



ICAO

# INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION

A UN SPECIALIZED AGENCY

RECONNECTING **THE** WORLD

# Activities of the ICAO Mental Health Working Group

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## DISCLOSURE

I have no actual or potential financial conflicts of interest in relation to this presentation.

This presentation does not contain confidential information but does cover some activities which are still ongoing. Please contact ICAO for up-to-date information if you wish to quote the material covered.

While the presentation will mostly cover published ICAO work, when opinions are expressed they represent the opinion of the presenter and not the International Civil Aviation Organisation.

## TOPICS COVERED

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**01** Importance of mental health  
in aviation

**02** ICAO and the Mental Health  
Working Group (MHWG)

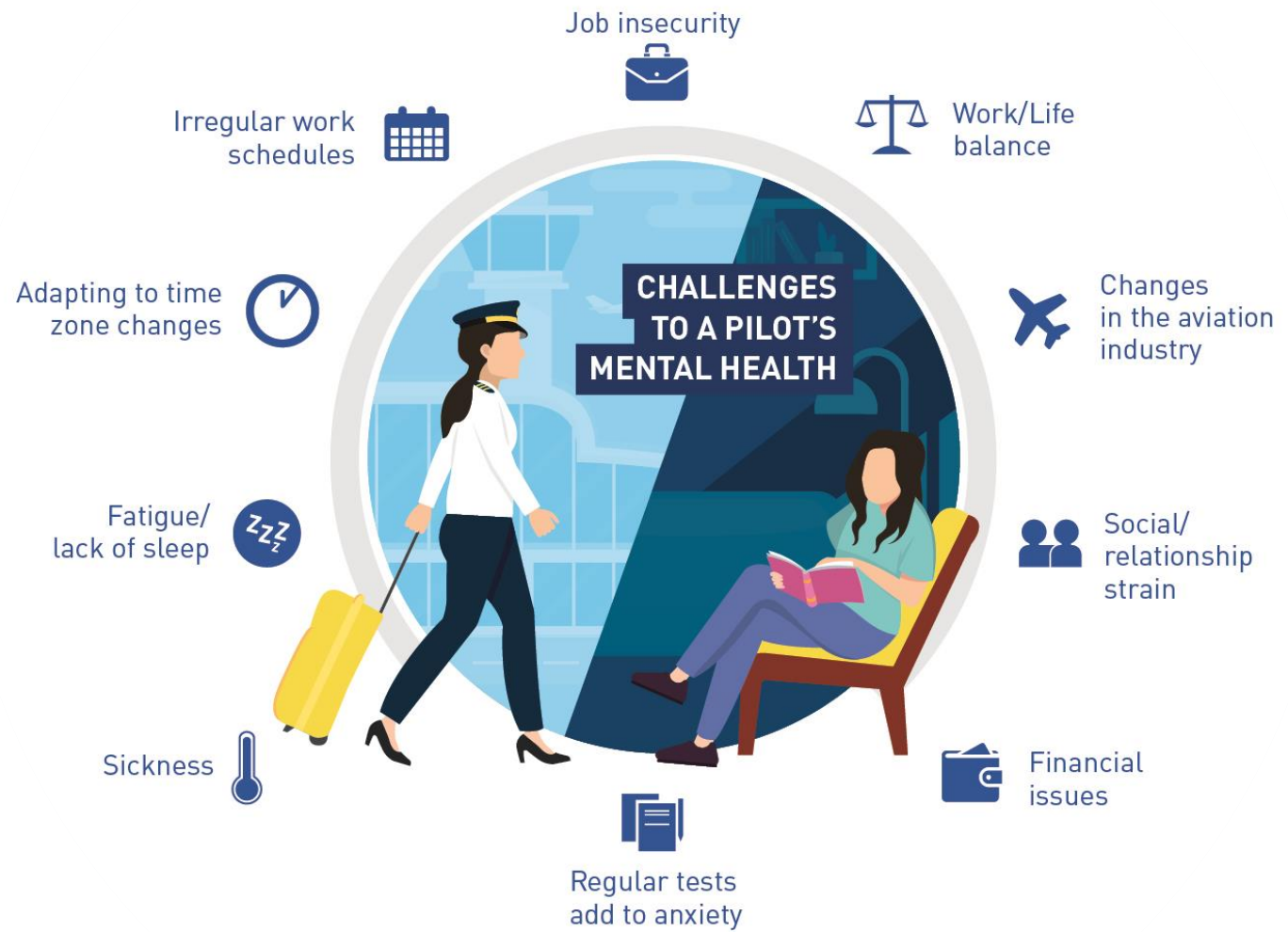
**03** Aviation MH Framework and  
Continua

