

# The Leslie Group and CanadianSME Magazine Announce Expert Panel on Mental Health

*Nearly half of Canadians report considering a post-pandemic career change. A lack of support for employee mental health and wellness is a leading reason why.*

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA, June 7, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Leslie Group, Canada's leading independent employee benefits consultancy, announced today that it will host an expert panel on employee mental health as part of the upcoming CanadianSME Expo 2021, in collaboration with CanadianSME Magazine.

The panel, Mental Health Matters: The Bottom Line on Employee Mental Health, will run on June 22 at 12:15pm

(EDT) and will feature leading experts in industry and technology. The discussion will explore the unique challenges faced by small and medium-sized businesses and employees, and explore strategies and technologies that are enabling improved accessibility and outcomes.

Panelists include Yolanda Billinkoff, Head of Sales at ALAViDA, a digital substance use management and treatment platform; Stéphan Belair, Program Director for Mental Health at Dialogue, Canada's leading telemedicine company; Darcy Michaud, CEO and Chief HR Consultant, HRprimed, an HR expertise-on-demand platform; and James Gardiner, Founder of FIRSTAR Therapy and co-creator of "Workplace Wellness", a virtual wellness program. The panel will be moderated by Aneesa Toor, Director of Group Benefits at The Leslie Group.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been an unprecedented challenge for Canadian SMEs. Surveys suggest that employee burnout is at an all-time high and experts are concerned that the challenges of remote work, homeschooling, and disruption to elder and childcare



arrangements, coupled with the stress, anxiety, isolation, and uncertainty of the crisis will lead to a mental health crisis even as the economy reopens.

“Mental illness and mental health challenges cost the Canadian economy over \$51 billion annually. It is the leading cause of disability claims, absenteeism, and reduced productivity” said Shawn Leslie, President and CEO of The Leslie Group.

“Roughly one in two Canadians will experience a mental health challenge by the time they reach 40. As we hopefully turn the corner on the pandemic, small and medium-sized businesses will face a new challenge that they cannot afford to ignore. New technology provides a roadmap for delivering critical mental health services at an affordable and accessible price point for all employers” added Shawn.



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*Shawn Leslie, President and CEO, The Leslie Group*

Nearly half of surveyed Canadians report considering a job change post-pandemic, most citing reasons such as dissatisfaction with their employer's response to the pandemic, increased mental stress, and a lack of support for mental health.

“This panel comes at a critical time for Canadian SMEs. New strategies to support mental health and wellness will pay dividends in reduced employee turnover, recruiting, and training costs, as well as lower long-term healthcare costs for employers, said SK Uddin, Founder CanadianSME Magazine.

The CanadianSME Expo 2021 runs June 21-22 and [registration](#) is free for businesses. The Mental Health Matters panel will feature on June 22 at 12:15pm (EDT). In addition to the panel, registrants are invited to join The Leslie Group at their virtual exhibit, where they will host their panel partners to discuss the challenges faced by Canadian SMEs in the post-covid business landscape.

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## About The Leslie Group

The Leslie Group is Canada's fastest-growing independent employee benefits consulting firm with clients located across Canada. The firm has full access to the group benefits marketplace with significant leverage to negotiate effectively with all prospective insurance companies. They work with clients to manage both their existing group insurance benefits and group retirement programs and provide in-house education and communication services. The Leslie Group can implement new or enhanced group benefits programs with competitive and sustainable pricing as well as plan designs that are competitive within clients' benchmark standards, meeting the needs of both the employer and its employees. The Leslie Group is headquartered in Toronto with satellite offices across Canada. To learn more visit [www.lesliegroup.com](http://www.lesliegroup.com)

## About the CanadianSME Business Expo 2021

The CanadianSME Business Expo is the largest gathering of Canadian small and medium enterprises. The expo will feature 40 speakers, 5 workshops and 5 panels made up of Canadian business leaders, entrepreneurs, and technologists who will share their experience and expertise. The Expo runs from June 21-22, 10:30am - 4:30pm EDT. For more information on speakers, workshops and to register, go to [www.smeexpo.ca](http://www.smeexpo.ca).

## About CanadianSME Magazine

A national publication with a big vision. CanadianSME signifies the empowerment of Canadian SMEs and aims to pursue this mission with the launch of CanadianSME Business Magazine to equip SMEs with expert knowledge and insights from industry leaders. CanadianSME business magazine incorporates compelling content and provides shelter to the business needs of small and medium scale enterprises. CanadianSME Business Magazine was created through the passion and admiration for entrepreneurs. With SMEs playing such a crucial role in Canada's business industry and contributing greatly to the economy, CanadianSME was built to provide a much-needed support system for hard-working business owners.

See how at <https://www.canadiansme.ca/>

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