

## Summary of WAVAW Psychosocial Stressor Survey Results

June 28, 2021

This is a summary of the Psychosocial Stressor Survey Results MoveUP received as a result of sending out the survey to all WAVAW members on May 11, 2021. 15 out of 33 members completed the survey.

### General working conditions

- 12 people (80%) felt they had conflict between work and private life;
- 10 people (67%) felt they always/often/sometimes have workload that unevenly piles up;
- 9 people (60%) said work always/often/sometimes puts them into emotionally disturbing work;
- 2 people (13%) said they seldom have a large degree of influence concerning work;
- 11 people (73%) said they always/often/sometimes get behind with their work;
- 15 people (100%) said they always/often/sometimes work at high pace;
- 8 people (53%) said they always/often/sometimes look for work elsewhere;
- 14 people (93%) said there is always/often/sometimes a good atmosphere between them and their colleagues;
- 13 people (87%) did not know that WAVAW is working on a reduced workload;
- 9 people (60%) were satisfied/very satisfied with their job as a whole, everything taken into consideration;
- 10 people (67%) said that they are to a small extent/very small extent informed at work well in advance of important decisions, changes, or plans for future;
- 6 people (40%) said their work is recognized and appreciated by management to a very large/large extent;
- 3 people (20%) said they receive all the information they need to do their job well to a large extent;
- 7 people (47%) said they are treated fairly at work to a very large/large extent;
- 8 people (53%) said they feel motivated and involved in their work to a very large/large extent;
- 6 people (40%) said they sometimes have to do things, which seem to be unnecessary, to a very large/large extent;
- 8 people (53%) said that management trust employees to do their work well to a very large/large extent;

- 10 people (67%) said some employees are given preferential treatment to a very large/large extent;
- 8 people (53%) said all employees are treated equally to a very small/small extent;
- 8 people (53%) said management withholds important information from employees to a very large/large extent;
- 6 people (40%) said there is space for diversity in the organization to a very large/large extent;
- 8 people (53%) said they are scared of retribution from management for raising work issues, including health and safety

### **Specific comments re: workload**

- Not enough time in day to complete all tasks;
- Increase in client file loads;
- Too much work is being placed on skeleton crew of employees;
- Constantly working at very fast pace due to amount of tasks that need to be done;
- Unstable communication (once per month team meeting communication is insufficient);
- Chronic understaffing and high turnover;
- Not enough time allotted for program development and admin tasks;
- Cap file loads for Victim Services and create clear boundaries between VS and SART so that responsibilities are not overlapping resulting in redundancies;
- Freeze on expansion of the organization and programs to attend to current program needs;
- More counsellors are needed;
- Management needs to stop insisting that staff are lazy, incompetent, or not cut out for the job if they are unable to keep up with demands;
- Not expected to see more than three clients per day when working from home;
- Comprehensive filing system so that important info, manuals, procedures, vendors, etc. don't get lost;
- Examining workloads and listening to worker concerns honestly. Allowing staff to have boundaries in the workplace is extremely important for wellness;
- Continuation of the wellness hour, not being told by senior management to just quit if work is unmanageable, ensuring tasks are better maintained and distributed if employee needs to take leave of absence, so they aren't worried about work pile up when they return, more opportunities to connect with staff (staff events)
- Need a culture of appreciation where organization takes time to ensure that staff's work and efforts are recognized and appreciated, a more open

environment where staff can voice their opinions/experiences without fear of being directly/indirectly reprimanded;

- Clearer direction and asking me how long I think a task will take before setting an expectation, more space for connection between coworkers
- Acknowledge the burnout and stress are not from the actual client work but is a symptom of a toxic work environment and poor leadership and communication;
- Less barriers to having flexibility in our hours, ie: not having us fill out paperwork for last-minute after-hours or important correspondence to send (we often don't know until the last minute);
- Culture of fear and intimidation has to end or burnout is inevitable, it is related to workload and management intimidation more than the work itself;
- Hire more staff, more "all staff" meetings to promote cross program communication, our "ideal capacity" is not sustainable even when we are not in a global pandemic

