



Does a Longitudinal Behavior Health Symptom Survey Clarify anything?

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Washington, DC Fire & EMS





What disorders did we screen for?

Depression

- 9 item Patient Health Questionnaire (**PHQ-9**)
- Two weeks prior to survey administration
- Symptom severity score 0-27
- Cut off $\geq 10 \rightarrow$ positive screening

General Anxiety

- 7 item General Anxiety Disorder (**GAD-7**)
- Two weeks prior to survey administration
- Symptom severity score 0-21
- Cut off $\geq 10 \rightarrow$ positive screening

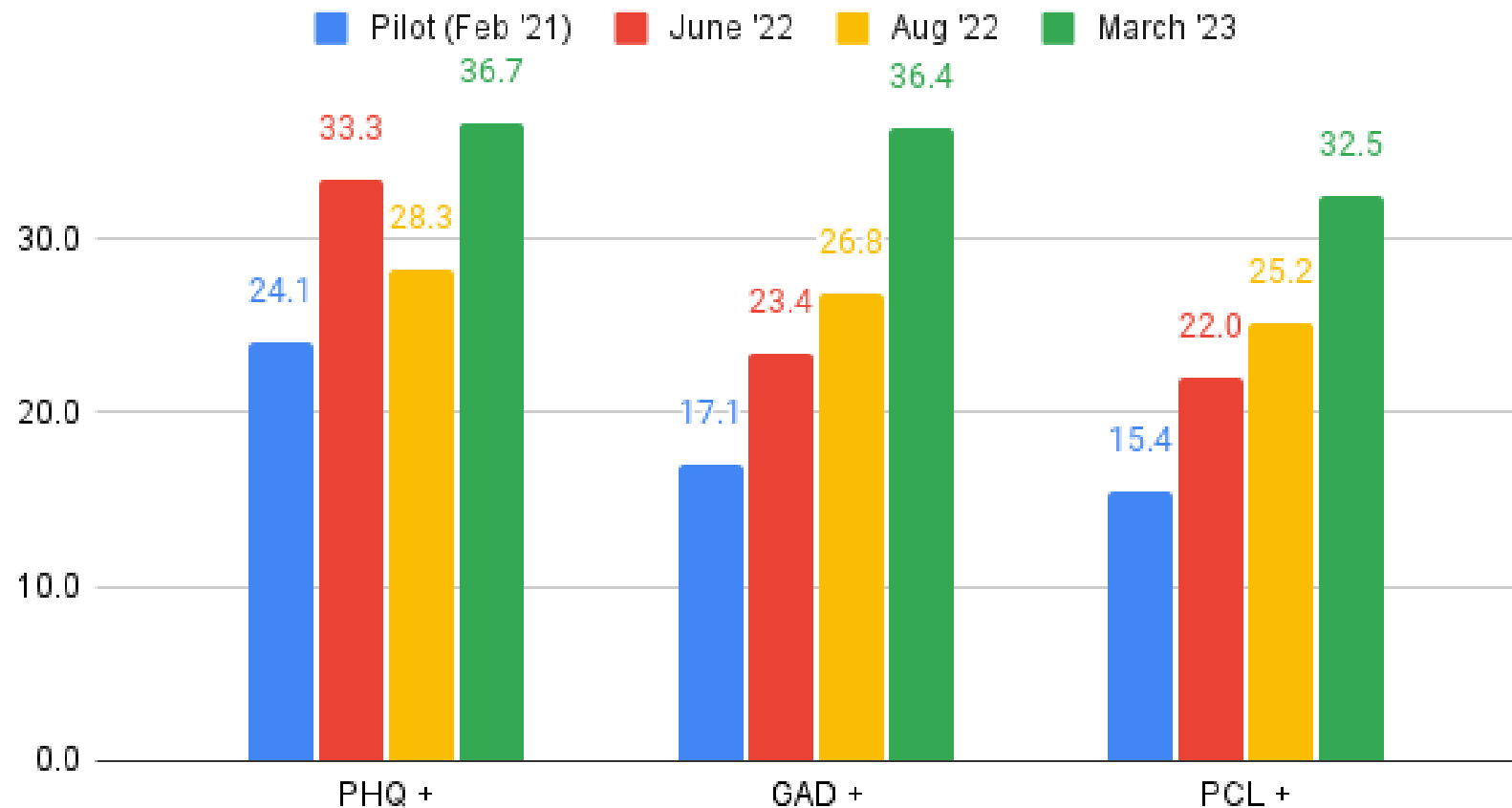
• PTSD

- 4 item PTSD Checklist (**PCL-5**) short-form
- One month prior to survey administration
- Symptom severity score 0-16
- Cut off $\geq 7 \rightarrow$ positive screening

