



Promising Practices to Address  
**FEMINIST BRAIN DRAIN**  
Compensation, Benefits,  
and Professional Development

Promising Practices to address concerns related to wages, benefits, and training

## 1 Benefits

- **Mental health benefits** – access to counselling or therapy. It was often acknowledged that these were too low compared to the cost of mental health resources. Many organizations have implemented an Employee Assistance Plan (EAP)<sup>1</sup> as a supplement.
- **On-site counselling for staff.** A professional who can focus on burnout, trauma, stress, and compassion fatigue (e.g. therapist or traumatologist).
- **Benefits are available** for part-time, contract, and relief or casual staff, not only full-time staff
- **Personal, vacation, and sick days** are available for all staff. Staff feel like these can be freely used.
- **Mental health or wellness days**
- Provision of a **yearly training budget for staff**

## 2 Compensation

- **Shift premiums for evenings or weekends**, which are more difficult to staff.
- **Shift premiums for staff who need to work in the shelter/TH**, compared to those who work from home.
- Provisions of **dedicated funds for retirement purposes** (e.g. shelter pension fund or contribution to an RRSP).
- **Salary increases** and small bonuses at the end of the year.

## 3 Employee Swaps

- Proposed idea not yet implemented: **Staff trade positions** (or shadow other positions) to encourage skill development and cross-training. It was suggested that this could happen across organizations, not only within individual shelters/THs. This could bring new ideas and innovations to teams and organizations.

<sup>1</sup> For more information about what EAP is, see <https://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com/resources/what-is-an-employee-assistance-program>