

Member Support and Wellness

Essential Ingredients for Mental Health
in the Workplace

Police Services Board
April 21, 2021



Overview

- Occupational Stress Injuries
- Optimizing organizational health
- Member Wellness Unit
- Programs and Services



Occupational Stress Injuries

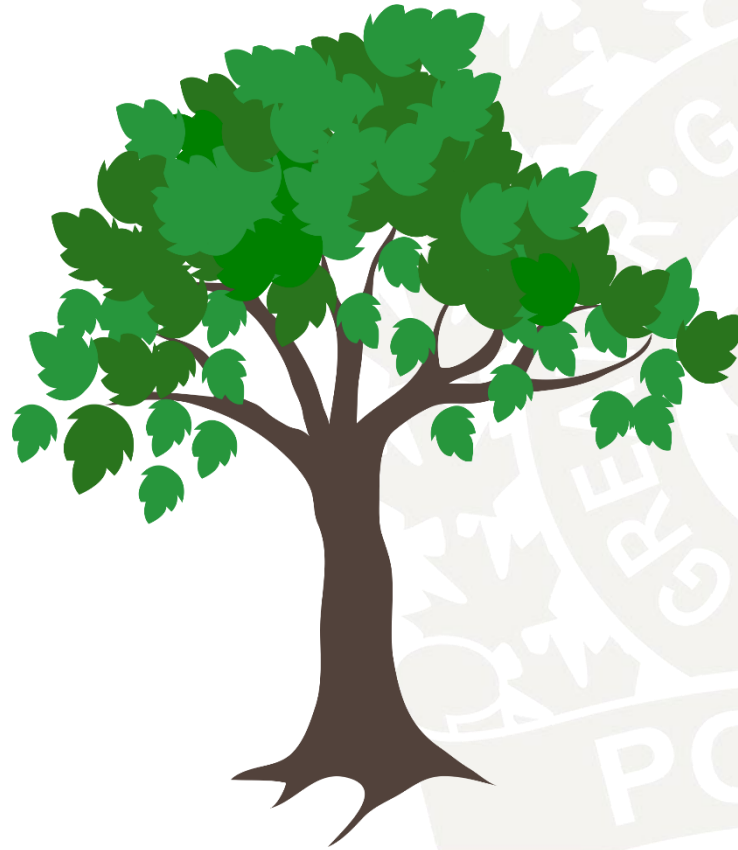
Wide acceptance that policing is one of the most stressful occupations: Why?

- Types of calls
- Exposure to confrontation and violence
- Day to day involvement with traumatic events and death
- Daily work with offenders
- Shiftwork
- Exposure to communicable diseases
- High level of public accountability
- Highly disturbing situations
- Suicides, homicides, vehicle collisions, serious injury, etc.

PTSD – WSIB presumptive injury 2017.



Essential Ingredients to Workplace Wellness: Mental Health Strategy A Journey of Growth and Evolution



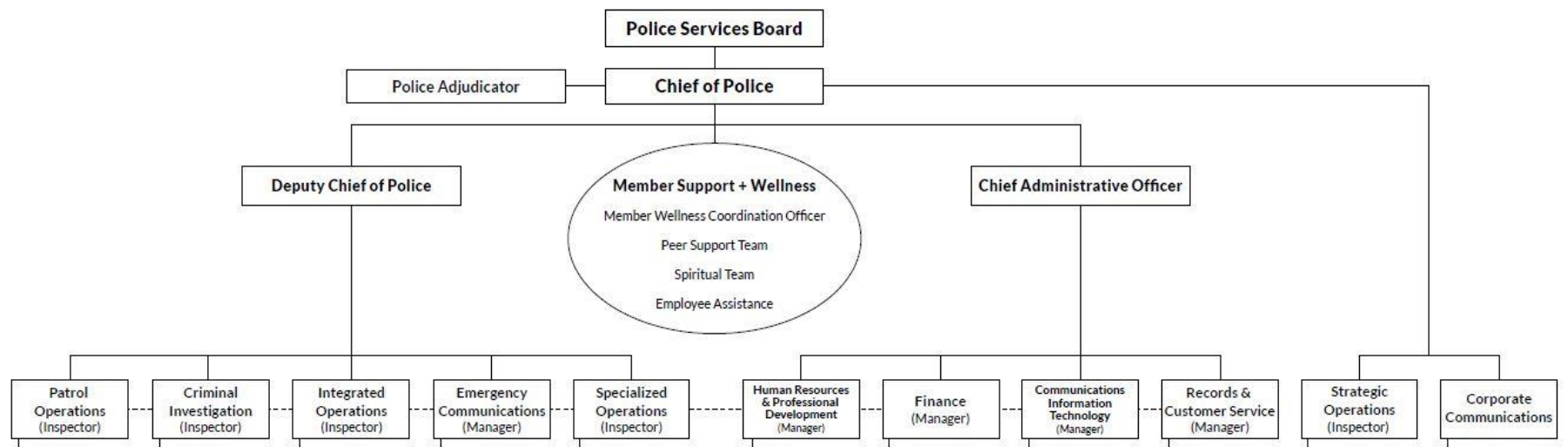
Essential Ingredients of Member Wellness

