Psycho-social Emergency Preparedness and Response

Did you know that in addition to being the largest public sector provider of Employee Assistance Programs, EAS offers a full spectrum of psycho-social emergency preparedness and response (PSEPR) services. These services include the provision of resources, training and interventions for employees, managers and responders that are provided by a team of mental health professionals that specialize in trauma and disaster management.

Services offered to Organizations – Trauma Response

As a full service EAP provider, EAS frequently delivers timely and effective trauma response services to support employees exposed to traumas or critical incidents during the course of their work duties. To access these services, contact the 24 hour Crisis and Referral Centre at 1-800-268-7708.

Other Services

1) Immediately available resources:

To assist organisations promote a culture of preparedness and resiliency across the Federal Public Service, EAS has created:

- Resources for first responders to prepare for the stress of responding to disasters and mass emergencies.
- Fact sheets for all employees and psychosocial planning relating to pandemics.

The above materials are available at the link below. We suggest that you bookmark this link and copy the materials relevant to you on a memory stick so they can be located as needed, without delay.

2) Emergency Management & Planning / Trauma workshops

The following workshops are available on a cost-recovery basis.

**Pre-Event Resiliency Training**

For Managers: A workshop focusing on the steps managers can take to create a resilient workplace. Topics include: Resilience - in the workplace and personal; the Stress Continuum; Emergency Planning [concrete steps for managers].

For Employees: The focus of this workshop is to assist employees with fostering personal resiliency to unexpected incidents and with times of high workplace stress. Topics include: Resilience – in the workplace and personal; the Stress Continuum; Employee Resiliency; Building a Resiliency Toolkit [concrete methods and strategies]

**Vicarious Trauma**

For Managers: Overview of vicarious trauma; stress continuum; individual and organizational domains; discussion of managers’ responsibilities; supervision; organizational culture, wellness team / planning.

For Employees: Overview of vicarious trauma; stress continuum; burnout versus vicarious trauma; risk and mediating factors for vicarious trauma – coping and resiliency; healthy boundaries; personal wellness planning.

3) Preparedness, Response and Recovery: Traumatic incidents of all degrees

EAS has provided support, referral and follow up services to employees who worked with the aftermaths of disasters including Swissair flight 111, and more recently, the First Air flight 6560 crash in August, 2011 in Resolute Bay (Nunavut). EAS has provided stand-by and onsite presence, as well as pre-event resiliency training for events such as the Kananaskis G8, COP11, the XIIè Sommet de la Francophonie, and the 2010 Vancouver Olympics and G8/G20 meetings.

Also, EAS regularly offers psycho-social trauma support services to individuals and teams following traumatic events that occur in, or affect, the workplace.

**The Psycho-Social Emergency Preparedness and Response Team (PSERT)**

The PSERT consists of experienced disaster-trained mental health professionals contracted by EAS, and created on the direction of Treasury Board Secretariat with funding under the Public Security and Anti-Terrorism II (PSAT II) security initiative.

Team members have diverse backgrounds and work in a variety of capacities: clinical private practice; academia; and, provincial and municipal response. The team is supported by a network of trauma counsellors trained in Critical Incident Stress Management [CISM] and Psychological First Aid [PFA] interventions.
Concepts to Remember: Stress, Resiliency and Preparedness

Stress is not the enemy: it can enhance our performance; however, if prolonged, chronic, excessive, or traumatic, it detracts from our ability to function well.

Resiliency comes through being aware of our stress & managing it consistently and effectively – not just before, during and after high intensity events but on a consistent day to day basis.

Because “the day-to-day” is just as important as “the event”, EAS regularly provides, on a cost recovery basis, stress management workshops to managers and their teams.

Preparedness promotes resiliency because it reduces uncertainty and mitigates stress. This is particularly true when people and organizations are prepared to meet challenges - especially the most difficult ones.

Comprehensive Business Continuity Plans [BCP’s] and Emergency Plans include psycho-social components. PSERT members work with managers on a cost-recovery basis to develop comprehensive BCP’s and Emergency Plans that support a continuous provision of essential services.

To learn more or arrange any of the services outlined in this newsletter, please contact Specialized Organisational Services at 1-888-366-8213.

For a confidential consultation, call your Employee Assistance Program at 1-800-268-7708 or for the hearing impaired at 1-800-567-5803 24-hours a day. www.healthcanada.gc.ca/eas