

Effective Emergency Service Employee Health and Wellbeing Support

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service



'1 in 3 people in the blue light services will experience a mental health problem in any one year.....

..... and are less likely than the general public to seek help or support'

(MIND Research)

Our main challenge was trying to change a culture...



Occupational Health

- Full time Occupational Health Team - 5 days a week
- Employee Assistance Programme 24/7
- Referrals to CBT/Counselling
- Service Chaplain
- Firefighters Charity
- Health Promotions
- Stress Risk Assessments

Mental Health First Aid



- The MHFA courses are aimed at those people without specialist mental health training who might encounter mental health issues in their work
- MHFA – 6 trainers -2 full day course to qualify as a Mental Health First aiders – includes all Senior Officers and Authority Members
- Mental Health First Aid is delivered to every recruit firefighter
- MHFA Lite - 1/2 day introduction to mental health awareness – Approximately 40% of the workforce have received this training with the aim to train all staff in a minimum of MHFA Lite
- Youth MHFA – 2 OH staff are now instructors of the Youth Mental Health First Aid programme. Delivery for our young people for example Princes Trust and Cadet Team Managers



Critical Incident Stress Management

- MFRS recognise that personnel are likely to be exposed to potentially traumatic incidents
- After we scoped for 12 months, CISM was introduced in 2013

'A service critical incident is any situation faced by personnel that may cause them to experience unusually strong emotions which could possibly affect their ability to function either at the scene/in work or later on'.

- **Stage 1:**
- **Stage 2:**
- **Stage 3:**



MIND Blue Light Programme

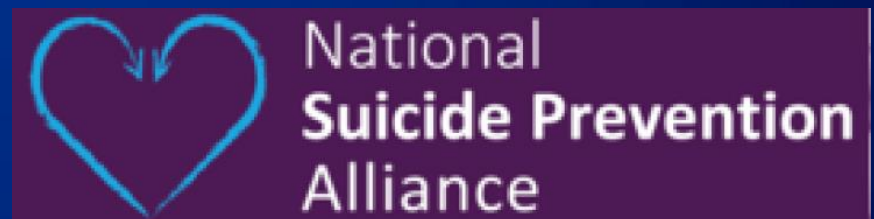
- After phase 1 – further funding was made available
- Wirral MIND was successful so we created a Merseyside Blue Light Services Mental Health Strategy
- Time to Change Pledge
- Network of Blue Light Champions
- Joint video of blue light staff plus a fire specific video – our people talking about their own experiences

Family Liaison Officers

- The main role of the FLO is to act as the main point of contact between the bereaved family and the Service
- Communicate with the family, build trust and provide emotional and practical support
- Be able to signpost the family towards Service departments or external organisations that may be able to offer extra support
- Our Lead FLO is a qualified counsellor and specialised in bereavement support. The Lead and Deputy coordinators receive external training to a suitable level regarding the complex issues involved in traumatic response and bereavement. The process is complemented by the Service Chaplain.

Suicide

Our staff know about suicide.



Our workforce is well placed...so what about our communities?

- NFCC MH sub group – leading 2 work streams:
 - Suicide Prevention
 - Mental health training



NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council



Public Health
England



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health

Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health

This is to recognise that

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service

is a signatory to the **Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health consensus statement and has committed to:**

- join the shift towards prevention-focused leadership and action throughout the mental health system; and into the wider system
- promote cross-sectoral action to deliver an increased focus on the prevention of mental health problems and the promotion of good mental health at local level
- draw on the expertise of people with lived experience of mental health problems, and the wider community, to identify solutions and promote equality
- promote a prevention-focused approach towards improving the public's mental health
- collaborate across organisational boundaries and disciplines to secure place-based improvements tailored to local needs and assets
- build the capacity and capability across our workforce
- support others to adopt this Concordat and its approach

November 2019

Duncan Selbie
Duncan Selbie
Chief Executive
Public Health England

Clare Perkins
Clare Perkins
Deputy Director – Public Mental Health
Public Health England

Outcomes

- Reduction in long term sickness by over 50% since 2014/15
- Staff survey results 2018
- Out of 864 replies:
 - 85% consider they have benefitted from support through our Occupational Health Team
 - 89% stated that in general their health was good
- Winners of National Positive Practice in Mental Health
Mental Health And Wellbeing of Staff Award x 2
- Published
'A happy, healthy workplace. Workforce wellbeing, recruitment and retention in mental health services' (endorsed by NCCMH)

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Fire service champions mental health

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Chief Fire Officer Phil Garrigh, Senior Occupational Health Officer & Psychologist Therapist Kelly Pottorign and Group Manager Mark Thomas at the House of Commons during the launch of 'A Happy, Healthy Workplace'.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service (MFRS) is leading the charge in raising awareness and championing mental health within the fire and rescue community. The mission

EMERGENCY SERVICES
A global in fire protection

Novoc
Protect what matters.

PRE-DESIGNED EPOXY COATED STORAGE TANKS
FOR THE FIRE SPRINKLER & FIRE-FIGHTING INDUSTRY

TRAIN FOR EVER BE PREPARED FOR ANY

NFPA GET FIRE PROTECTION TRAINING



The future

- National Suicide Prevention Alliance members
- Suicide Training online and ASIST training
- Workplace Wellbeing Charter (renewal)
- Mental health assessments as part of the firefighter two yearly health screenings
- Working with Liverpool Samaritans
- Zero Suicide Alliance – membership and training

Thank You

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