

Dilemmas of Emergency Services Leaders in Creating Meaningful Work Environment: Evidence from the United Kingdom

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Servant-Leadership Centre for Research and Education (SERVUS), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam



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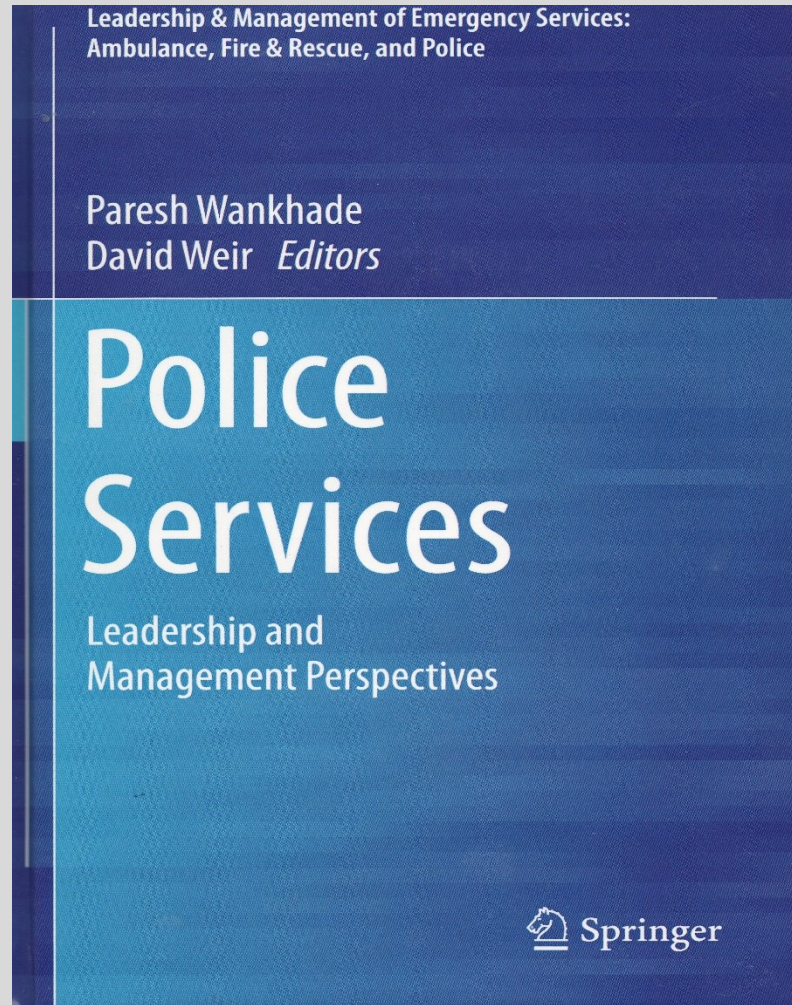
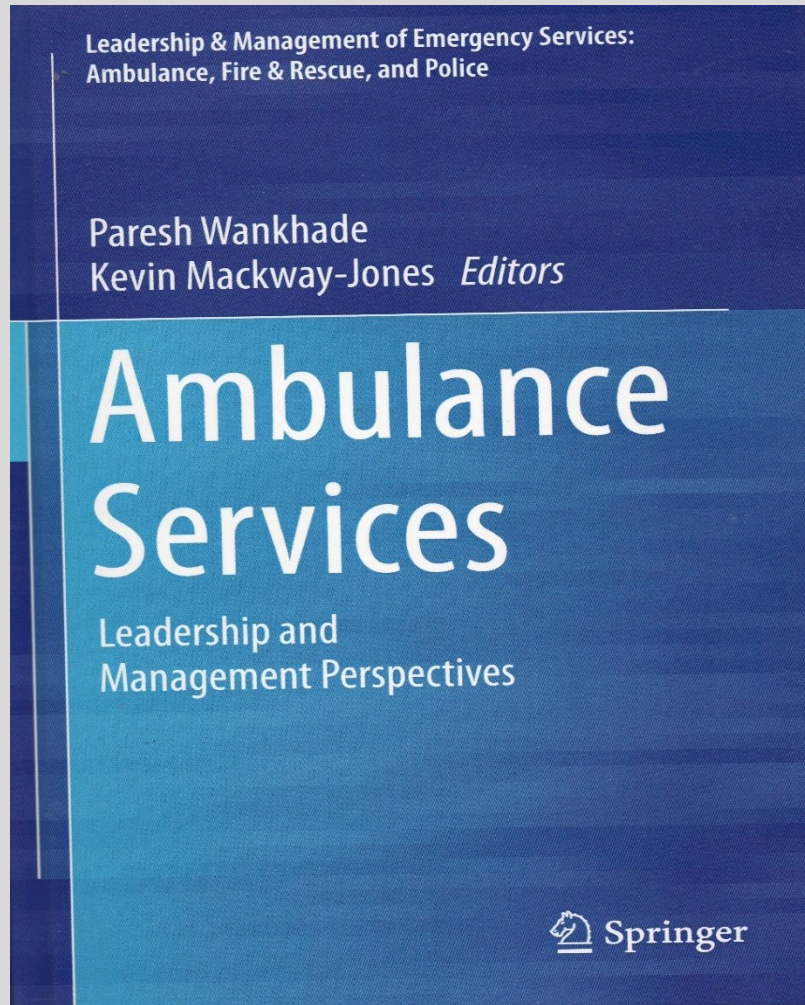
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State of emergency services leadership

