

Operational Stress Injury Social Support (OSISS): Canadian Experience in Peer support

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Don Richardson, MD, FRCPC
Clinical Expertise Sector-National Centre for OSI
Veterans Affairs Canada/Anciens Combattants Canada
Parkwood Operational Stress Clinic
Adjunct Professor-Department of Psychiatry
University of Western Ontario



Veterans Affairs
Canada
Ste. Anne's Hospital

Anciens Combattants
Canada
Hôpital Sainte-Anne

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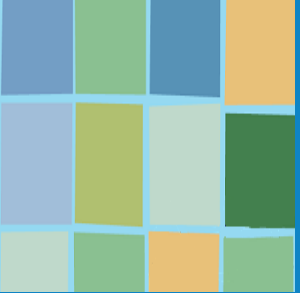
OSISS – Background

- National peer support program
- Partnership between Department of National Defense & Veterans Affairs Canada (2001)
- One-to-one support, group support, education, guidance to CF members, Veterans & families
- Employs Military Veterans and Family Members who have **‘lived the experience’**
- Multi disciplinary team to support Management



Operational Stress Injury

- “Operational Stress Injury” (OSI) is a term defined by OSISS to focus on “*injury*” rather than illness in an effort to diminish stigma



LESSONS LEARNED...



Lessons Learned from OSISS

- Selection
- Training
- Self-Care
- Organizational Support

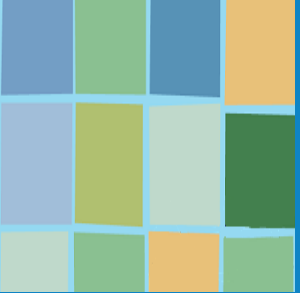


SELECTION



Selection

- Peer Support Worker (PSW)
 - *Personal experience* of the illness
 - Complete medical screening by treating clinician (pre-hiring)
 - Multidisciplinary interviewing team/panel



TRAINING



TRAINING-The Concept of Limits

Peer Support Worker must:

- Clearly **understand** their role
- Stay **within** the confines of that role
- Be **aware** of their own "triggers"
- Remember **that they are there for the peer**
- Willing to **refer** a peer/client to a professional resource



SELF-CARE



Self-Care

- Be aware of own ‘triggers’ and potential impacts of work
- Establish appropriate limits in intervention with peer
- Maintain and foster good health practices and balance
- Linked to clinician for guidance and advice
 - Teleconference – group setting
 - One-to-one by telephone
 - Twice yearly – group setting – annual conference
- Annual medical screening by peer helper’s clinician



ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT



Organizational Support

- Leadership at senior levels of the organization [Champions]
- Using a Multi Disciplinary Management team
- Collaboration with MH Professionals
- Advisory with key stakeholders
- Supervision and coaching
- Co-location in clinical and organization settings



Keys to Success

- Overcoming systematic barriers
 - clinicians, organizations, traditional disability models
- Building a healthy Inter Government Partnership
 - ensure a seamless transition for still serving members & families
- Using a Multi Disciplinary Management team
- Involving clients in program development
- Being vigilant with self care and boundaries
- Ensuring proper screening and recruitment
- Developing a volunteer network

QUESTIONS??

Don.Richardson@sjhc.london.on.ca

&

Juan Cargnello

Juan.Cargnello@vac-acc.gc.ca