February 2, 2021

**RE: Support for Covid - 19 Stress**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We have all read about the incredible toll the pandemic is taking on the mental health of Canadians. In the face of these challenges where many people are experiencing feelings of anxiety, stress and concern about Covid-19 we want to remind all of our members of the support that is available under programs supported by LCC and your employer along with:

* Letting you know about some of the improvements to these programs,
* Providing you with information on free online resources

**Current Programs**

**Employee and Family Assistance Program (EAP)** - EAP is a confidential support service provided by Morneau Shepell that can help solve all kinds of problems and challenges in life. The program covers members and their immediate family (those enrolled on your group benefits). EAP helps with:

* Personal Well-Being (stress, depression, anxiety, grief, mental health, life transitions etc.)
* Managing Relationships and Family (conflict, parenting, aging parents etc.)
* Getting Legal and Financial Clarity ( Family law, bankruptcy, financial emergencies)
* Workplace Challenges (conflict, stress, work/life balance etc.)
* Addictions
* Understanding Nutrition (addressing high cholesterol, blood pressure, diabetes, weight management etc.)

EAP will covers a number of session (typically 4-6 sessions) with a qualified counsellor at no cost to members and their families. Christian counsellors are available. A Depression Care program is also available for those with severe depression where the short-term counselling available through EAP may not be enough. It focuses on complicated and higher risk situations where a combination of counselling and ongoing psychometric testing is required.

If you are referred to specialized or longer-term support, EAP can provide assistance in selecting an appropriate provider. Fees for these services may be covered by provincial plans or under the Worker Benefit Plan- Extended Health Plan.

**Contacting EAP**

Call **1-844-880-9137** (Toll free)

Morneau Shepell also has a number of mental health resources on their website: <https://www.workhealthlife.com/>

**Worker Benefit Plan-Extended Health Plan**- The Extended Health Care program covers a number of paramedicals including psychologists and psychotherapists. The Psychological Benefit was increased last year from $500 to $1000 per person, per calendar year. Coverage was also expanded to include psychotherapists so members can choose either a psychologist or a psychotherapist.

**Other Resources**

Among the online mental health resources available free to all Canadians are:

• Canadian Mental Health Association’s [BounceBack](https://bouncebackbc.ca/), currently available in B.C., Manitoba and Ontario and expanding to the rest of the country soon through a gift from Bell Let’s Talk. Visit: https://bouncebackbc.ca/
• [Wellness Together Canada](https://ca.portal.gs/), a federally funded program. Visit: https://ca.portal.gs/
• [WellCan](https://wellcan.ca/) a resource developed and funded by corporate, community and public sector partners. Visit: https://wellcan.ca/
• Mind Beacon, provides video’s and quick reads from mental health experts. Visit <https://www.mindbeacon.com/strongerminds>. Ontarians also have free access to their cognitive behavioral therapy program during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Regional Pastors are Available to Help**

Your Regional Pastor can also help you find additional resources. Contact the following:

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| WEST REGION | Rev. Robert Mohns  | rmohns@lutheranchurch.ca |
| EAST REGION | Rev. Marvin Bublitz  | mbublitz@lutheranchurch.ca |
| CENTRAL REGION | Rev. David Haberstock  | dhaberstock@lutheranchurch.ca |

It has never been more important for Pastors and Church Workers to do what they can to take care of themselves and each other, while doing your best to help people impacted by the pandemic.

God’s Blessings,



Nancy Swerhun, Pension and Benefits Manager

LCC Worker Benefit Services Inc.