

Implementation Guide for the Organizational Self-Care Assessment Tool

Background

Health Outreach Partners (HOP) Organizational Self-Care Assessment Tool (OSCAT) is designed to help health centers and organizations evaluate and improve their practices in supporting the well-being of their employees. To effectively implement the tool, it is crucial to have a comprehensive understanding of its context and purpose.

Acknowledgments

Health Outreach Partners had one in-person session at the Western Forum for Migrant and Community Health and two virtual sessions. These listening sessions were held from February to May of 2024. We collaborated with health professionals, community health workers, organizational leaders, and employees. These stakeholders shared their insights and experiences on effective self-care practices during this period. The sessions aimed to gather valuable feedback and perspectives that were instrumental in shaping the development of the self-care guide. This inclusive approach ensured that the guide reflects a comprehensive understanding of self-care needs and strategies across different roles and perspectives within the community and organizational contexts.

Introduction

Health Outreach Partners (HOP) [Organizational Self-Care Assessment Tool](#) (OSCAT) was developed in the Spring of 2023 to evaluate an organization's self-care policies, practices, and culture. It is divided into five sections, each focusing on a different aspect of organizational self-care. Using the tool, organizations can identify strengths and areas for improvement, fostering a healthier work environment with all employees and, as a result, the patients and communities in which they provide care.

Key Terminology

- **Self-Care:** Practices and policies that support the well-being of employees.
- **Organizational Policies:** Formal guidelines and procedures that govern workplace practices.
- **Mentoring:** Support and guidance provided to employees by more experienced colleagues.
- **Professional Development:** Ongoing education and training to enhance employees' skills and career growth.
- **Organizational Sustainability:** Practices that ensure the long-term health and stability of the organization.

Welcome to the Guide!

The guide will assist you in implementing Health Outreach Partners' Organizational Self-Care Assessment Tool (OSCAT). By following these steps, organizations can proactively foster their employees' well-being, creating a work environment that nurtures personal growth and professional success.

- **Identify OSCAT's Responsibility:** Assign responsibility for employee well-being initiatives to appropriate teams such as human resources, organizational development, operations, or dedicated employee well-being teams.
- **Leverage Expertise:** Utilize insights from these teams regarding organizational policies, practices, and culture that impact self-care and well-being.
- **Understand Nuances in Self-Care:**
 - **Industry Specific:** Tailor self-care initiatives to fit the unique demands of different industries.
 - **Organizational Culture:** Adapt self-care strategies to align with the specific culture and values of the organization.
 - **Company Size:** Recognize how organizational size influences the implementation and effectiveness of self-care programs.
- **Examples of Nuances:**
 - Develop mental resilience programs for employees in high-stress environments (e.g., Outreach workers, providers, administrative staff, etc.)
 - Customize self-care practices to accommodate differing industry norms and work environments.
- **Adapt OSCAT:** Ensure OSCAT is adapted to assess the organization's self-care needs accurately and guide the development of targeted interventions.
- **Take a Holistic Perspective:**
 - Involve staff from various departments and levels in assessing and planning self-care initiatives.
 - Gain comprehensive insights by considering diverse perspectives within the organization.
- **Secure Buy-in for Initiatives:**
 - Foster support for self-care initiatives through inclusive assessment processes.
 - Align initiatives with the organizational context and priorities to gain buy-in from leadership and employees.

Therefore, tailoring the OSCAT to fit the organization's specific characteristics ensures a thorough understanding of self-care needs. This approach facilitates targeted interventions and fosters a supportive workplace environment where employee well-being is prioritized and supported at all levels.

Organizational Self-Care Assessment Tool Guide

Organizational Policies and Practices

This area focuses on evaluating the formal policies and practices within the organization that contribute to employee self-care and well-being. It encompasses an examination of various initiatives designed to support health, wellness, and work-life balance among employees.

01

Employee Supervision and Mentoring

The Role Leadership Can Play in Fostering a Culture of Self-Care

Leadership is instrumental in fostering a culture that prioritizes self-care among employees. This section evaluates the strategies and support mechanisms that leadership employs to promote self-care through effective supervision and mentoring. It examines how leaders set the tone for organizational well-being by demonstrating and encouraging practices that enhance work-life balance, stress management, and overall employee health.