- ▶ This symposium is a timely exploration of servant-leadership virtues in nurturing meaningful work and organizational practices.
- ▶ Leadership and management research about emergency services is an emerging phenomenon with a clear theory-practice divide.
- ▶ Organizations are characterised by reverence to a 'heroic' leadership style, 'command and control' culture, 'top-down' hierarchical structures including a tendency to blame.
- ▶ The challenges of leadership, funding, training and cultural transformation are now felt globally:
 1. Emergency services are witnessing a period of great uncertainty as new models of delivery, merger and reconfigurations are currently being practiced;
 2. Creating meaningful work and supporting a diverse, modern and healthy workforce is a critical function of the leaders in to these organizations.
- ▶ This is also a plea for building a community of scholars (academics, researchers and practitioners) for being emphatic in raising the issues of a meaningful work in the blue-light services.

Building community of scholars



REVIEWS

"This is an ambitious work and one which stands out by successfully bringing together different and influential academic, professional and practitioner perspectives. ... this book makes a valuable contribution to the literature and is distinguished in several key respects, not least in terms of successfully bringing together diverse perspectives and experiences as well as engaging with persistent themes as well as those traditionally less well explored."

Geoff Coliandris, *The Police Journal*, Vol. 88 (4), 2015

State of emergency services leadership contd..

