

## **CISM Team Services**

Some services provided by the CISM Team include:

### **Pre-Crisis Preparation / Training**

Educational, informational, and in-service programs for law enforcement personnel.

### **On-Scene Support**

Team may observe, watch for acute reactions, provide support, encouragement and be able to help resting personnel and command deal with stress reactions.

### **Demobilization**

Short, informational sessions with personnel as they leave the scene of a long duration, critical incident.

### **Defusings**

Short version of critical incident stress debriefing which occurs within a few hours following a critical incident.

### **Debriefing**

A confidential, non-evaluative discussion of involvement, thoughts and feelings resulting from a critical incident.

### **Individual Crisis Intervention (one-on-one)**

Peer to peer intervention used to mitigate the symptoms of critical incidents.

### **Pastoral Crisis Intervention**

Provides spiritual, faith-based support for individuals and groups.

### **Family Support**

For the police officer's family members and significant others.

### **Follow-Up/Referrals**

Follow up contact from the team and/or referral to mental health professionals if needed.

**Fraternal Order of Police Pennsylvania State Lodge**

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**1-888-254-1727**

**or**

**1-717-236-6981**

**Dan Billings**

**State Coordinator / CISM Program**

**1-610-329-9703 Available 24/7**

**Rich Malwitz**

**State Deputy Coordinator / CISM Program**

**1-717-315-9485 Available 24/7**

**Edward B. Michalik, Psy.D.**

**Clinical Director / CISM Program**

**1-610-301-2933 Available 24/7**

## **CISM Program Offerings**

### **Training**

Critical Incident Stress Management training is offered with the goal of assuring that CISM services are available to all law enforcement personnel in the Commonwealth.

The International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF) training is available statewide and is aimed at increasing the number of trained personnel and promoting their involvement in local CISM teams or in the establishment of new teams where needed.

### **Available Courses**

#### **Individual Crisis Intervention and Peer Support**

The course, also known as "One-on-One" is designed to prepare the participant for the role of "peer support" for individuals who have experienced a traumatic event.

Crisis interventions are typically done individually or in groups. For many reasons, One-on-One interventions are used most often when dealing with the law enforcement community.

#### **Group Crisis Intervention**

The CISM Group Crisis Intervention training program is designed to present the core elements of a comprehensive, systematic and multi-component crisis intervention curriculum.

The two day course prepares participants to understand a wide range of crisis intervention services including pre and post incident crisis education, significant other support services, crisis interventions for small and large groups and spiritual and family care

#### **Law Enforcement Perspectives for CISM Enhancement**

The work that police officers choose to do can be, and often is, emotionally draining, physically difficult and a threat to their safety.

This training will provide participants with a better understanding of the police culture and the perspective of certain stresses inherent in law enforcement as a whole.

This is a must course for trained law enforcement "peers" and mental health practitioners who work closely with law enforcement or who will interact with law enforcement in CISM interventions.

## **CISM Law Enforcement Network**

The PA State Lodge has established a database with the goal of developing a network of law enforcement personnel who are trained members of CISM teams from across the Commonwealth and who are available to respond to the needs of their fellow officers.

The program will endeavor to identify all law enforcement personnel in the Commonwealth who have received ICISF CISM training by contacting all known teams, placing notices in the State Lodge publication and the utilization of email to seek information from all local lodges.

The database will have the ability to provide the names of trained law enforcement personnel able to respond to critical incidents in every part of the state.

For more information about the database or to be included, contact Rich Malwitz, Deputy Coordinator/CISM Program at:

[RMALJR@comcast.net](mailto:RMALJR@comcast.net)

## **PA State Lodge Response Team**

The PA State Lodge has established a highly trained and experienced CISM Response Team which is tasked with the responsibility of responding to the aftermath of critical incidents and offering CISM services.

The team is very capable of providing CISM services but also is prepared to assist with organizing and coordinating services for and with local teams until they are able to continue on their own.

