FIRST HEALTH SOLUTIONS:

LATERAL VIOLENCE OVERVIEW

Montreal FNHMA
November 5th, 2015
Identifying Lateral Violence: Signs and Symptoms.

* Types and Impacts of Lateral Violence
* When is conflict not Lateral Violence?
* What do we do about it?
Great to be here!

BC, Yukon, NWT, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec... next stops: New Brunswick & Chicago!
A Four-Step Process

Services offered by First Health Solutions that assist organizations to deal with Lateral Violence in an effective, respectful and sustainable way:

- Awareness Seminars
- Addressing needed Skills
- Policy Development
- Reinforcement of the "new culture"
Recommended Course of Action:
A two-day workshop for all teams (ideal group size is 12-20) that:

* Teaches the W5 of Lateral Violence (who, what, where, when, why?)
* Begins a process of self-reflection
* Identifies conflict-handling styles and skill deficits.
WHY DO WE HAVE
THE PROBLEM OF
GOSSIP AND LIES
Horizontal Violence / Hostility, Internalized Colonialism, Relational Aggression, Lateral Violence.

“When a powerful oppressor has directed oppression against a group for a period of time, members of the oppressed group feel powerless to fight back and they eventually turn their anger against one another” - Jane Middleton-Moz
Even at work (some would say especially at work) we seek significance in our lives – to be doing something of value, and to be recognized for it.

For many people, this remains elusive – here is one way of looking at “why”:
First Nations Grieving
The Iceberg of Loss©
OK, so what is Lateral Violence

Gossip/Rumours

First Health Solutions
Lateral Violence is . . .

Undermining & Sabotage

First Health Solutions
Lateral Violence . . .

Passive-Aggressive non-verbals
Lateral Violence is . . .

No respect for lines of authority
Lateral Violence is . . .

Policy infractions

First Health Solutions
Lateral Violence is . . .

Accountability:
Taking responsibility for your actions and the actions of your co-workers.

Lack of Accountability
Lateral Violence is . . .

Blaming

First Health Solutions
Lateral Violence is . . .

Creating Chaos

First Health Solutions
Impacts of Lateral Violence

Poor Team-Work

First Health Solutions
Impacts of Lateral Violence

Poor Communication

First Health Solutions
Impacts of Lateral Violence

Defensive/Territorial (‘turf wars’)

First Health Solutions
Impacts of Lateral Violence

Triangulation

First Health Solutions
Chaos & unpredictable
Impacts of Lateral Violence

Lack of trust
Impacts of Lateral Violence

Favouritism

First Health Solutions
Impacts of Lateral Violence

High staff turnover

First Health Solutions
Impacts of Lateral Violence

High rate of absenteeism
Impacts of Lateral Violence

Quality of service suffers

- Excellent
- Average
- Poor

First Health Solutions
Impacts of Lateral Violence

Defensive / Judgemental / Critical staff

First Health Solutions
Impacts of Lateral Violence

Rigid power hierarchy
Instability & Insecurity

Impacts, cont’d 3...
Impacts, cont’d 3...

Unhealthy boundaries

First Health Solutions
So now we know what it is, what it does, why it happens... but HOW do we change things???
Essential Skills required to effectively move from away from Lateral Violence:

* **Conflict Resolution**
* **Assertive Communication**
* **Power** – Understand it, Use it
* **Emotional Intelligence**
5 CONFLICT STYLES

Accommodate
Avoid
Compete
Collaborate
Compromise

First Health Solutions
5 COMMUNICATION STYLES

Assertive
Aggressive
Passive
Passive-Aggressive
Destructive
5 Types of POWER

LEGITIMATE
COERCIVE
REWARD
REFERENT
EXPERT
How is gossip connected to other things?
Emotional Intelligence

* Also known as “EI”, has since spawned “Collaborative Intelligence” (CI).

* Consider assessing at point of hire; also including as ongoing staff training.

* EI is dynamic, not static – meaning we can improve it.
BUT, how do we show people that we are SERIOUS about this???
Update/Revise Policy and Procedure to:

- Ensure inappropriate behaviours (i.e., Lateral Violence) are clearly identified;
- Provide specific procedures for investigation, remediation and discipline;
- Ensure compliance with Labour Law
Very nice.

* BUT... how do we make it safe for people to use their new skills, and follow the new policy???
A new “way of doing things” does not sustain itself unless:

* Employees and Teams are acknowledged for positive changes;
* Team-building and recognition events must out-number disciplinary actions!
* Employee’s personal wellness is recognized as crucial and is supported accordingly.
Lateral Violence is but one (albeit critical) component of a Toxic Workplace. Other components include:

- Poor management/leadership;
- Inadequate policy (or punitive);
- Personality conflicts allowed to impede work;
- Others?
While Bullying is often an element of Lateral Violence, it is often identified as personality-related (ie, more about the person than the workplace); A bully may be present at a healthy workplace but is “weeded out” quickly.

Also, Bullying is not necessarily lateral, it is often from superiors to underlings.
Case Studies

*Boy, do we have some stories for you!!*
THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!

Thanks for having us!

First Health Solutions