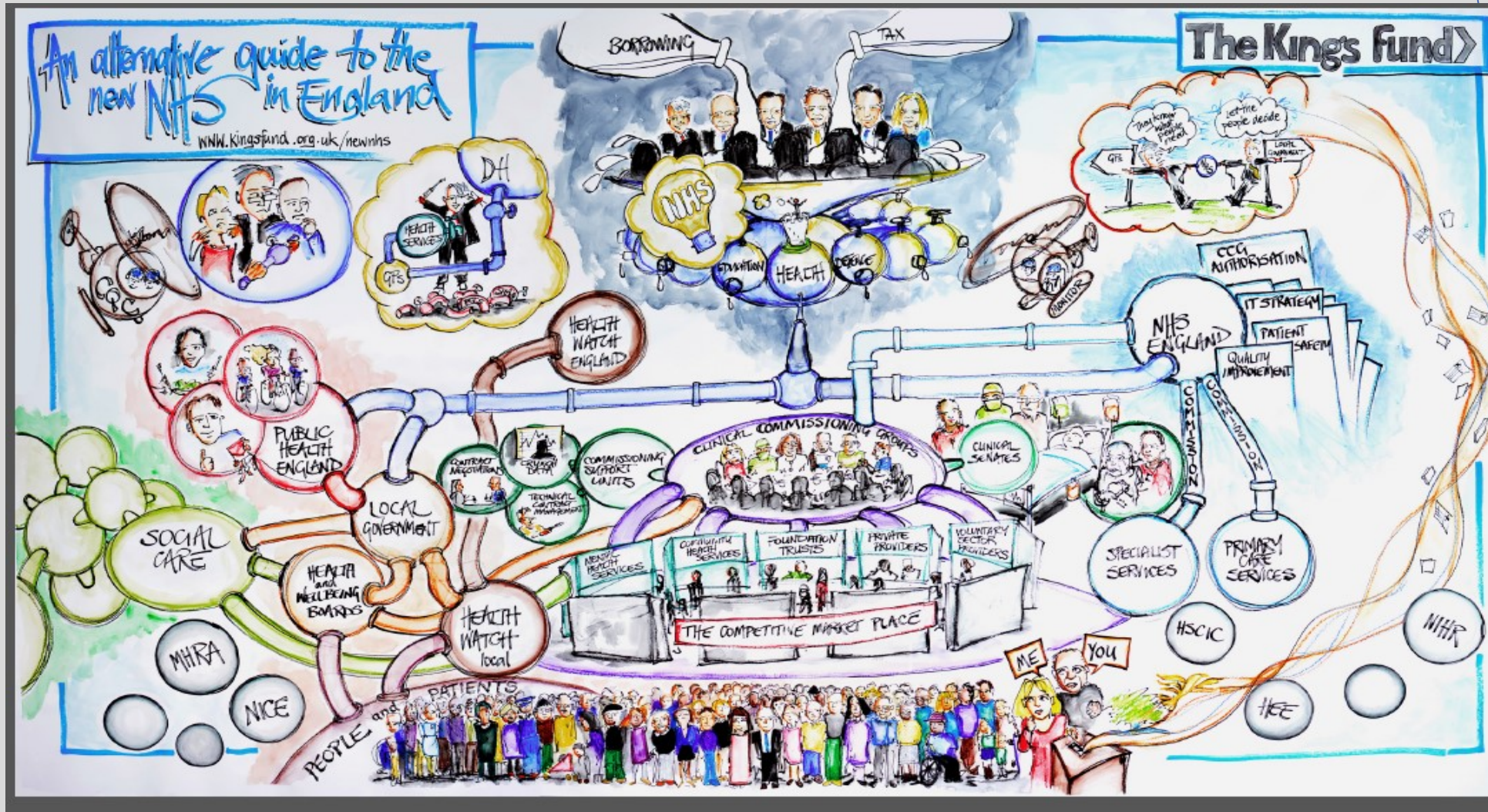
- ▶ The servant-leader characteristics which resonate with the emergency services include accountability, authenticity, communication and courage.
- ▶ More work however needs to be done around empowerment, humility and inert-personal acceptance towards staff. The record on creating cultures of inclusion (discrimination), harassment and bullying and towards staff sickness is much to be desired.
- ▶ I'll present evidence from the emergency services in the UK as to how there are huge challenges for leaders creating meaningful work spaces for a culturally diverse work force (Raub and Blunschi, 2013).
- ▶ I will try to argue a leadership style, which is grounded in the principles of servant-leadership, is the best way forward to resolve various 'dilemmas' (Trompennars, 2009) to reconcile passion and control and create positive work environment .

Supporting a diverse, modern and healthy workforce

- ▶ One of the key commitments in the NHS Five Year Five Year Forward View.
- ▶ Similar commitments in Police and Fire Services are evident.



State of the NHS



Dilemma of creating cultures of inclusion

TheKingsFund>

SUMMARY

Making the difference

Diversity and inclusion in the NHS

Authors
Michael West
Jeremy Dawson
Mandip Kaur

December 2015



The 2014 NHS Staff Survey included responses from **255,150** individuals across **284** organizations- including 157 acute trusts, 57 mental health/learning disability trusts, 40 clinical commissioning groups (CCGs), 19 community trusts and 11 ambulance trusts.

