

Arrowhead CISM Team

Critical Incident Stress Management

Taking care of the people in emergency services — Since 1990



Emergency service personnel deal with a variety of unique stressors on a daily basis within their career and personal lives. For the most part, they are readily able to cope with and bounce back after a challenging response. There are those occasional “critical incidents” that can be so physically and emotionally intense that they have a lasting and powerful impact. In those cases, utilizing a Critical Incident Stress Management Team can be a valuable resource to process the event and speed individual and agency recovery.

The Arrowhead CISM Team is composed of a combination of mental health professionals and experienced emergency services personnel from many disciplines. Both have specialized training and are available to provide peer support. All are volunteers who have the knowledge and tools needed after emotionally difficult events and responses.

There are three types of interventions that CISM uses most frequently following challenging events: a group stress debriefing (CISD), a small group or one-on-one defusing, or a crisis management briefing (CMB). If a stress debriefing (CISD) is requested and scheduled after an event, CISM team members from appropriate emergency services will be assembled to facilitate the debriefing. Only the responders directly involved in the event being debriefed are invited to attend a confidential stress debriefing.

Education and training programs are also available from Arrowhead CISM to any and all emergency service personnel, including managers and supervisors. Educational topics include developing skills to manage critical incident responses, personal stress recognition and management, and developing agency and individual resiliency. Professional continuing education credits are available for some topics.

Who Can Request the Arrowhead CISM Team’s Services?

- Law Enforcement
- Fire Service
- Search & Rescue
- Ski Patrol
- EMS – Air & Ground Ambulance/ Medical 1st Responders
- Hospital Emergency Departments
- Dispatchers
- Emergency Management

**To Request Services After an Incident
218-625-3581**

This number is answered 24/7 by the St. Louis County
Emergency Communications Center.
They will put you in touch with the CISM Team.

EDUCATION

MANAGEMENT

SUPPORT

Critical Incidents and Life-Changing Events

Emergency services personnel encounter stressful, dangerous and unpredictable situations. They can be routinely exposed to hazardous conditions, human tragedies, or events requiring that life and death decisions be made in a matter of seconds. For the most part, they are able to cope with these situations, move on to the next response while not recognizing or dismissing the impact on them personally. They may consider these stressors just part of the job without understanding the impact on them personally.

There are some events known to impact responders and care-givers more strongly than others and have the potential to produce stronger physical, emotional and psychological reactions. They may impair the ability to function normally at work and at home. These events are known as “critical Incidents.” Situations that are more likely to evolve into critical incidents include:

- Death or injury of a child
- Injury or death of a co-worker
- Violence against responders
- Prolonged events or rescues
- Multiple or mass casualty incidents
- Suicides
- Victims or the family known by the responders
- High-risk or exposure to injury situations
- First time experiences for responders
- Build-up: multiple difficult incidents that occur over a period of time

Education & Training Services

Arrowhead CIM offers a variety of Pre-Incident and Post-Incident educational and informative programs designed specifically for emergency services personnel:

- Personal Stress Management
- Pre- Critical Incident Training
- Critical Incident Aftermath Tools
- Resiliency P.O.W.E.R. Program
- Death Notifications
- Pre-Incident Family Planning and Communications
- Pre-Incident Buddy System Planning

Arrowhead CISM is Sponsored by



Arrowhead EMS Association
4219 Enterprise Circle
Duluth, MN 55811

www.arrowheadems.com/cism

Available CISM Services

Critical Incident Stress Debriefings (CISD)

CISDs are structured group sessions for the emergency responders directly involved in any event they found difficult or they identified as a critical incident. Participants sort through the facts of the event, identify the associated distressing and challenging issues, and then discuss the physical and the emotional aftermath of their involvement. CISDs are not therapy sessions. Participation is voluntary, take place behind closed doors, and confidentiality is expected, including no social media postings.

Defusings

Event defusings are informational and educational in nature. They can be one-on-one or large group meetings that occur shortly after an event or during a prolonged incident such as a natural disaster or a lengthy search. Defusings are shorter, less formal and less structured than a debriefing. They provide an opportunity to discuss the events and its impact with specially trained CISM team peer support members. They can take place when and wherever the need. Depending on team member availability, this includes at the scene of the event or by telephone.

Crisis Management Briefings (CMB)

CMBs are informational sessions following a high-impact event, organized by the impacted agency, and presented with the help of a CISM Team. They are designed to reduce stress by providing factual information and updates about the situation as well as identifying plans and resources to deal with the specific crisis faced. They can be an effective tool to assist in managing any stressful event impacting an entire agency. CMBs can be conducted during or immediately after an Incident. A CMB only requires from 30 to 60 minutes and individuals beyond the scene responders are invited to participate.

How to Access CISM Team Services

All services are offered free of charge by the Arrowhead CISM Team for emergency service personnel and organizations in the 7-Counties of the Arrowhead Region of Minnesota and Douglas County, Wisconsin. Contributions to support our regional CISM Team are appreciated and tax deductible.

Education or training programs offered outside of the above region can be arranged by contract for minimal fees to cover expenses.

To request a debriefing, defusing or CMB following a critical incident or event, contact the St. Louis County Emergency Communications center:

218-625-3581

To request education and training, or for additional information about our Team, please contact the Arrowhead EMS Association:

218-726-0070