- Blue Balance Wellness
- Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP)
- Best Practices – Research and Evidence-Based
- Benefits & Income Protection Plan
- Critical Incident Support Unit
- Fitness and Nutrition
- Training and Awareness
- 10-78 Talks and Warrior's Coffee
- Human Resources Health & Ability Claim Coordinator
- Onboarding and Orientation
- Member Wellness Coordination Officer
- Professional Psychologists
- Early and Safe Return to Work
- Self-Care
- Peer Support
- Mental Readiness and Resilience
- Inclusion Team
- Coaching and Supervision
- Reward and Recognition
- Spiritual Team
- Police Association
- Mental Health Supports
- Respectful Workplace



Member Empowerment

- Creation of stand-alone Member Support & Wellness Unit
- Key coordination area for member access to confidential resources through Member Wellness Coordination Officer
 - Member-driven through lived experience
 - Not driven from the top – supported from the top of the organization
 - Supported by supervision
 - Peer-driven and self-driven through encouragement and empowerment



Experience

- Member Wellness Coordination Officer: Constable James Jefferson
- Member with PTSD: lived experience after fatal on-duty shooting
- Return to work plan in non-operational police role
- Proposed an innovative internal position



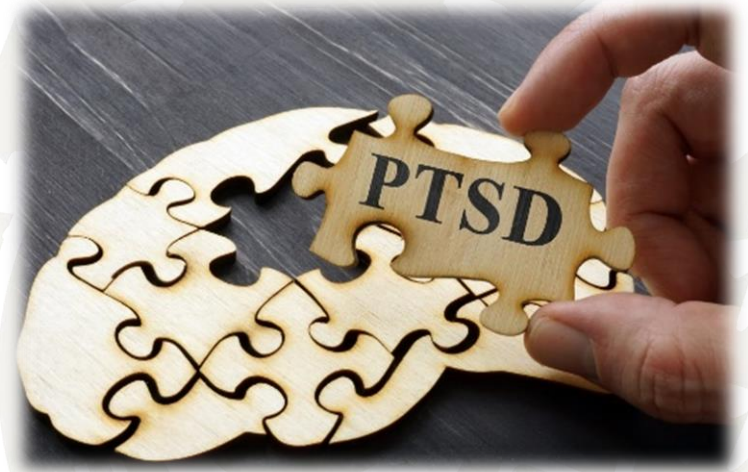
Member Wellness Coordination Officer

- Crucial position introduced in 2019
- Specializes in mental health support and physical wellness
- Works with supervisors assisting members
- Trained in assisting individuals in crisis, group crisis intervention, mental health first aid, building resiliency and suicide intervention/prevention
- Assists members who need support; makes referrals; maintains contact and seeks alternatives
- Monitors reports for critical incidents and/or trends involving members and calls for service
- Researches best practices in police mental health supports