02

04

Organizational Leadership and Structure

Diversity in Leadership Roles

This portion of the tool explores the importance of having a multifaceted leadership team in addressing the diverse needs and perspectives of employees within the organization. It evaluates the representation and inclusivity within the organization's leadership, emphasizing the benefits of eclectic leadership in fostering innovation, empathy, and fairness throughout the organization.

05

Organizational Sustainability

Assessing Retention Rates

This section focuses on evaluating the organization's ability to maintain high retention rates among its employees, which is often a reflection of a supportive and engaging work environment. It examines factors contributing to employee turnover and identifies strategies to enhance retention efforts.

Training and Professional Development

Education and What it Means for the Organization

Section three delves into the critical role that continuous education and training play in fostering both professional growth and self-care among employees. It evaluates the organization's commitment to providing opportunities for learning and development that support the well-being and career advancement of its workforce.

03

Considerations from Listening Sessions Centered on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) Employees

Between February and May 2024, three in-person and virtual listening sessions were held with Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) staff from health centers nationwide to gather insights and recommendations. These sessions provided a platform for BIPOC employees to share their experiences and perspectives on workplace challenges and opportunities. The suggestions presented, including establishing mentorship programs, offering tailored professional development, reviewing policies for inclusivity, providing cultural competency training, and supporting Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), emerged directly from these collaborative discussions.

- **Mentorship Programs:** Establish mentorship programs that pair BIPOC employees with mentors who can provide guidance and support in navigating their career paths.
- **Professional Development:** Offer tailored professional development opportunities that address the specific needs and aspirations of BIPOC employees.
- **Inclusive Policies:** Review and revise organizational policies to ensure they are inclusive and equitable. This includes policies related to hiring, promotion, and workplace conduct. Create a safe and supportive environment where employees feel comfortable discussing their concerns and suggestions.
- **Cultural Competency Training:** Provide ongoing training for all employees on cultural competency and unconscious bias to foster a more inclusive workplace culture. Ensure that facilitators are trained in cultural competency to manage these sessions effectively.
- **Employee Resource Groups (ERGs):** Support the creation of ERGs for BIPOC employees to build community, provide mutual support, and facilitate advocacy within the organization.

Using a binary "yes" or "no" scoring format, the OSCAT simplifies the assessment process and indicates the organization's current level of adherence to self-care

Wrap-Up

Self-Care Group Activities

Implementing group activities can reinforce the importance of self-care and create a supportive work culture. Here are some examples:

1. **Mindfulness and Meditation Sessions:** Organize regular mindfulness and meditation sessions to help employees manage stress and improve mental well-being.
2. **Wellness Workshops:** Conduct workshops on nutrition, exercise, and mental health to educate employees on self-care.
3. **Team-Building Retreats:** Arrange off-site retreats focused on relaxation and team-building activities to strengthen relationships and enhance workplace morale.
4. **Physical Activity Groups:** Encourage employees to form groups for walking, yoga, or sports activities to promote physical health and social interaction.
5. **Creative Expression Sessions:** Offer sessions for activities such as painting, writing, or music to provide employees with creative outlets for stress relief and self-expression.

Useful Resources

To support the implementation of self-care practices, organizations can refer to the following resources:

1. [Employee Assistance Programs \(EAPs\):](#)

- Provide confidential counseling and support services for employees facing personal or professional challenges.

2. [Professional Development Programs:](#)

- Access programs and courses that offer training and development opportunities for employees at all levels. *Examples include [LinkedIn Learning](#) and [Coursera](#).*

3. [Health and Wellness Platforms:](#)

- Utilize platforms like [Headspace](#), [Calm](#), or fitness apps offering mental and physical resources.

4. [Cultural Competency Training Providers:](#)

- Engage with organizations specializing in cultural competency and diversity training to enhance workplace inclusivity.

5. [Industry-Specific Guidelines:](#)

- Refer to guidelines and best practices from industry associations related to employee well-being and organizational health.

6. [Self-Care Literature:](#)

- Distribute books, articles, and online resources on self-care strategies and practices to employees.

7. [Government and Non-Profit Resources:](#)

- Explore resources offered by government agencies and nonprofits focused on workplace wellness and mental health support.

By utilizing these resources and effectively implementing Health Outreach Partners' Organizational Self-Care Assessment Tool, organization

This publication is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$847,285 with 0% financed with non-governmental sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit [HRSA.gov](#).