**04** Promotion of mental health  
in aviation

**05** Developments in peer  
support

**06** Next steps and question

# 01 Importance of mental health in aviation



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# IMPORTANCE OF MENTAL HEALTH IN AVIATION

- Historical background of aviation mental health
- From “aeroneurosis” to the “right stuff”
- Germanwings Flight 9525 and the formation of the MHWG
- Covid-19 pandemic
- ICAO’s Electronic Bulletin on *Promoting, maintaining and supporting mental well-being in aviation during the Covid-19 pandemic* (EB2020/55)

## 02 ICAO and the Mental Health Working Group



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# ICAO AND MENTAL HEALTH

- Annex 1
- Aviation Medicine Section, the MWHG and other working groups
- ICAO's High-level Conference on Covid-19 (HLCC)
- ICAO's 41<sup>st</sup> Assembly working papers and States' response
- ICAO's Electronic Bulletin on *Promoting, maintaining and supporting mental well-being in aviation during the Covid-19 pandemic* (EB2020/55)



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# RECONNECTING THE WORLD



6.2.1.3 *Examination of the nervous system.* The examination of the nervous system of the candidate shall include a full inquiry into family and personal medical history. The information obtained shall be given in a statement made and signed by the candidate. He must be free from any history of morbid mental or nervous trouble. The candidate must not present any mental or trophic impairment, pathological tremor, or presumptive evidence of latent epilepsy. Motility, sensibility, tendinous, cutaneous and pupillary reflexes, co-ordination of movements and cerebellar functions must be normal. An exception may be made for local peripheral trouble due to accidental section of a nerve branch.

03

## Aviation MH Framework and Continua



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## ICAO MED SECTION AVIATION MENTAL HEALTH FRAMEWORK

- ICAO works to **PROMOTE** mental health in aviation.
- ICAO gives guidance on how to **ASSESS** mental health in safety-sensitive personnel.
- ICAO provides **SUPPORT** to stakeholders to strengthen mental health in aviation.

