

11 FAQs About the Mental Health of Employees During a Pandemic



On April 1, 2020, HR Insider held a webinar with Dr. Ryan Todd and Dr. Karen MacNeill of Headversity about the impacts on employee wellness, productivity, and mental health by the COVID-19 pandemic and the sudden transition to isolation, self-distancing and remote working conditions. So much of the insight was equally applicable outside of the pandemic when it comes to managing remote teams and ensuring productivity. As a society, we've gone to extraordinary lengths to 'flatten the curve'. Now largely working in isolation, how are our teams coping with this? How do we balance productivity and mental wellness in our people with all this uncertainty? Questions such as these, and many more, were addressed in this expert Q&A session with two mental health experts: Dr. Ryan Todd and Dr. Karen MacNeill. Dr. Todd and Dr. MacNeill come from both ends of the mental health spectrum: A psychiatrist (Dr. Todd) and a performance psychologist (Dr. MacNeill). The two of them also bring lived experience in the business world, as CEO and CPO of headversity, a workplace mental wellness solution.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Ways for us to be well and protect mental health individually, and for our teams
- Employer responsibilities and best practices for managing employee mental wellness remotely
- Ways to excel and build resilience amidst uncertainty
- The role of technology in mental health and the transitioning workforce
- Resilience skills for optimal functioning while working remote

AFTER THE WEBINAR

So many questions came out of the webinar, that we here at HR Insider decided to put together this special report to help answer some of the frequently asked questions and give you some guidance and tools to help you navigate these issues facing Canadian businesses during this period of isolation and lock-down.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

Dr. Ryan Todd

Dr. Ryan Todd is a psychiatrist at Foothills Hospital in Calgary, Alberta, where he has seen and treated thousands of individuals who have a mental illness as a

result of trauma, medical or surgical illness. Dr. Todd believes mental wellness can be learned and practiced by everyone, and that technology is a vital resource in helping bridge the gap between demand and mental healthcare today. This belief fuelled his desire to start headversity, a mental wellness tech company where he acts as CEO. Through headversity, Dr. Todd envisions building a culture of mental wellness in the Canadian workforce through mobile, micro, and measurable training.

Dr. Karen MacNeill

Karen is a performance psychologist with the unique experience of competing and consulting on the World stage. She is the lead Mental Performance Consultant for the Canadian Olympic Committee and has worked with athletes competing at the last 4 Olympic Winter Games, while also having competed herself at the international level for over a decade. Karen is also co-founder and Chief Product Officer of a mental wellness tech company called headversity, which offers preventative and personalized mobile training to workplaces to help their people get ahead of adversity. While her vast experience has been working with elite level athletes and business leaders, Karen believes mental wellness can be learned and practiced by everyone, and that technology is a vital resource to help accomplish this.