to stress, low engagement, or burnout</li> <li>Workers' commitment and passion for their work goes unnoticed</li> </ul>
8	<b>Involvement and Influence</b> A workplace where people join discussions about how their work is done and have a say in decisions that affect their jobs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers have some control over how they do their work</li> <li>Leaders listen to workers' suggestions when making decisions</li> <li>The organization tells workers about important changes promptly</li> <li>The organization encourages worker input</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers feel their ideas are ignored or don't matter</li> <li>Workers have little say in changes that affect their work</li> <li>Workers aren't clear about how decisions impact their jobs</li> <li>Low involvement makes workers less motivated and engaged</li> </ul>
9	<b>Workload Management</b> A workplace where people can finish their tasks within the available time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers can complete tasks in the time they have</li> <li>Leaders provide the support and resources workers need</li> <li>Leaders set reasonable deadlines and workloads</li> <li>The organization reduces interruptions and distractions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers feel rushed or overwhelmed by tasks</li> <li>Leaders don't give enough guidance or resources</li> <li>Unclear priorities or unrealistic deadlines cause stress and fatigue</li> <li>Frequent disruptions make it hard to focus on work</li> </ul>
10	<b>Engagement</b> A workplace where people enjoy and feel connected to their work, their coworkers, and the organization, and want to do their jobs well.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers feel connected to their work, coworkers, and organization</li> <li>People are motivated to put in extra effort when needed</li> <li>Workers take pride in their work and see it as important</li> <li>People care about the organization's success and mission</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers feel detached or uninterested in their work</li> <li>Low motivation leads to mistakes or missed opportunities</li> <li>Workers feel isolated or unsupported</li> <li>People lose focus, morale drops, and commitment fades</li> </ul>

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		 <b>When You Have It</b>	 <b>When You May Not Have It</b>
11	<b>Balance</b> A workplace that understands and supports people in managing the demands of work, family, and personal life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organization encourages workers to take breaks and time off</li> <li>• People can balance the demands of work and personal life</li> <li>• Leaders support workers when personal or family issues come up</li> <li>• Workers have energy left at the end of the workday for their personal life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers feel constantly tired or burned out from work</li> <li>• Work gets in the way of personal or family responsibilities</li> <li>• Lack of support causes stress, frustration, or resentment</li> <li>• Poor balance leads to injuries, missed work, and higher turnover</li> </ul>
12	<b>Psychological Protection</b> A workplace where people can ask questions, get feedback, report mistakes, and share ideas without fear of bullying, harassment, or discrimination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organization works to prevent bullying, harassment, and discrimination</li> <li>• Workers feel safe asking questions, sharing ideas, and reporting problems</li> <li>• Leaders care about peoples' emotional wellbeing</li> <li>• People believe the workplace is mentally healthy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers feel threatened or unsafe at work</li> <li>• Stress, fear, or uncertainty affects how people do their jobs</li> <li>• People avoid raising concerns or giving feedback</li> <li>• Poor psychological protection increases conflicts and stress-related illness</li> </ul>
13	<b>Protection of Physical Safety</b> A workplace where leaders act to keep people safe from physical injury and illness, and appropriate training and support is provided.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People get the training, tools, and equipment they need to be healthy and safe at work</li> <li>• Leaders deal with physical hazards and risks quickly and effectively</li> <li>• Workers feel safe and confident in their work environment</li> <li>• The organization schedules work to allow for rest and recovery</li> <li>• Workers asked to do work that they believe is unsafe, have no hesitation in refusing to do it</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers worry about hazards or unsafe conditions</li> <li>• Lack of guidance or equipment puts workers at risk of injury</li> <li>• Leaders do not respond when safety issues arise</li> <li>• Unsafe practices increase stress, fatigue, and accidents</li> </ul>
14	<b>Protection from Moral Distress</b> A workplace that helps healthcare teams do their jobs in ways that match their personal and professional values, reducing stress from ethical or moral conflicts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers can make decisions that match their professional and personal values</li> <li>• Coworkers and leaders support workers when facing ethical challenges</li> <li>• Teams talk openly and support each other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers feel powerless or forced to compromise their values</li> <li>• Workers cannot provide proper care due to staffing limits or rules</li> <li>• Workers feel leadership decisions prevent them from having a say in patient care decisions</li> <li>• Pressure to meet productivity targets comes before patient care and worker wellbeing</li> </ul>
15	<b>Support for Psychological Self-Care</b> A workplace that encourages and helps people take care of their own mental health and wellbeing, showing the organization values people as whole.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaders show they care about mental health through policies, training, and preventive practices</li> <li>• Workers can take breaks, use time off, and access wellbeing resources</li> <li>• Teams support each other and hold regular debriefs after stressful events</li> <li>• Workers feel able to speak up about their mental health needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers feel they must put patients or work ahead of their own wellbeing</li> <li>• Working conditions make it hard for people to care for themselves</li> <li>• Teams offer little support due to conflict, hierarchy, or lack of understanding</li> <li>• Leaders and policies do not provide resources or prioritize mental health</li> </ul>