Examining the Impact of Presenteeism in Policing

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Introduction
Relevant literature has been analysed and reviewed to identify evidence surrounding presenteeism in this research paper. Organizations do not only suffer large costs stemming from individuals exhibiting absenteeism; literature in this research demonstrates that presenteeism, which precedes absenteeism, is an additional and marginally explored aspect that reflects hidden costs (Cancelliere & Cassidy, 2011). According to Ruskin (2016), the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) has paid its members more than $1 billion of overtime since 2009; people who have recently retired from the RCMP testify that this has had a key impact on many who have been working long hours who are now stressed, overworked and depressed. This research has been conducted for the purpose of exploring characteristics and identifying solutions related to presenteeism in order to minimize and/or avoid future losses of productivity for businesses and workforces.

Background
The primary aim in this research is the examination of causes leading to presenteeism. Police who are suffering presenteeism can have a negative impact on themselves, their co-workers, their department and the public (Leineweber et al., 2011). Essentially, decreased and losses in productivity and/or decreased levels of performances at work can stem from presenteeism. Deery, Walsh & Zatzick (2014) state that severe policies and severe disciplinary measures can make employees hesitate to take time off even when they sincerely need to. Furthermore, their study argued that “the fear associated with taking sick leave” have “the potential to increase presenteeism” (p. 355). As demonstrated in Duxbury & Higgins’ (2012) study, police officers who reported to a non-supportive manager are twice as likely as those who reported to a supportive manager to report high levels of stress and depressed moods” (p. 80).

Discussion
The elements that have been discussed in all of these themes all have shown to be contributors of presenteeism. It was determined that the adaptive coping strategies were used by employees who tried to view stressors through positive lenses, who requested for social support and tried to eliminate their stressors. In contrast, a maladaptive coping strategy is the employee who will have the tendency to vent emotions, who will make use of drug or alcohol, or who will emotionally distance themselves from situations (Padyab, Backteman-Erlanson & Brulin, 2016). Results in lack of productivity is prominent in presenteeism and it is costly to employers.

Upon conducting the research, it was noted that not all the articles and data related to policing or law enforcement; most related to civilian workforces. Selecting the appropriate articles was challenging therefore close examination was crucial and the valued information gathered was then compiled and directly applied to information that came from law enforcement research.

Conclusions or Recommendations
In order to identify individuals who suffer presenteeism Lerner (2016) recommends an indirect assessment relying on self-report. She created a test that relies on human responses, the Work Limitations Questionnaire (WLQ). Upon completing the questionnaire, assessors can determine the level of productivity that has been lost, in comparison to previous assessments.

In order to reduce presenteeism and reduce the human and economic burdens, Lerner (2016) recommends the “Be Well at Work Program” (BWW). She indicates that the program is employee centered, uses a functional approach addressing the medical, psychological and work factors that influence outcome, care is customized to employee preferences and needs, and is coordinated with primary care and/or behavioral healthcare for depression (p. 22). Lerner’s (2016) findings concluded that their program was superior to usual care in restoring work performance and productivity and that it improved mental health to levels obtained with antidepressants (p. 27).

References