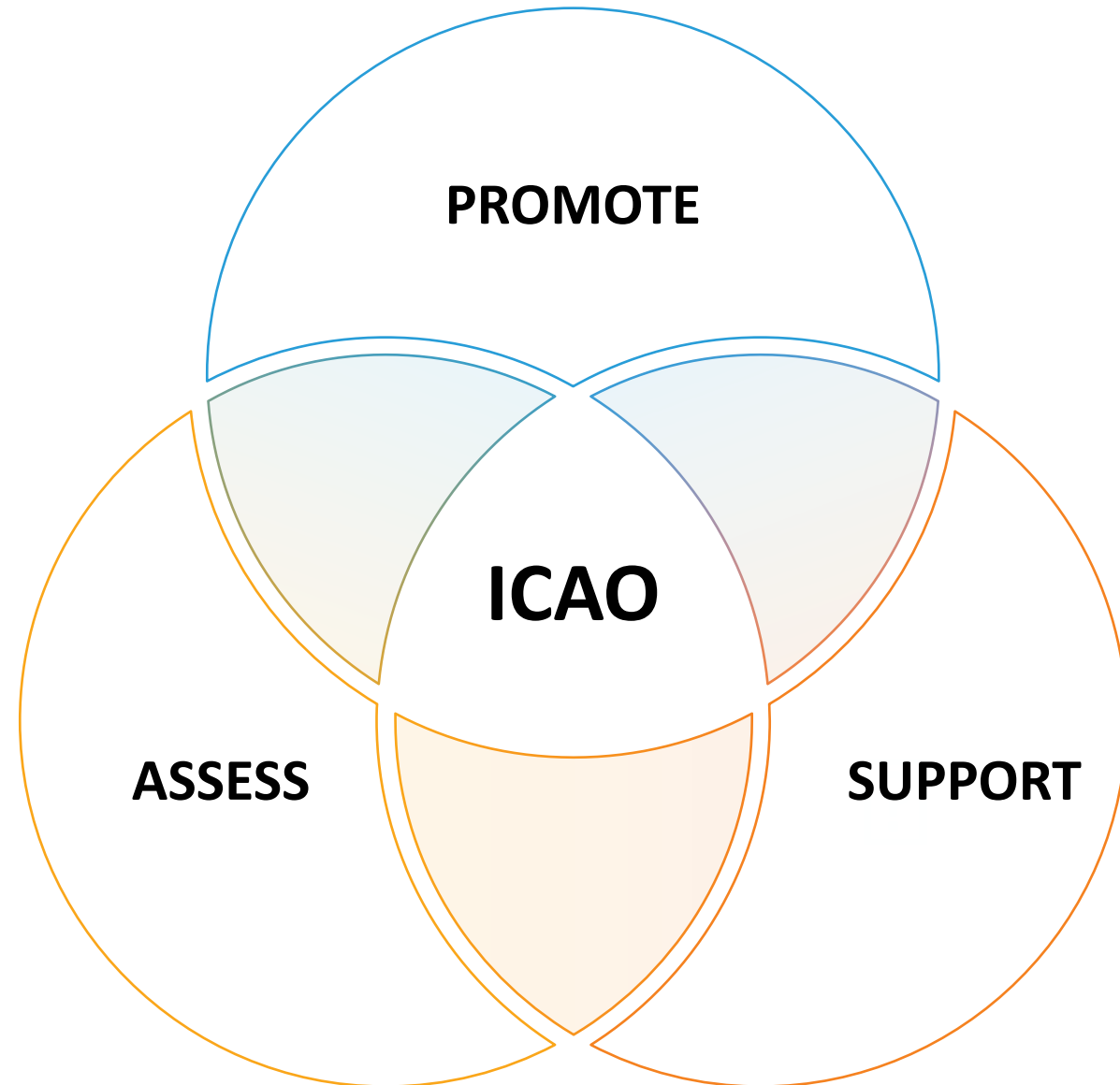
## ICAO MED Section Aviation Mental Health Framework

ICAO affects aviation mental health by publishing SARP's and Statements; Documents and Manuals; PANS Health; and Guidelines, best practices and more.

ICAO **promotes** mental health through endorsing health promotions; peer support; specific aviation MH initiatives and more.