Member Wellness Coordination Officer

- Member engagement pre, post and during employment with a focus on member wellness
- Early identification and referral to treatment – Self-care and member reliance; assisting members with PTSD
- Certified in personal training, healthy eating and weight loss
- Certified fitness appraiser
- Assists with workplace re-entry
- Chair of the Peer Support Unit, Critical Incident Support Unit and Anti-Police Reform
- Many positive impacts and successes



Member Testimonials

- “He not only taught me how to use the gym. He taught me self-love, self-assurance and how to push myself ... I have become a more well-rounded and productive employee.”
- “Having his support was vital and important to my mental health recovery.”
- “Cst. Jefferson TRULY understands all of stressors police officers experience. I whole heartedly believe that no other support worker could replicate his position, nor could they be as approachable as he's "one of us.”
- “Constable Jefferson’s way of understanding mental health and his non-judgmental way of communicating made me feel hopeful and gave me the momentum I needed to get better.”
- “The program that has been built by the GSPS is envied throughout the province as I know I have touted the effort not only of Cst. Jefferson but the leadership of Senior Command to many officers from other police services who do not have such a program.”



Podcasts

- <https://open.spotify.com/episode/5G9NM9WzC3tvXYUbTPCSiM> - UpTalk Podcast - October 2019
- <https://www.behindbluelines.co.uk/the-podcast/> - Behind Blue Lines - September 2020
- <https://www.blueline.ca/blue-line-the-podcast-const-james-jefferson-greater-sudbury-police-service/> - Blueline Magazine the Podcast – October 2020
- <https://oc87recoverydiaries.org/> - Author @ OC87 Recovery Diaries January 2021
- <https://psychcentral.com/blog/psy-26013> - PsychCentral - Inside Mental Health Podcast – March 2021



Human Resources Health and Ability Claim Coordinator

- Assists Members with Disability claims (PHD/STD/LTD/WSIB)
- Provides information and access to mental health avenues
- Assists members with early and safe return to work
- Supports members alongside the Member Wellness Coordination Officer and Supervisors
- Committed to a holistic approach to member wellness



Onboarding and Orientation

- All members should have general discussions about self-care and stressors of law enforcement prior to going to college and should meet with the Member Wellness Coordination Officer

New members should receive literature and have discussions on:

- Work-life balance, self-care, nutrition and work stressors
- Internal services available to members i.e. EAP, Health & Wellness, Peer Support
- Income Protection Plan program
- Receive a copy of Kevin Gilmartin's book "Emotional Survival for Law Enforcement"



Coaching and Supervision

- Crucial to effective member wellness program
- Supervisory supports for members
- Assisting members with workplace concerns
- Referring to services
- Monitoring Fitness for Duty
- Early identification and treatment interventions
- Working with HR on return to work solutions following periods of absence



Training and Awareness

- Ensuring ongoing training and awareness to members on available supports
- Use of External Subject Matter Experts
- Road to Mental Readiness Training (R2MR)
- Resiliency Training
- Continual research and best practices
- Wounded Warriors
 - Trauma Informed Workplace Training
 - Trauma Informed Leadership
 - Creating Resiliency and Hope for Ill and Injured



Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Private and confidential service

• Short-term counselling services for employees and family members:

- Marital, Child & Family
- Job pressures
- Stress
- Substance abuse
- Anxiety
- Financial
- Depression
- Grief
- Legal



Blue Balance Wellness

- Internal member-driven committee engaging members to maintain balanced and healthy personal and professional lifestyle
- Provides guidance and leadership in workplace wellness initiatives
- Plans and organizes events such as employee appreciation, wellness challenges, etc.
- Fitness: encourages fitness, maintains on-site gym facility, promotes fitness facility memberships, has certified fitness trainers, maintains Annual Fitness PIN incentive Program
- Regular communications i.e. wallet cards, wellness information on internal website



Peer Support

- Provides an “in-house” resource consisting of specially trained members to assist members in accessing services
- Recognizes the possible reactions, signs, and symptoms of stress – reaching out to members proactively
- Lends support in managing both personal and professional crisis
- Available through hand-held application
- New and now available through **PeerConnect**: a new app that provides quick access to Peer Support Team members and to resources online



