



### SYNOPSIS

#### Introduction to Mental Health

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**Key words:** Mental Health, Workers Compensation

**Synopsis:** Building off the paper presented at the Actuaries Summit (Mental Health and its impact on the insurance industry), this session aims to assist the wider actuarial community in developing an understanding of mental health conditions, the growing awareness of these and the social challenges they present. We intend to provide the audience a pathway to understand this topic better. We will explore the myths currently surrounding mental health and discuss the issues from three perspectives – occupational health and safety, claims management, and the actuarial view. A key element of the session will be to discuss and workshop whether our profession is doing enough and what more we are able to do to assist in this space.

Whilst everyone is aware of the issue of mental health in our society, few know the statistics implying that mental health (specifically depression) will be the second leading cause of DALY's (disability-adjusted life years) lost by the year 2020<sup>1</sup>, only behind heart disease. Naturally, this will have significant impact in areas where mental health is already known to be prominent and perhaps will venture into areas of insurance unseen before. This is a significant societal issue and we are keen to discuss how and where the profession can provide its support.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: World Health Report 2001 – Mental Health: New Understanding, New Hope.