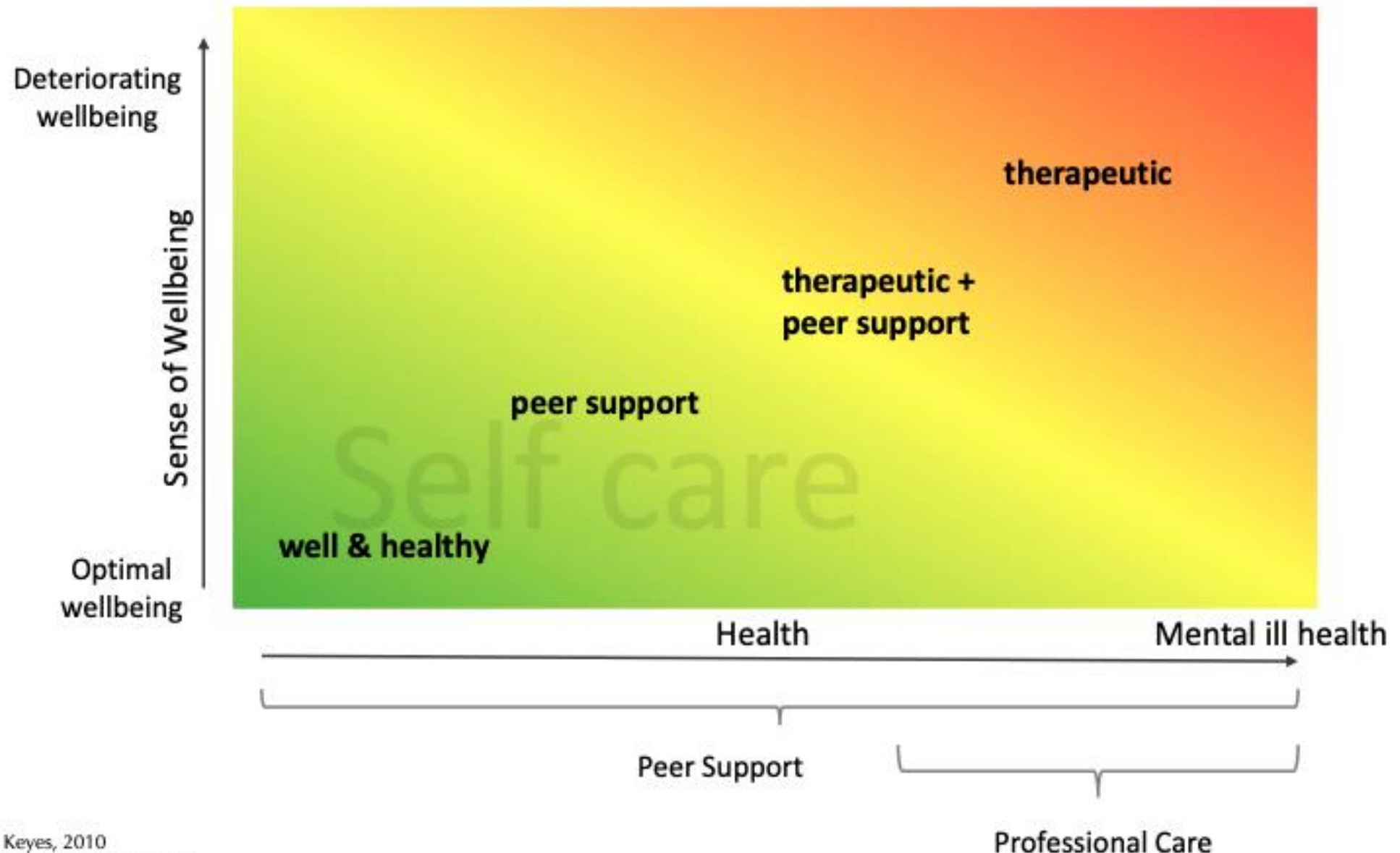
ICAO provides **support** to regulators; aviation industry; healthcare providers and more.

ICAO provides guidance on how to **assess** safety-sensitive personnel to aeromedical experts, specialists and other operational personnel (human-in-the-system).



# Mental Health and Wellbeing Continua

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Modified from Keyes, 2010  
Santilhano, 2018, Fahnenbruck, 2020

## 04 Promotion of mental health in aviation



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## PROMOTION OF MENTAL HEALTH IN AVIATION

- ICAO's Fitness-to-Fly manual.
- Aviation mental health “Principles of Support”
- Health Promotions
- Increased stakeholder awareness and education

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## ICAO AVIATION MENTAL HEALTH TERMINOLOGY

- Has been reviewed by the MHWG. Will form part of the proposed Aviation Medicine Terminology.
- Goal was to create a easy-to-use reference document that contains definitions of relevant mental health used in aviation; provide core definition for contested/unclear terms; and give indication for scope of mental health field in aviation
- Forms a living document but so far 348 aviation and aviation mental health terms have been listed and defined.

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## Developments in peer support



## ICAO ON PEER SUPPORT

*“A formal Peer Support Programme provides an emotionally safe, non-judgmental environment, where confidential information can be shared. Peers are well-trained and skilled colleagues, who are trustworthy, share common professional qualifications and experiences, may have encountered similar situations, usually work within the same or similar operational context and can relate to his or her colleague’s situation.”*



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## PEER SUPPORT IN AVIATION

- Response following Germanwings (e.g. EASA, FAA ARC Report, Australia, etc.)
- Upcoming ICAO Document 10185 “Manual on Critical Incident Response Programmes for Cabin Crew”
- Upcoming ICAO Circular on Peer Support

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## PROBLEMATIC USE OF PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES

- Sub-group of the MHWH
- Updating Document 9654, the “Manual on Prevention of Problematic Use of Psychoactive Substances in the Aviation Workplace”
- Considerable changes since 1995 when the Manual was first published.

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## Next steps & Questions

For further information  
contact  
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Thank You