

---

## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
2021MMHA0015-000644  
April 7, 2021

Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions

### **New mental health resources for sectors hit hard by pandemic**

VICTORIA – Employers and employees throughout B.C. who work in the tourism, hospitality and community social services sectors now have access to vital mental health resources with the creation of a digital resource hub.

The online hub offers a range of tools to help address common workplace concerns, such as bullying, harassment, COVID-19 exposure, coping with stress and more.

“The pandemic has had a devastating impact on people working in tourism, hospitality and social services,” said Sheila Malcolmson, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions. “I’m grateful to workplace leaders stepping up to promote positive mental health for their employees. This will have a lasting impact on people in the months and years ahead.”

The new hub provides workshops, webinars and information to help employees manage stress and build resiliency. It also provides tangible steps for workers at all levels to improve their overall mental health, as well as navigation support to connect to other mental health services, including counselling and peer support. To access the hub, visit: [www.workmentalhealthbc.ca](http://www.workmentalhealthbc.ca)

In May 2021, the hub will expand to include a made-in-B.C. training and coaching platform that will provide managers and leaders in these sectors with personalized guidance to help make meaningful and lasting change at work. Participants will gain knowledge and practical tools, apply learning and strengthen peer connections to help make continuous improvements that support the long-term well-being of their employees.

The new hub is being developed in partnership with the BC Division of the Canadian Mental Health Association and health and safety associations, such as go2HR.

The new hub will augment existing mental health supports the government deployed early on in the pandemic for workers in the long-term care and continuing-care sector, including the Care for Caregivers site and Care to Speak peer support service. Both services received major uptake from health-care workers throughout the province. The hub builds on this success and provides more workplace sectors with the mental health supports they need.

As part of B.C.’s \$1.5-billion economic recovery plan, \$2 million was provided for the development of the online hub and soon-to-be launched coaching and training platform for the tourism and hospitality sectors. The Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction contributed an additional \$1 million to expand the scope to include the community social services sector.

Improving workplace mental health is an integral part of the government’s plan to build a comprehensive system of mental health and addictions care British Columbians deserve, as

outlined in A Pathway to Hope, B.C.'s roadmap for making mental health and addictions care better for people in British Columbia.

**Learn More:**

StrongerBC: BC's Economic Recovery Plan: <https://strongerbc.gov.bc.ca/>

Free and low-cost mental health supports for British Columbians during COVID-19: <http://www.gov.bc.ca/covid19mentalhealthsupports>

A Pathway to Hope: [https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/BCMentalHealthRoadmap\\_2019.pdf](https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/BCMentalHealthRoadmap_2019.pdf)

Care for Caregivers – mental health support for health-care providers:  
<https://www.careforcaregivers.ca/>

Care to Speak – peer support for B.C. health-care workers:  
<https://www.careforcaregivers.ca/caretospeak/>

For emotional support, information and resources specific to mental health available 24-7, call 310Mental Health Support toll-free (no need to dial an area code): 310-6789

StopOverdose BC – resources and information related to B.C.'s overdose crisis: <https://www.stopoverdose.gov.bc.ca/>

Two backgrounders follow.

**Contact:**

Heidi Zilkie  
Communications Manager  
Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions  
250 213-7049

---

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: [news.gov.bc.ca/connect](https://news.gov.bc.ca/connect)

---

## BACKGROUND 1

For Immediate Release  
2021MMHA0015-000644  
April 7, 2021

Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions

### **What people are saying about the Workplace Mental Health Hub**

#### **Niki Sharma, Parliamentary Secretary for Community Development and Non-Profits –**

“Throughout the pandemic, community social services workers have continued to provide care and assistance for some of B.C.’s most vulnerable people, all while managing the impacts to their own mental health. In launching this new hub, we’re helping these vital workers quickly access the resources they need to support their personal well-being.”

#### **Jonny Morris, CEO, Canadian Mental Health Association BC Division –**

“Workplace mental health has taken on significant and new meaning as we continue to respond to the impacts of the pandemic. Whether you’re an employee worried about your own or a colleague’s mental health, or someone interested in improving mental health across your organization, today’s launch of B.C.’s Workplace Mental Health Hub is such an important step to help workplaces learn, train and inspire change. We are proud to be partnering with the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, industry and sector leaders, and workplaces on this critically important initiative.”

#### **Arun Subramanian, director industry health and safety, go2HR –**

“The devastating impact of COVID-19 on the tourism workforce cannot be overstated. While some impacts are obvious and visible, others, like the psychological one, are not. Regardless, the impact upon the workforce is significant. As employers and employees prepare to restart or ramp up their operations, this new initiative offers comprehensive mental health and wellness resources for all.”

#### **Sherry Sinclair, director of programs and services, the Federation of Community Social Services of BC –**

“Mental health services like the ones announced today help to create environments that support the growth and development of our valuable employees. Access to these resources will help B.C.’s community social services workers navigate the next phase of this pandemic and will help our organizations recruit and retain the dedicated staff who are going above and beyond to ensure that vulnerable people are not made even more vulnerable by this public health crisis.”

#### **Nicole Baudisch, senior manager of employee services and employee housing, Whistler Blackcomb –**

“We care very deeply for everyone in our workplaces and we know it can be very difficult to support yourself and others through challenging times. To have a central resource focused on

mental health in the workplace will be a game changer for not only our industry, but our province. We are very grateful to be involved in this collaborate approach to developing a hub that will support the health and well-being for both employees and employers across B.C.”

**Contact:**

Heidi Zilkie  
Communications Manager  
Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions  
250 213-7049

---

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: [news.gov.bc.ca/connect](https://news.gov.bc.ca/connect)

---

## BACKGROUND 2

For Immediate Release  
2021MMHA0015-000644  
April 7, 2021

Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions

### **Facts about mental health support in B.C.**

- Since the pandemic began, the Province has committed a total of \$25 million to expand existing mental health and addictions programs, including virtual supports.
- The tourism sector has one of the largest workforces in the province – employing about 161,500 people. A further 6,000-plus people are employed by the members of the Federation of Community Social Services of BC.
- Since the start of the pandemic, the Province has allocated almost \$55 million in funding towards tourism resiliency and development throughout B.C. under the Community Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program. This includes:
  - \$20 million from the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture and Sport to support destination development; and
  - \$34.5 million for 95 tourism-related projects from the ministries of Municipal Affairs and Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development.
- In partnership with leaders in B.C.'s tourism, hospitality and sport sectors, more than 1,400 new jobs will be provided for workers laid off due to the pandemic. These jobs will be in non-clinical roles at immunization clinics.
- The Province is also supporting the BC Tourism Resiliency Network – a long-term resiliency program providing B.C. tourism businesses with meaningful, one-on-one support to navigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, adapt and work towards eventual recovery. Businesses in the tourism sector can reach out to the network to receive assistance in navigating available programs, resources, relief and recovery measures, as well as to complete applications as they become available. To access the network, visit: <https://tourismresiliency.ca/>

### **Contact:**

Heidi Zilkie  
Communications Manager  
Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions  
250 213-7049

---

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: [news.gov.bc.ca/connect](https://news.gov.bc.ca/connect)