



Taking Care of Our Own – The Outagamie County Peer Support Team

LIEUTENANT POLLY OLSON – APPLETON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Objectives

What is the process for developing a peer support team?

What are some of the unique challenges with incorporating multiple agencies into a team?

How do you sustain a peer support team?

What do you consider when establishing model policies and procedures?



- Outagamie County
- Population: 180,000
- 15 municipalities
- 12 law enforcement agencies
- Approximately 600 LE personnel
- City of Appleton – 75,000 residents



Recognizing the Need

2004 – Introduction of Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training to Wisconsin – the “Memphis Model”

Expanded the CIT curriculum in 2007 to include “suicide risk for first responders”

This training segment later evolved into “taking care of our own”



Too Close to Home

2010 – Appleton Police Department officer reaches out for help

Triggers the process for establishing a connection to resources and “opens the door” for other officers to feel comfortable with seeking help



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What About Peer Support?

2012 – Sergeant Wallschlaeger (retired) initiates discussions on establishing a peer support program

Agency versus countywide?

- Pros and cons
- Which agency has oversight?



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Next Steps

2013 – Outagamie County Chief’s meeting

- Concerns – liability and confidentiality

Second Chief’s meeting

- Building support
- “If this isn’t our problem, gentlemen, then whose problem is it? This one is on us, and we need to own it.” ~Chief Joe Collins



Building Your Team

Support needs to come from the top

Establish a steering committee

Recruit members

Build-in training

Gather statistics

Sustain your program



Steering Committee

If multiagency team, strive for equal representation

Establish positions

- Coordinator/advisors/peer supporters

Establish screening process

- Application
- Interview

Establish policies and procedures

Gather policies and resources from participating agencies

Establish methods of communication for outreach

Peer Supporters

Sign confidentiality agreement



Confidentiality Agreement

I, _____, agree to volunteer my time and commit myself to the Outagamie County Peer Support Team as a Peer Supporter. In doing so, I agree to 100% confidentiality in any peer situations excluding those circumstances detailed in the Outagamie County Peer Support Team Policy, Unit 5.

Any violation of this confidentiality agreement will result in termination from participation in the Peer Support program.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

***Exceptions to confidentiality**

Training

Establish training curriculum

- For example
 - Active-listening skills
 - Suicide assessment
 - Trauma
 - CISM?

Ongoing training?

- How often?
- Which topics are a priority?



Gathering Statistics

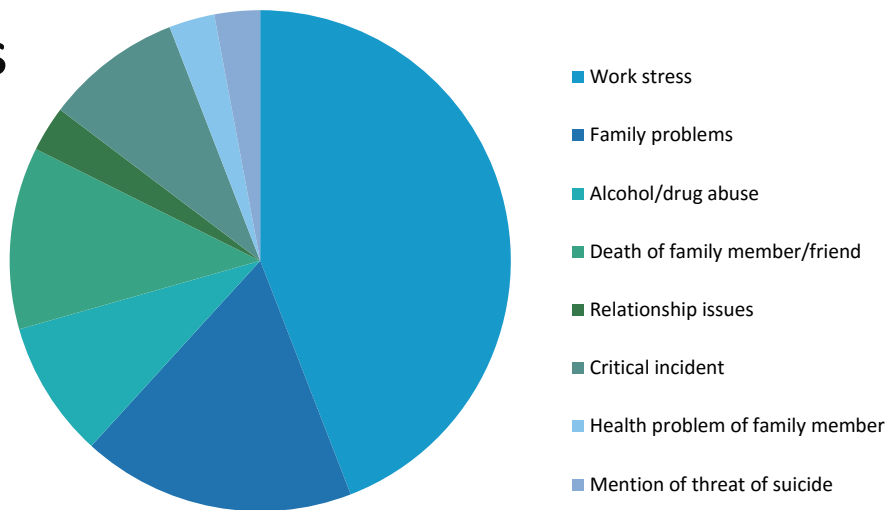
Example: Use “Google Drive”

Track usage without compromising confidentiality

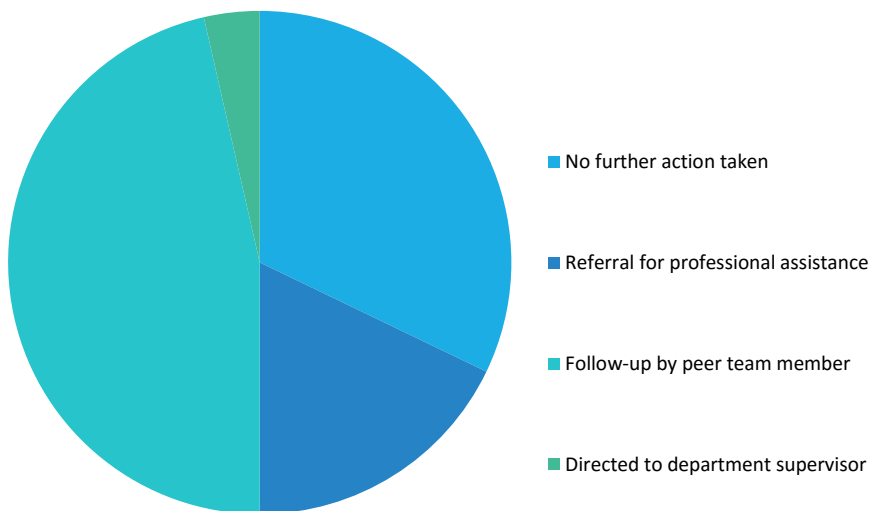
Important to report out – build on success



Examples



Reason for contact/referral to peer support



Action taken by peer supporter

Referral Resources

- EAPs
- Private providers
- Police psychologists
- Challenges**



Code Blue Procedure

Consider establishing a procedure for how voluntary/involuntary commitments are handled

- Maintain confidentiality
- Maintain dignity
- Issues that may occur when officers are admitted through the emergency rooms in the communities they serve

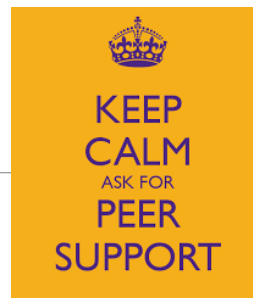


Getting the Word Out

Brochures
Posters
E-mail
Mail – home
Ideas?



Questions?



If you are interested in receiving copies of policies and procedures, please e-mail me at

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