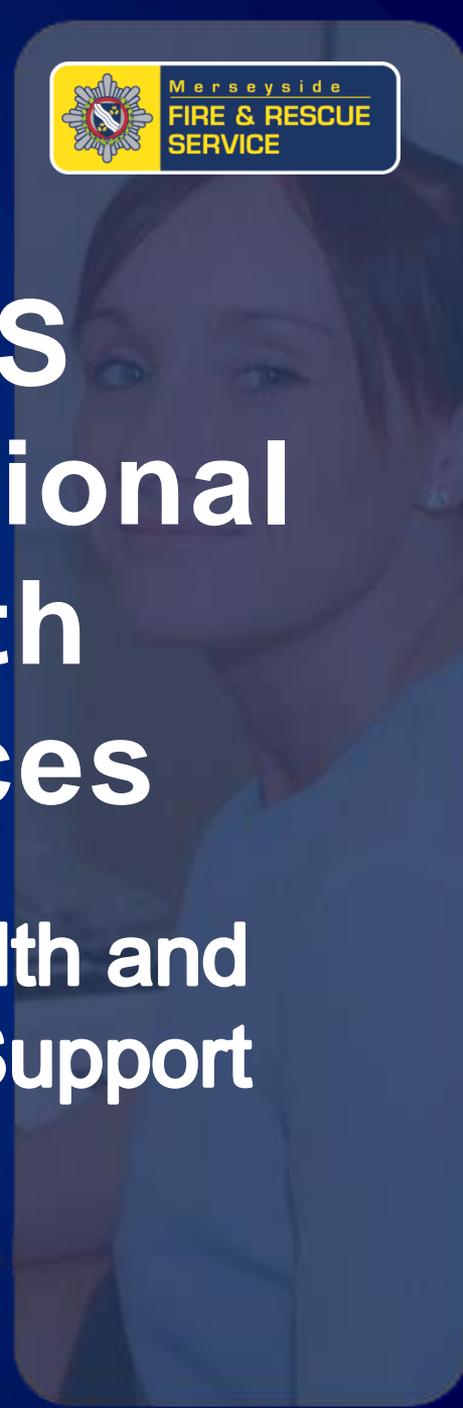


MFRS Occupational Health Services

Mental Health and Wellbeing Support



The objective of Occupational Health is to promote and facilitate the maintenance of the highest possible standards of health and fitness, both physical and mental, for Service employees.

Occupational Health

- Full time Occupational Health Team
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Referrals to Counselling/CBT Therapist
- Firefighters Charity
- Health promotions

Mental Health and Wellbeing has to be at the heart of everything that MFRS embraces

Mind research:

‘1 in 3 in the emergency services are likely to experience a mental health problem in any one year, but are less likely than the general public to seek help’

Wellbeing support

Historically operational firefighters have been predominantly male.

The main challenge MFRS faced was trying to change a culture... it is ok for men to talk about their mental health...

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)



- The MHFA courses are aimed at those people without specialist mental health training who might encounter mental health issues in their work.
- Mental Health First Aid (2 full day course to qualify as a Mental Health First Aider). So far 23% of the MFRS workforce have been trained as Mental Health First Aiders
- Mental Health First Aid is now a mandatory element of the FF recruit training programme
- In June 2017, MFRS started training all operational staff in Mental Health First Aid 'Lite' (1/2 day awareness course). So far 221 operational personnel have received the MHFA Lite training, which is approx. 36% of operational staff

Stress Risk



Assessments (SRAs)

It is recognised that workplace stress is a health and safety issue and we acknowledge the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.

- Works to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Stress Management Standards. The 6 Management Standards cover the primary sources of stress at work: Demand, Control, Support, Relationships, Role, Change
- 2 trained Stress Risk Assessors
- Works with the person's Line Manager to consider ways in which feelings of stress can be reduced

Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM)



- MFRS recognise that personnel (particularly operational) are likely to be exposed to potentially traumatic incidents
- After an in depth 12 month research programme, CISM was implemented in 2013

'A service critical incident is any situation faced by personnel that may cause them to experience unusually strong emotions which could possibly affect their ability to function either at the scene/in work or later on'.

