

Appleton Police Department



Date: October 14, 2015
From: Lt. Polly Olson
RE: Outagamie County Peer Support Program

Outagamie County Chiefs-

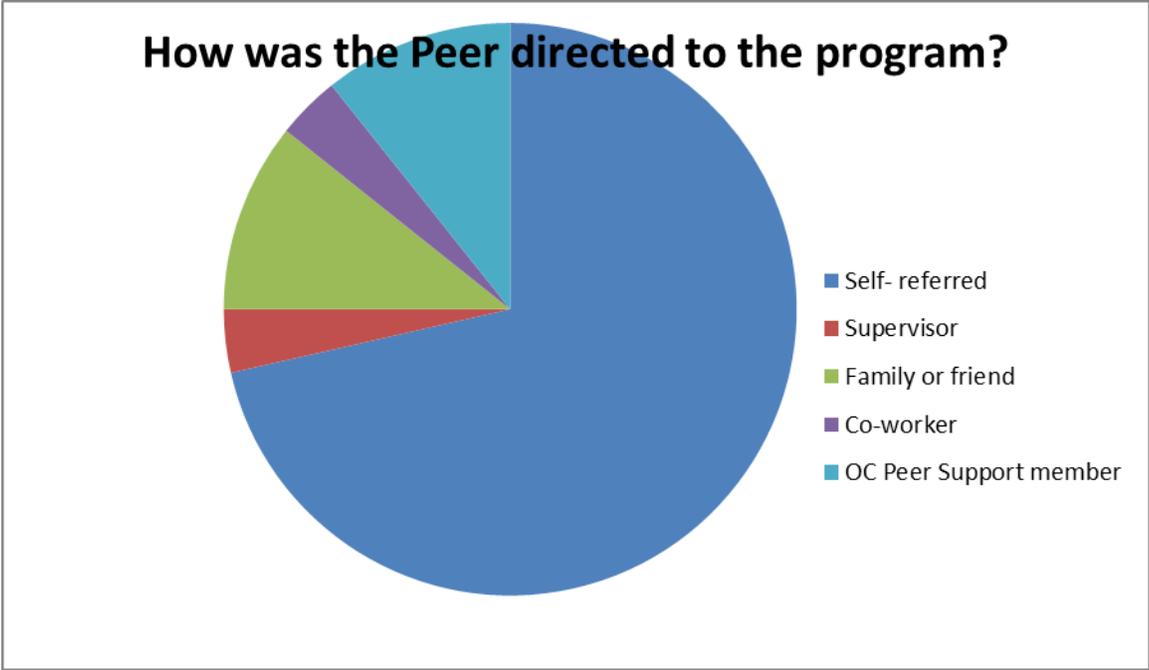
It is my pleasure to take this opportunity to share some information regarding the Outagamie County Peer Support Program.

Our program was “officially” launched October 1st, 2014. Peer supporters attended 16 hours of mandatory training prior to be included as a team member. There were 29 Peer Supporters trained from 7 different police departments. Information about the peer support program was disseminated to all police departments within Outagamie County during the month of October via email and U.S. mail.

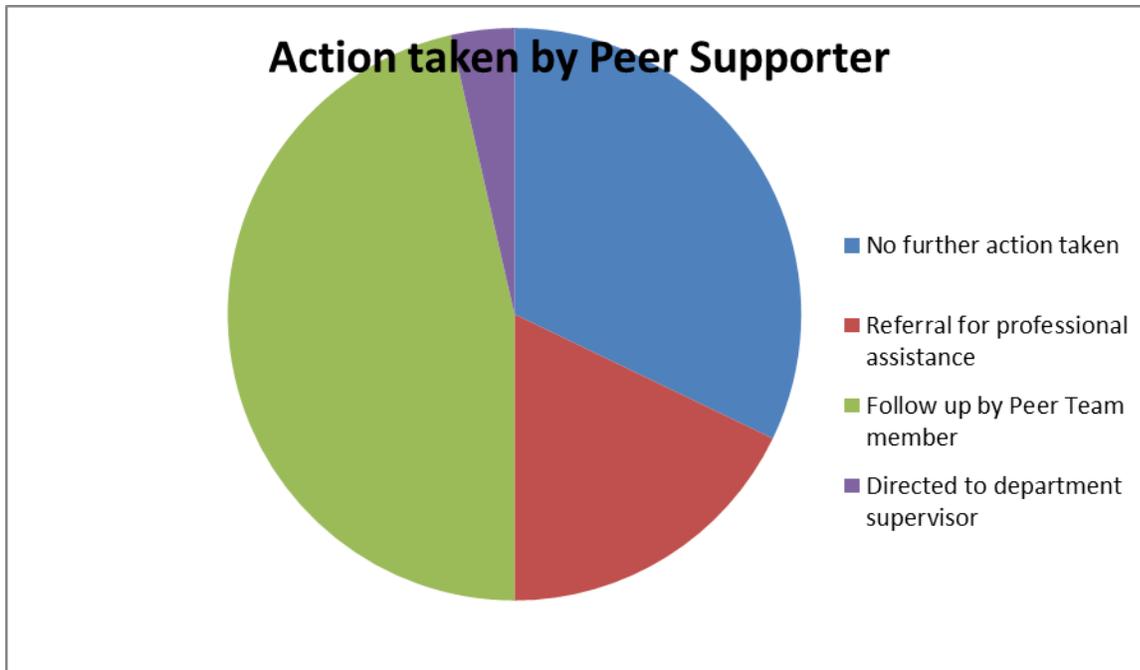
Outagamie County Peer Supporters were asked to complete a brief survey following a contact they have with a peer. Data was collected by asking the following questions:

- What is the gender of the peer?
- How was the peer referred to Peer Support?
- Reason(s) for referral
- Action taken
- Name of Peer Team member
- Amount of time spent

There were 28 documented contacts from October 2014 – September 2015. I believe there were many more peer-to-peer sessions taking place that were not captured in the survey for a variety of reasons.



Some Peer Supporters reported more than one issue for the reason for referral.



Under the umbrella of the Peer Support program, some Outagamie County police departments have implemented other measures to encourage wellness with their employees. Some examples are:

- Free Yoga classes.
- Peer support curriculum in FTO program.
- New employee orientation – information shared regarding peer support, including Dr. Gilmartin’s book “Emotional Survival for Law Enforcement.”
- Peer support curriculum/information included on a “jump drive.”
- Paul Smith (licensed counselor) participating in ridealongs with officers.
- Paul Smith provided training for employees.

In September, 2015, Peer Supporters were invited to attend a free training. Paul Smith presented on Critical Incident Stress Debriefing, Lt. Mike Frisch presented on de-escalation techniques, and Wendy Gehl presented on domestics and Harbor House. I hope to continue to offer free training opportunities on a regular basis.

Interoffice Memorandum

I want to thank all of you for the continued support for this valuable program. You should be proud of the countywide collective effort that has been put forth to help this initiative be as successful as it is. I also encourage you to provide your thoughts and offer any feedback you may have that may help us as we continue to move forward.

Thank you!

Lt. Polly Olson