The data looked at **discrimination** within the NHS, between **managers and staff**, between **colleagues**, but also from patients and members of the public on grounds of **age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, & ethnicity.** 7

Highest levels of overall discrimination reported by ambulance staff

		Acute (%)	Community (%)	MH/LD (%)	Other (%)
Any discrimination		11.7	8.9	12.9	5.3
Discrimination from...	...patients/relatives/public	5.6	3.7	7.1	1.5
	...manager/team leader/other colleagues	8.1	6.3	7.7	4.3
Discrimination on the basis of...	...ethnic background	4.5	2.3	4.8	0.8
	...gender	2.0	1.6	2.7	1.1
	...religion	0.6	0.3	0.7	0.1
	...sexual orientation	0.5	0.3	0.8	0.2
	...disability	0.8	0.9	1.1	0.6
	...age	2.1	1.5	2.5	1.2

Discrimination by occupational group

	Medical/ dental (%)	Nursing (registered) (%)	Nursing assistants (%)	Scientific and technical (%)		Managers (%)	Central functions (%)	Social care (%)	Ancillary (%)	Other (%)
Any discrimination	13.5	14.0	17.3	10.4		8.2	8.1	10.7	9.7	10.9
From...										
...patients/relatives/public	8.0	8.5	11.8	4.4		1.7	2.0	5.7	3.2	3.8
...manager/team leader/ colleagues	7.9	8.3	9.1	7.3		7.2	6.9	6.6	8.3	8.4
On the basis of...										
...ethnic background	7.1	6.5	7.7	2.9		1.9	1.7	3.0	2.8	2.8
...gender	3.6	2.2	2.9	2.3		1.7	1.3	2.2	1.3	1.8
...religion	0.9	0.5	0.9	0.6		0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.7
...sexual orientation	0.3	0.6	1.1	0.5		0.6	0.3	0.6	0.6	0.6
...disability	0.5	0.8	1.0	0.8		0.5	0.9	1.4	0.8	1.2
...age	1.8	2.3	3.0	2.2		1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	2.3

Protect Staff from Bullying and Harassment



London Ambulance Service NHS Trust

Quality Report

220 Waterloo Road
London
SE1 8SD
Tel: 020 7921 5100
Website: www.londonambulance.nhs.uk

Date of inspection visit: 1-5;17-18 June
2015. Unannounced visits on 12,17,19 June 2015
Date of publication: 27/11/2015

This report describes our judgement of the quality of care at this trust. It is based on a combination of what we found when we inspected, information from our 'Intelligent Monitoring' system, and information given to us from patients, the public and other organisations.

Ratings

Overall rating for this trust

Inadequate 

Are services at this trust safe?

Inadequate 

Are services at this trust effective?

Requires improvement 

Are services at this trust caring?

Good 

Are services at this trust responsive?

Requires improvement 

Are services at this trust well-led?

Inadequate 

Headline findings

- ▶ **Bullying and harassment** was a major concern for the organization.
- ▶ Several frontline ambulance staff perceived that they were **bullied** by managers.
- ▶ A large number of frontline staff to be **demoralized**.
- ▶ **Culture of fear** amongst frontline staff.
- ▶ Most ambulance crews told that the organization was a good place to work in the past, but now they felt **unsupported** by the service.
- ▶ Forced to work with a new Rota system which was very **demanding** with little or no rest between shifts.
- ▶ Independent, external review into bullying and harassment in the organization found that the problem was **widespread**.

Bullying in Fire & Rescue Services

MailOnline

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Theresa May slams fire service chiefs for allowing 'bullying and harassment' to flourish as she unveils sweeping reforms

- Home Secretary handed fire service control for the first time in 15 years
- May said there was 'no excuse' for 'toxic and corrosive' attitudes
- She vowed to transform the almost universally white and male fire service
- May praised the professionalism of fire fighters who do a dangerous job

By IAN DRURY HOME AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT FOR THE DAILY MAIL
PUBLISHED: 17:35, 25 May 2016 | UPDATED: 17:47, 25 May 2016

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Theresa May has accused fire chiefs of allowing a culture of 'bullying and harassment' to flourish in some parts of England and Wales.

In a stinging rebuke, the Home Secretary warned there was 'no excuse' for the 'toxic and corrosive' attitudes identified in some of the country's fire and rescue services.
www.edgehill.ac.uk

She also criticised the lack of diversity among fire fighters, who were 96 per cent white and 95 per cent male, and vowed to 'transform' the make-up of the workforce.