- **Stage 1:** Defusing (Immediately after incident – always before end of shift)
- **Stage 2:** Debriefing (48 – 72 hours later)
- **Stage 3:** Bridging Team Support (Following Debrief, over next 4 week period)
- Signs and symptoms are monitored 3/6 months later by Critical Incident Coordinator by means of 'symptom' questionnaires

MIND Blue Light Programme



Anti Stigma – Raising awareness of mental ill health in the workplace

- Wirral MIND and Merseyside Blue Light Services won the bid to continue the MIND Blue Light work following the end of the national campaign
 - Resulted in the creation of the Merseyside Blue Light Services mental health strategy (written by MFRS project leads)
 - Joint and individual mental health films, using own staff with the aim to get people talking about mental health and reduce attached stigma
 - Further training in Peer Support, mental health awareness and resilience
 - Support groups for emergency service personnel and families set up
- Signed the Blue Light Pledge



Family Liaison Officers (FLOs)



There is a clear moral responsibility placed upon to Service to ensure emotional support and consideration for the welfare of the bereaved family following a death in Service

- The main role of the FLO will be to act as the main point of contact between the bereaved family and the Service
- Communicate with the bereaved, build trust and provide emotional and practical support
- Be able to signpost the family towards Service departments or external organisations that may be able to offer extra support

* The MFRS Lead Family Liaison Coordinator is a qualified counsellor and specialised in bereavement support. The Lead and Deputy Coordinator receive extra external training to a suitable level regarding the complex issues involved in traumatic response and bereavement. Access to the external trainer is available at short notice and can be utilised as required. This process is supported by the Service Chaplain.

Service Chaplain and Bridging Team

'For all without exception'



- Independent Chaplain - part of the Occupational Health Team
- The Chaplain is available to all staff, irrespective of rank and for those of faith or none
- Supports the Critical Incident Stress Management programme
- Church services in consultation with Parish Priests
- Available for hospital/ home visits and family support
- Chaplains of other faiths are also available
- Leads the Bridging Team – volunteer MFRS staff who act as 'bridge' to access services

Results

- Reduction of long term sickness by over 50% since 2014/2015.
- Staff survey results 2018
 - Out of 864 replies:
 - 85% consider they have benefitted from support through OH (12% neither agree/disagree and 3% disagree)
 - 89% stated that in general their overall health was good (7% neither agree/disagree and 4% disagree)

Future

- National Suicide Prevention Alliance members
Suicide training/ASIST training
- Workplace Wellbeing Charter renewal
- Mental health assessments as part of the two yearly health screenings
- NFCC Mental Health sub group - leading 2 work streams: Suicide awareness and mental health training. Currently requesting volunteers for the working groups

Recognition and awards



- 2018 National Positive Practice in Mental Health National Awards - Mental Health and Wellbeing Support Programmes Award – Highly Commended
- 2018 National Positive Practice in Mental Health National Awards - Mental Health and Emergency Services Award Finalist – Highly Commended
- 2018 Renewal of MINDFUL Employer Charter for Employers who are positive about Mental Health
- 2017 National Positive Practice in Mental Health National Awards - Mental Health and Wellbeing Support Programmes Award Winner
- 2017 National Positive Practice in Mental Health National Awards - Mental Health and Emergency Services Award Finalist – Highly Commended
- 2017 February/March Occupational Health [at Work] Journal Meet the Practitioner profile OH Manager
- 2016 Engage Awards Winner – Occupational Health Strategy
- 2016 National Positive Practice in Mental Health National Awards - Emergency Services Mental Health and Wellbeing Support Programmes Finalist – Highly Commended
- 2016 Personnel Today Awards – Award for Health and Wellbeing Finalist
- 2016 MIND Blue Light Programme – Time to Change Pledge
- 2013 Occupational Health Magazine – OH Awards – OH Nurse of the Year Finalist. Jackie Sullivan. Merseyside FRS OH Nurse for her work with the Service
- 2012 Liverpool NHS (PCT)/ Health at Work - Workplace Wellbeing Charter – Awarded Excellent in all Assessment Criteria
- 2011 Royal Society for Public Health – Health Promotion and Community Wellbeing and Partnership Award (Sefton Consortium – Sefton area partnership, re accredited in 2015)

- 2010 Occupational Health magazine – OH Awards –Health Promotion and Wellbeing Finalist
- 2010 Business in the Community – Reaccredited Award for Excellence – Healthy Workplace Award
- 2009 Occupational Health magazine – OH Awards –Mental Health and Stress Management Finalist
- 2009 MINDFUL Employer Charter for Employers who are positive about Mental Health
- 2009 Business in the Community –Award for Excellence – Healthy Workplace Award
- 2008 FireFit Conference – Fire Service conference on fitness and health - “delivering what was probably the best Conference this decade” - FireFit National Steering Group
- 2007 Mersey Charter for Smokefree Protection of Community Staff – Heart of Mersey
- 2007 Pay Awards - Award for the Service Absence and Attendance Policy, and its innovative Attendance Incentive Scheme
- 2005 National Clean Air Award Celebration Award, House of Lords
- 2005 The BBC Big Challenge - Healthy Workplace Award
- 2004 National Clean Air Award, Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation
- 2004 The RoSPA Occupational Safety and Health Journal



Thank you