

# Healthy Workplace Model

## National Quality Institute

“Culture is created, reinforced and sustained by ongoing patterns of relationships and communications that are known to have an important influence on mental and physical health. These patterns are strongly influenced by managerial decisions about the organization and the design of work as they affect policies and practices and routinely address basic human needs. These needs relate to respect and dignity, a sense of belonging and purpose, a sense of control over one’s work, freedom of expression and protection from harassment and discrimination.

Interpersonal relationships - for example, peer communication and supervisory communication and feedback - also impact the work culture. A positive workplace culture nurtures the ability for people to use their talents and resources fully and enjoy their work. Such a culture includes programs for employee feedback and recognition”.

### What Makes a Workplace “Healthy”?

There are **3** factors which influence the health or wellness of the organization and its employees

#### 1. Health and Safety (Physical Environment)

The environment in which people work is a major influence on employee health. Organizational support and commitment to strategies that reduce injury /illness at home and work are critical. Some aspects are:

- ★ Noise level
- ★ Air Quality
- ★ Ergonomics
- ★ Toxic substances
- ★ Work pace
- ★ Workplace design
- ★ Safe lifting
- ★ Employee violence
- ★ Physical demands
- ★ Safety guidelines

#### 2. Cultural/Social Environment (Organizational Culture)

The cultural/ social environment is created by the interaction of people and their relationships with one another. It has a strong impact on the mental and physical practices, and interpersonal relationships among employees. Basic human needs such as sense of belonging, purpose and mission, sense of control and freedom from harassment. Related issues are:

- ★ Balance between work and family
- ★ Staff involvement in decision making
- ★ Flex time
- ★ Peer communication
- ★ Employee training and development
- ★ Employee satisfaction
- ★ Positive supervisor communication and feedback
- ★ Staff morale
- ★ Employee recognition
- ★ Social atmosphere

#### 3. Lifestyle Practices (Voluntary Health Practices) of Employees

Workplaces that support health practices encourage healthy behaviours and coping skills. Lifestyle practice initiatives address:

- ★ Smoking Cessation
- ★ Healthy weight
- ★ Healthy eating
- ★ Physical activity
- ★ Women’s health issues
- ★ Hygiene
- ★ Stress management
- ★ Coping with shift-work
- ★ Healthy pregnancy
- ★ Alcohol and drug use

