



Promising Practices to Address
FEMINIST BRAIN DRAIN
and Workload and Work-life Balance

Promising Practices to support staff with their workloads and to increase staff work-life balance

1 Four-day work week

The concern raised is that this is incompatible with frontline work, but here are two examples:

- A **condensed 40-hour week**, which meant a longer weekend, but also longer daily hours.
- A **32–35-hour work week**.

2 Shifts

Workers want a **stable schedule**. These are some ways to accommodate this:

- Ending shift rotations so that people would always have the same schedule. This included:
 - Creating a three-day, one-afternoon shift schedule, giving more time off and consistency
 - Three days on, three days off on 12-hour shifts. This is similar to nursing schedules.
 - Accommodating people's preferred shifts as much as possible (days, evenings, weekends)
- Importance of **double staffing** so that people had support and safety, particularly for evening and weekend shifts

3 Flexibility

Several organizations tried to bring **more flexibility to the work**. Examples included:

- **Every other Friday**, staff work from home and this is often a **short day**
- **Hybrid work**, which was appreciated by staff when they were mildly sick, but did not want to lose a day of pay
- **Accommodate work-life balance** and provide flexibility in work. Frontline staff indicated that they could move hours around or make up time to do personal things like go to appointments or family events.
- If staff needed to work additional hours or on a weekend, they could take those days or hours as **personal time** during the week
- Allowing **staff to make their own schedule**, as long as they were able to continue supporting their clients
- **Taking timeouts or breaks**. This was especially important after working through a difficult circumstance or case. These might be very short, but were a needed and appreciated reset.