Critical Incident Support

- Formally known as Critical Incident Stress Debriefing
- Focus: Early intervention and identification of symptoms following critical incidents.
- Goal: To provide support and assistance and mitigate cumulative effects that may lead to PTSD by:
 - Conducting Defusings and Debriefings
 - Educating to prevent further, more serious difficulties
 - Providing information on other resources available such as EAP and Peer Support Assistance



Professional Psychologists and Other Treatment Providers

- Available to provide directed psychological referral and/or assessments
- Assist members on member request, or by a peer/supervisor
- Mandatory check-in for certain units
- Annual wellness check-ins
- Specialized units receive one-on-one and/or discussion groups



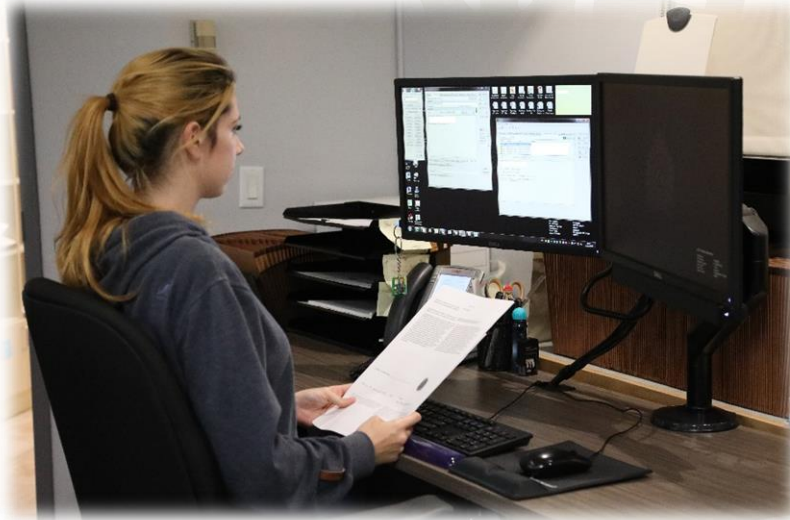
Sudbury Police Association

- “Reach Out Committee”
- Volunteer group of members who provide help with routine daily activities when members are off due to illness or injury
- Snow shoveling, lawn maintenance, cleaning, meals, driving to appointments, etc.



Early and Safe Return to Work

- Income Protection Plan
- WSIB Claims Management
- Early and Safe Return to Work Program – promoted/encouraged/supported by the organization
- Working within limitations and abilities



GSPS Spiritual Team

- Supports the spiritual and emotional well-being of members and families through walk-about/reach out availability
- Assists and supports employees in a variety of ways
 - Ceremonial functions
 - Police funerals
 - Marriages
 - Other special events



Warrior's Coffee

- Warrior's Coffee is a group meeting where informal discussions are held on various topics in order to standardize and gain perspective from each other on issues affecting us in this profession and in life.
- Topics discussed include:
 - Healthy Coping Techniques
 - Depression/Anxiety/PTSD
 - Mental Health Professionals
 - Workplace Stress/Stress Leave/Return to Work
 - Spousal Relationships/Divorce



10-78 Talks

- Members and their spouses are invited to an intimate evening with internal guest speakers.
- The speakers go beyond the surface into their unique journeys in policing, family, professional challenges and growth.
- 10-78 Talks provide a night of truth, transformation and celebration.
- “Together we rise, we heal, we overcome”



Respectful Workplace

A place to work where employees:

- feel safe
 - are treated fairly
 - understand the importance of respect for equality, dignity and human rights
-
- Focus is on achieving resolutions to workplace conflict, harassment and discrimination



Rewards and Recognition

- Research shows that feeling appreciated makes a person feel good
- Appropriate and fair reward and recognition improves worker self esteem and self-image
- Examples: Written commendation, Nickel Awards, Employee Appreciation, Long Service Recognition, Our Shared Commitment Awards, In the Spotlight



Outside Resources

- Many outside resources are available and readily accessible online
- Maintain an inventory
- Publish the services members can access
- Available through video or phone



Work-Life Balance and Health – It's in our hands!

**Our Members are our most
valuable resource.**