The FOP PA State Lodge CISM Response Team is registered with the ICISF. The CISM team is available to respond to assist with CISM interventions in areas not covered by other teams in the state, or when specifically requested by law enforcement personnel.

CISM works well because it is a peer managed and peer operated support program.

Specially trained peer support personnel provide most of the operational support services for their peers, but they do so with the guidance of mental health professionals.

The goals of every CISM team are to mitigate the impact of critical incidents, accelerate the recovery of normal people with normal reactions to abnormal events and to identify those who may need help.

## **Critical Incident Stress**

You may have experienced a traumatic event or critical incident which is defined as any event which is unusually challenging and has the potential to create significant human distress and can overwhelm one's usual coping mechanisms. These events have the potential to interfere with one's ability to function either at the scene or at a later time.

Even though the event is over, you may immediately experience or may experience later, some strong emotional and/or physical reactions. It is very common, in fact quite normal, for people to experience emotional aftershocks when they have been through a horrible event.

Sometimes the emotional and physical aftershocks or stress reactions appear immediately after a critical incident. Sometimes they appear a few hours or a few days later. And, in some cases, weeks or months may pass before the stress reactions appear.

The signs and symptoms of a stress reaction may last a few days, a few weeks or a few months and occasionally longer depending on the severity of the event and the depth of a person's involvement in the event.

With understanding and the support of loved ones and colleagues, the stress reactions usually pass more quickly. Occasionally, the traumatic or critical incident is so powerful and painful that professional assistance is needed. This does not imply weakness or a mental health problem. It simply indicates that the particular incident was just too powerful for the individual to manage by themselves.

## **Common Signs and Signals of Stress Reactions**

### **Cognitive (thinking)**

Poor concentration, Memory problems, Poor attention span, Slowed problem solving, Difficulty making decisions and calculations

### **Emotional (feelings)**

Depression, Grief, Guilt, Anxiety/Fear, Feeling lost/overwhelmed, Loss of emotional control

### **Physical (body)**

Muscle tremors, Chest pain, Headaches, Difficulty breathing, Elevated blood pressure

### **Behavioral (actions)**

Excessive silence, Sleep disturbance, Unusual behavior, Withdrawal from contact, Changes in eating and work habits

### **Spiritual**

Anger at God, Withdrawal from Faith-based Community, Cessation of Faith-based Practices

## Ways for Family and Friends to Respond to Your Stress Reactions

Listen Carefully

Spend time with traumatized person

Give them some private time

Don't take anger or other feelings personally

Offer your assistance and listening ear if they have not asked for help

Reassure them that they are safe

Help them with daily tasks like cleaning, cooking, caring for the family minding children

Don't tell them that they are "lucky it wasn't worse" - traumatized people are not consoled by those statements. Instead, tell them that you are sorry such any event has occurred and you want to understand and assist them.

## Ways to Deal with Stress

WITHIN THE FIRST 24-48 HOURS, periods of appropriate physical exercise, alternated with relaxation will alleviate some of the physical reactions

**Do** structure your time—keep busy

**Do** understand you're normal and having normal reactions. **Don't** label yourself crazy

**Do** talk to people—talk is the most healing of medicines

**Do** beware of numbing the pain with overuse of drugs or alcohol. You **do not** need to complicate this with a substance abuse problem

**Do** reach out—people do care

**Do** maintain as normal a schedule as possible

**Do** Things that feel good to you

**Don't** make any big life changes

**Do** help your co-workers as much as possible by sharing your feelings and checking out how they are doing

**Do** get plenty of rest

**Don't** try to fight reoccurring thoughts, dreams or flashbacks. They are normal. They will usually decrease with time and become less painful

**Do** eat well balanced and regular meals.

**Do** drink plenty of water

**Do** keep a journal; write your way through any sleepless hours

**Do** make as many daily decisions as possible. It will give you a feeling of control over your life.

**Do** give yourself permission to feel rotten and share your feelings with others

**Do** spend time with others, especially loved ones