



2nd US/Canada Forum on Mental Health and Productivity
Hosted by the
Global Business and Economic Roundtable for Addiction and Mental Health
November 14, 2007, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

An event that brings together Canadian and U.S. scientists, researchers, psychiatrists, physicians, psychologists, business people and agency representatives is bound to provide a few thought provoking ideas and this Forum was no exception. Some of the highlights included:

- When employees are encouraged to complete confidential questionnaires about mental health issues, this type of screening not only has the potential of early identification and treatment for employees, it is a useful reflection on self and well-being that can be of value to all. If we can remove the stigma, we can make routine screening, like that available at www.checkupfromtheneckup.ca part of a regular, annual check up when employees share the results with their family doctor.
- That workplace mental health must be a shared responsibility among employers, unions, employees and treating physicians.
- An understanding that the illness of depression includes feelings of hopelessness and helplessness and therefore requires more support to assist the individual in accessing effective treatment.
- For all the guidelines and policies on healthy workplace mental health, we will not see change unless and until these are actually taken up as an approach in practice.
- There is a need to invest in and maintain our human capital at least as well as we do with other valuable capital. This means being involved in up-keep and up-grading that impacts employee well-being and productivity.
- We can't manage what we can't measure. We need better ways to assess our occupational mental health and the psychological safety in the workplace.
- That work stress has an impact on family life and well-being. This can translate into poor health outcomes for both children and adults.

More complete report on the proceedings of the Forum will be posted at www.mentalhealthroundtable.ca