PEER SUPPORT TOOLKIT FOR FIRE SERVICE WORKERS

Peer support plays a critical role in promoting mental health within the fire service. This toolkit provides guidance on how to effectively support colleagues, foster wellbeing, and recognise when professional help is needed.

Roles of Peer Support:

- Peer Mentors: Provide informal emotional support and active listening.
- Wellbeing Champions: Advocate for mental health awareness and promote wellbeing initiatives.

Key Skills for Effective Peer Support:

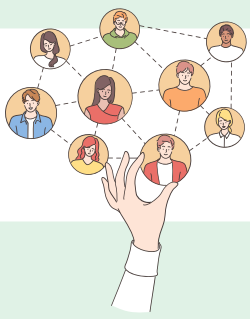
- Active Listening: Be fully present, listen without judgment.
- Empathy: Understand and share the feelings of others.
- Maintaining Boundaries: Know your limits and when to refer to professional support.
- Confidentiality: Respect privacy while understanding when to escalate concerns.

Conversation Starters:

- "I've noticed you've seemed a bit off lately. Do you want to talk about it?"
- "How are you really feeling after that last call?"
- "I'm here if you ever need to chat, no pressure."

When to Refer to Professional Support:

- Signs of crisis (e.g., suicidal thoughts, severe distress).
- Ongoing issues that do not improve with peer support.
- Concerns about safety (self-harm, harm to others).



MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES DIRECTORY

Accessing the right mental health supportis essential. This directory provideskey contacts and resources for fire service personnel to seek help when needed.

Internal Support Resources:

- Occupational Health: 01785 232492 or 01785 232244 ; welfaresupport@staffordshire.police.uk
- Employee External Psychology Services: Prohealth UK, admin@prohealthuk.org

External Mental Health Resources:

- Samaritans (24/7 Helpline): 116 123
- Mind: www.mind.org.uk
- Shout (24/7 Text Support): Text 'SHOUT' to 85258
- Blue Light Programme:

Quick Access to Online Resources:

- Use QR code on the back of your badge. This will direct you to Prohealth UK webpages for your cohort.