Firefighters

Theresa May accuses fire and rescue services of significant failings

Home secretary says lack of diversity and accountability as well as 'bullying culture' in parts of country make reform necessary

Alan Travis Home affairs editor

Tuesday 24 May 2016 15:19 BST



This article is 4 months old

Comments
129

Save for later



Theresa May's speech is her first major statement of direction for fire and rescue services since the Home Office took over responsibility this year. Photograph: Gary Calton for the Observer

The home secretary, [Theresa May](#), has criticised fire and rescue services for being 96% white, 95% male and allowing a "culture of bullying and harassment" in some parts of England and Wales.

May said this lack of diversity, the existence of what she described as a toxic and corrosive culture in some parts of the fire and rescue services and a lack of accountability made necessary a programme of reform that was as "radical and ambitious as I have delivered in policing since 2010".

High sickness absence rates in the NHS

Annual Sickness Absence Rates by Organisation Type in the NHS

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
England	4.40%	4.16%	4.12%	4.24%	4.06%	4.25%
Acute trusts	4.18%	3.91%	3.89%	4.01%	3.84%	4.03%
Ambulance trusts	5.73%	5.67%	5.76%	6.05%	5.82%	6.27%
Clinical Commissioning Groups	-	-	-	2.07%	2.20%	2.60%
Commissioning Support Groups	-	-	-	-	2.69%	3.05%
Community Provider Trusts	4.07%	4.64%	4.60%	4.65%	4.47%	4.65%
Mental Health	5.23%	4.95%	4.89%	4.94%	4.74%	4.88%
PCT	4.42%	4.20%	3.93%	3.09%	3.26%	2.15%
Special Health Authority	3.93%	3.69%	3.47%	3.56%	3.30%	3.47%
SHA	2.22%	2.31%	2.13%	2.55%	-	13

Source: Adapted from NHS Sickness Absence Rates, Annual Summary Tables, 2009-10 to 2014-15, Health and Social Care Information Centre. July 2015 (Table 2)

Dilemma between Standard and Adaptation



Report for:

SPA/Police Scotland

Opinion Survey 2015

September 2015

Axiom Consultancy (Scotland) Ltd
27 Woodside Place
Glasgow
G3 7QL

t: 0141 212 7980
w: axiomconsultancy.co.uk
twitter: @AxiomInsights

A total of 11,796 people (out of 23,438) responded to the SPA/Police Scotland's first ever opinion survey (a response rate of 50.4%).

Positive message

Their Jobs, their teams, their managers

Areas of improvement

The Survey responses highlighted particular issues which are impacting on engagement. These being:

- Information and Communication
- Feedback
- Training and Development
- Wellbeing
- Commitment.

Areas of Improvement

- ▶ **Information and Communication-** Heavy reliance on non-verbal communication (particularly email and intranet). **47% of respondents also felt they were overloaded with information** - this was more acutely felt by Police Officers.
- ▶ **Feedback-**Whilst 50% of respondents got a sense of personal achievement from their work, only **30% felt that they received any recognition** of good work. Only **18% thought that they would be supported** if they tried a new idea even if it did not work.
- ▶ **Training and Development-**Whilst 54% of respondents had received training in the last 12 months **only 40% thought it was relevant to their current role** and only **18% felt it was relevant to their career development**.
- ▶ **Wellbeing-**Whilst 60% of respondents felt able to raise issues about their physical health and 53% of respondents felt able to raise issues on their mental health with their immediate manager, **only 8% thought the organisation was genuinely interested in wellbeing**.
- ▶ **Commitment-****33% of all respondents indicated an intention to leave**. Concerns about not feeling valued, work pressure, lack of resources, lack of genuine commitment about well-being, health and safety.

Should we be surprised??