### **Specific comments re: Inclusion**

- WAVAW is not a safe place for people of colour to work;
- Management doesn't foster an inclusive and trustworthy work environment;
- Don't believe WAVAW's claim to prioritize marginalized folks is honest;
- There was a 'People of Colour' caucus which was not supported by leadership and didn't last past a few months

### **Specific comments re: WAVAW - Abusive relationship/Disrespectful behaviour**

- I don't agree with that statement at all;
- WAVAW staff are expected to work at a very high capacity with very intense traumatic situations with no regard as to how this impacts us on the frontline level, when addressing work situations management respond by telling us just to deal with it or that it is the norm and if they can't adjust they should leave the organization, management doesn't consult with staff re: major decisions that will impact the frontline staff's workload and when concerns are brought up about this they go unaddressed;
- I feel I am constantly trying to please with no recognition or support in return, I have felt gaslit by the employer. When I bring up that I am overworked I am met with no solutions, disbelief, and an implication that I need to better take care of myself;

- Staff that come forward about burnout are met with statements about how they are already performing under capacity, staff bringing up issues are forced out of the organization through covert pressure tactics;
- Gaslighting is often present at WAVAW, which is a manipulative, abusive tactic. It is often suggested that certain people are not cut out for the work if they do not fulfill unreasonable work demands. This is crazy-making;
- When the pandemic hit we were told not to connect with other employees unless a manager or supervisor was present;
- 8 people (53%) have witnessed or been subjected to covert forms of bullying and harassment or disrespectful behaviour in the workplace;
- 10 people (67%) have been absent from work due to illness during the last 12 months (3 of those people (20%) took off a month or more due to illness);
- Management must face actual repercussions for bullying staff;
- Respect, hire more counsellors rather than starting new programs, please respect that our self-care has been greatly impacted by this pandemic and that we cannot be expected to work at full capacity, advocate for your staff (private donors care that humans are providing services to other humans);
- More team building activities that are focused on a positive purpose;
- Healthy, effective, supportive leadership. Leadership that trusts employees and doesn't see staff who raise concerns as threats or problems. Creating an inclusive environment and not just talking about inclusion;
- A greater sense of being on a team is needed

### **Specific comments re: Supervisors**

- 8 people (53%) said their immediate supervisor appreciates the staff and shows consideration for the individual to a very large/large extent;
- 6 people (40%) said their immediate supervisor is good at allocating work to a very large/large extent;
- 7 people (47%) said their immediate supervisor is good at communicating with staff to a very large/large extent;
- Doesn't think their supervisor has the capacity to do the job as they would like, they are regularly working beyond the job description and unpaid hours due to how much responsibility they are allocated;
- My direct superior is fantastic. I believe the problems at WAVAW are due to Senior Management/Executive Director;
- Please note that I've had 3 different supervisors in 6 months, so they each had different strengths

## Specific comments re: training

- I don't have capacity or space in my workload to do additional trainings, however our rollout of pretty much all of the technological platforms for Covid-19 has been minimally supported;
- Jane platform training – Management needs to be well versed in the platform before bringing it forward for staff to use, I have spent a lot of time trying to figure out this platform which resulted in admin errors;
- Many staff would benefit from Zoom and Slack training;
- We weren't given clear direction when we were first onboarded;
- We need training on how to set up our home work spaces, how to provide virtual counselling, how to maintain fully digital files to ensure that they are consistent;
- 3 people (20%) said they have not received adequate training for vicarious trauma

MoveUPTogether.ca

Suite 301 - 4501 Kingsway, Burnaby, B.C. V5H 0E5 | Phone: 604-299-0378 | Toll Free Line: 1-800-665-6838 | Fax: 604-299-8211

LOCAL 378 – CANADIAN OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES UNION