

Emergency Services Update on Occupational Stress Injury

**Emergency Services Committee
August 8, 2016**



Objectives

- Occupational Stress Injury (OSI)
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Bill 163, Supporting Ontario's First Responders Act
- Emergency Services plan moving forward



Steering Committee

Traumatic Mental Health Steering Committee

- Formed in Summer of 2014
- Building Sustainability
- Long term vision
- Success to date
 - Peer Support Network (official launch early fall 2016)
 - Evidenced based decision making
 - Medical oversight



Legislation

Bill 163 – Supporting Ontario's First Responders Act (PTSD)

- Occupational Health and Safety Act came into effect March 21, 2016
- First Responders website
- PTSD Resource Toolkit
- Employers must publish PTSD plans by April 23, 2017



Traumatic Mental Stress

What is Occupational Stress Injury (OSI)?

- Causes
- Risk factors
- Sign and Symptoms
- Impact
 - on staff
 - on the organization



Traumatic Mental Stress

What is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)?

- Causes
- Risk factors
- Sign and Symptoms
- Statistics
- Impact
 - on staff
 - on the organization



Emergency Services

Incidents since 2012

- 31 (reported) psychological incidents
- 27 referrals for psychological care in Paramedic Services
- 4 referrals for psychological care in Fire Services
- Specialized counselling for first responders cost more than \$54,000



Fire Services

Interventions

- History
- Building a collaborative approach
- Challenges
 - Employee burnout
 - Challenges with a volunteer system



Paramedic Services

Interventions

- Critical Incident Downtime policy
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Champion
- Improved Access to Counselling
- Exposure reports
- Focus on training & education for Paramedics
 - Stress awareness and avoidance
 - Death and Dying
 - Road to Mental Readiness (fall 2016)



Summary

Emergency Services is continuing to explore new opportunities to reduce the stigma of mental illness, while increasing awareness and prevention to better support our first responders.



Questions