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Police officers and staff take 200,000 sick days over mental health

2 October 2016 | Scotland [Share](#)



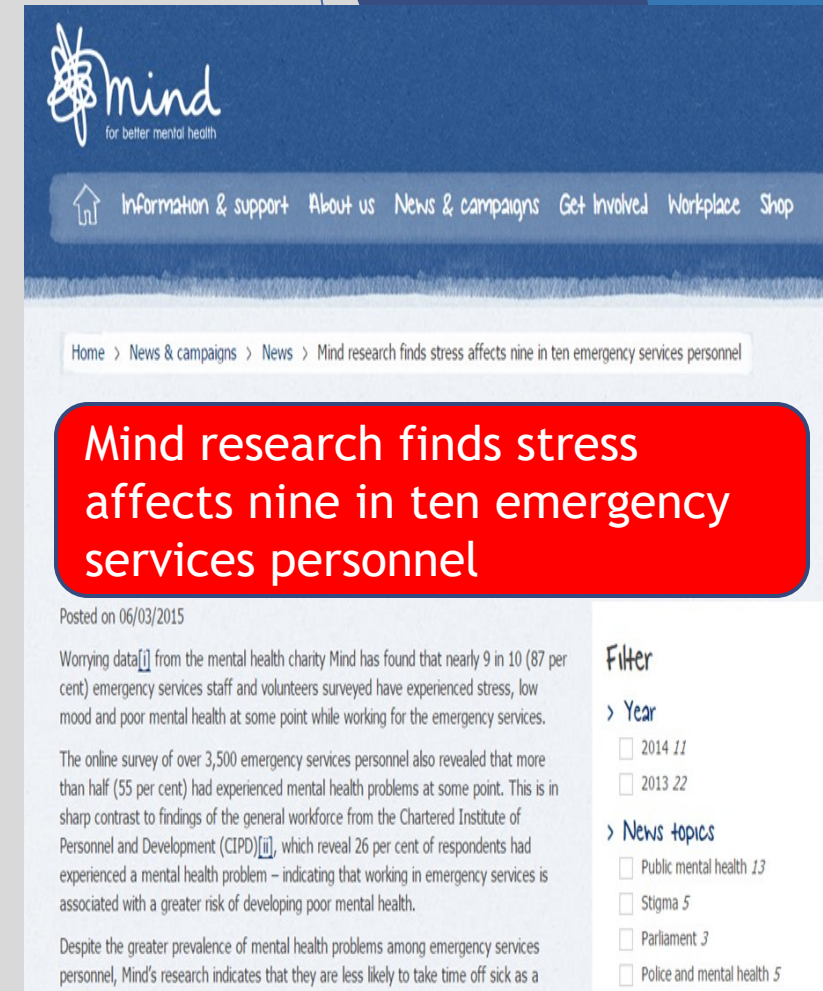
GETTY IMAGES

Police Scotland officers and staff suffering psychological problems took nearly 200,000 sick days over the last three years, new figures show.

16

Holistic approach to resilience and well-being

- ▶ Major changes in the landscape of prehospital care and the impact on the patient and user groups.
- ▶ What about impact on leaders, officers and staff at every level?
- ▶ Organisational resilience has received greater attention but it's still an unexplored topic within the workforce context and its various dimensions.
- ▶ Holistic approach to resilience helps with coping mechanism, lowers the cost for individuals and the organization while enhancing public trust.
- ▶ A modern, healthy and a resilient work force is integral to cultural transformation of the emergency services.



The screenshot shows the Mind website header with the logo and navigation menu. The main content area features a red banner with the article title. Below the banner, the article text is visible, including the date 'Posted on 06/03/2015' and a 'Filter' sidebar on the right.

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for better mental health

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Home > News & campaigns > News > Mind research finds stress affects nine in ten emergency services personnel

Mind research finds stress affects nine in ten emergency services personnel

Posted on 06/03/2015

Worrying data^[i] from the mental health charity Mind has found that nearly 9 in 10 (87 per cent) emergency services staff and volunteers surveyed have experienced stress, low mood and poor mental health at some point while working for the emergency services.

The online survey of over 3,500 emergency services personnel also revealed that more than half (55 per cent) had experienced mental health problems at some point. This is in sharp contrast to findings of the general workforce from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)^[ii], which reveal 26 per cent of respondents had experienced a mental health problem – indicating that working in emergency services is associated with a greater risk of developing poor mental health.

Despite the greater prevalence of mental health problems among emergency services personnel, Mind's research indicates that they are less likely to take time off sick as a

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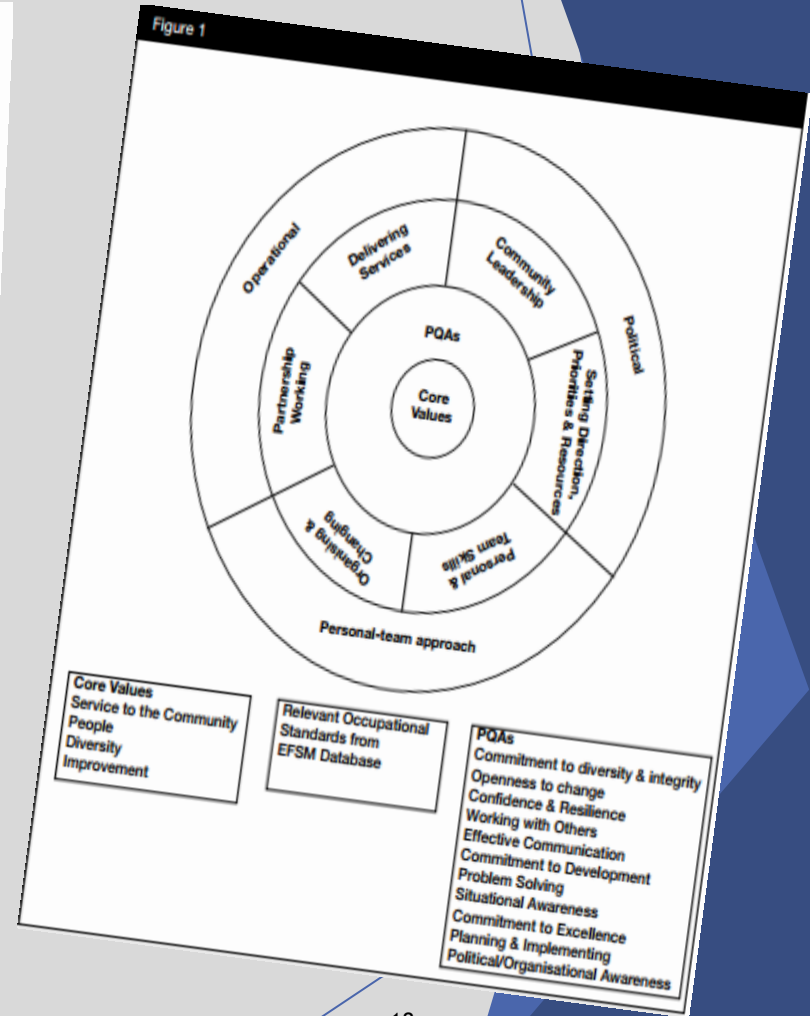
> Year

- 2014 11
- 2013 22

> News topics

- Public mental health 13
- Stigma 5
- Parliament 3
- Police and mental health 5

Right Leadership behaviour(s)



Fire Service Leadership Framework

Key leadership challenge: Dealing with Dilemmas

- ▶ Russell (2013) argues how servant-leadership is inherent to effective acting in emergency situations. He shows how the successful features of the individual emergency worker (passion, their desire to serve) are the very same that make up the servant-leader.
- ▶ Need for moving beyond traditional heroic or leader-centric frameworks to a much broader shared, connected leadership capacity (Dionne et al. 2014; Day et al. 2014).
- ▶ Creating serving culture (attribute of a servant-leader) enhances individual attitudes and behaviours (Liden et al., 2014) and servant-leadership can help finding meaning in uncertain situations (Dierendonck and Sousa, 2016).
- ▶ This might include supporting and building a professional workforce and systems that embrace and enhance differences.
- ▶ This is also help the emergency services leaders to deal with various dilemmas, conflicts, contradictions in discharging their duties as servant leaders.



Closing thought!!

“You can have pessimism for free but we are paid to lead.”

Rob Webster, Chief Executive, NHS
Confederation, 2016