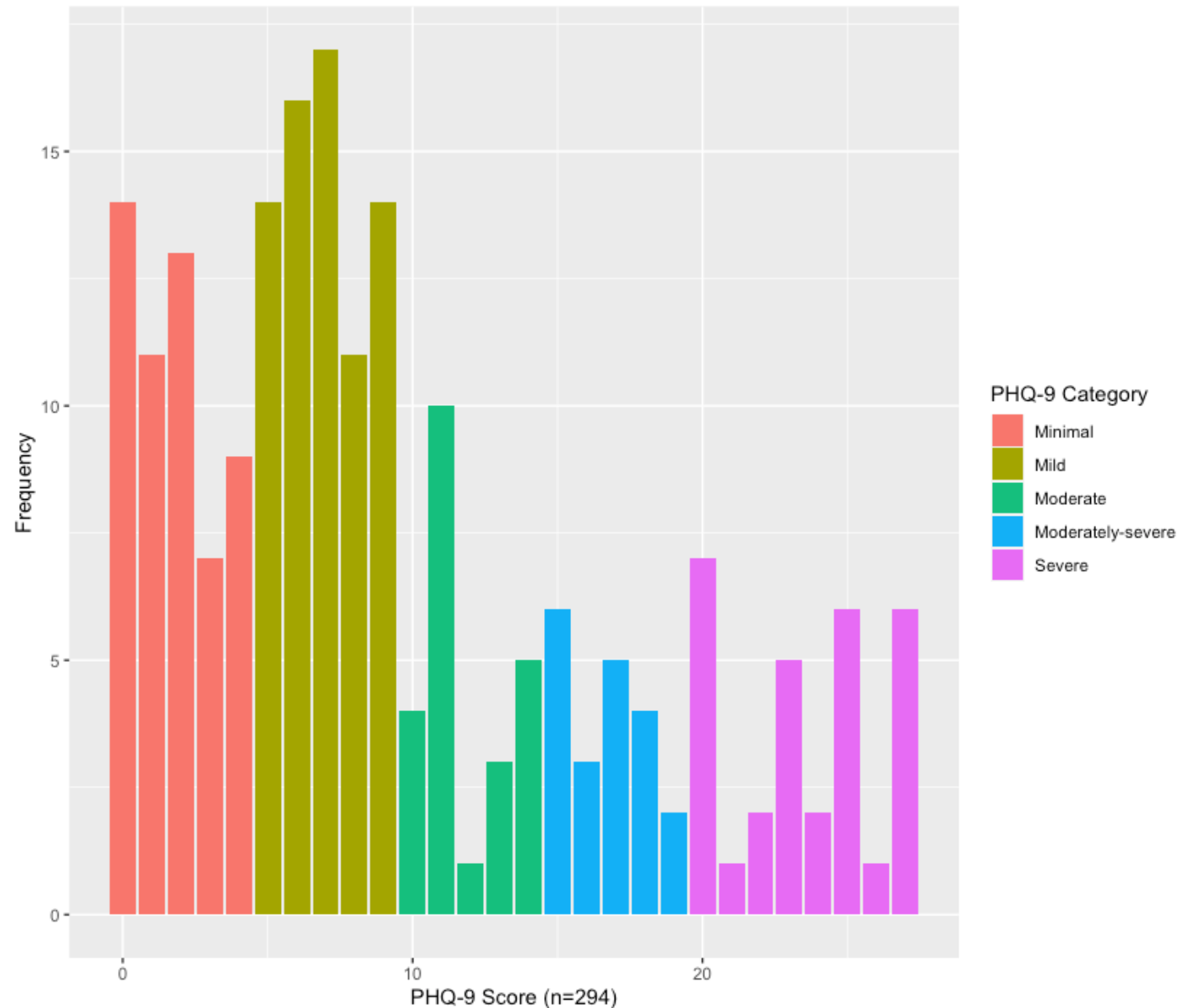


Did the results change over time?

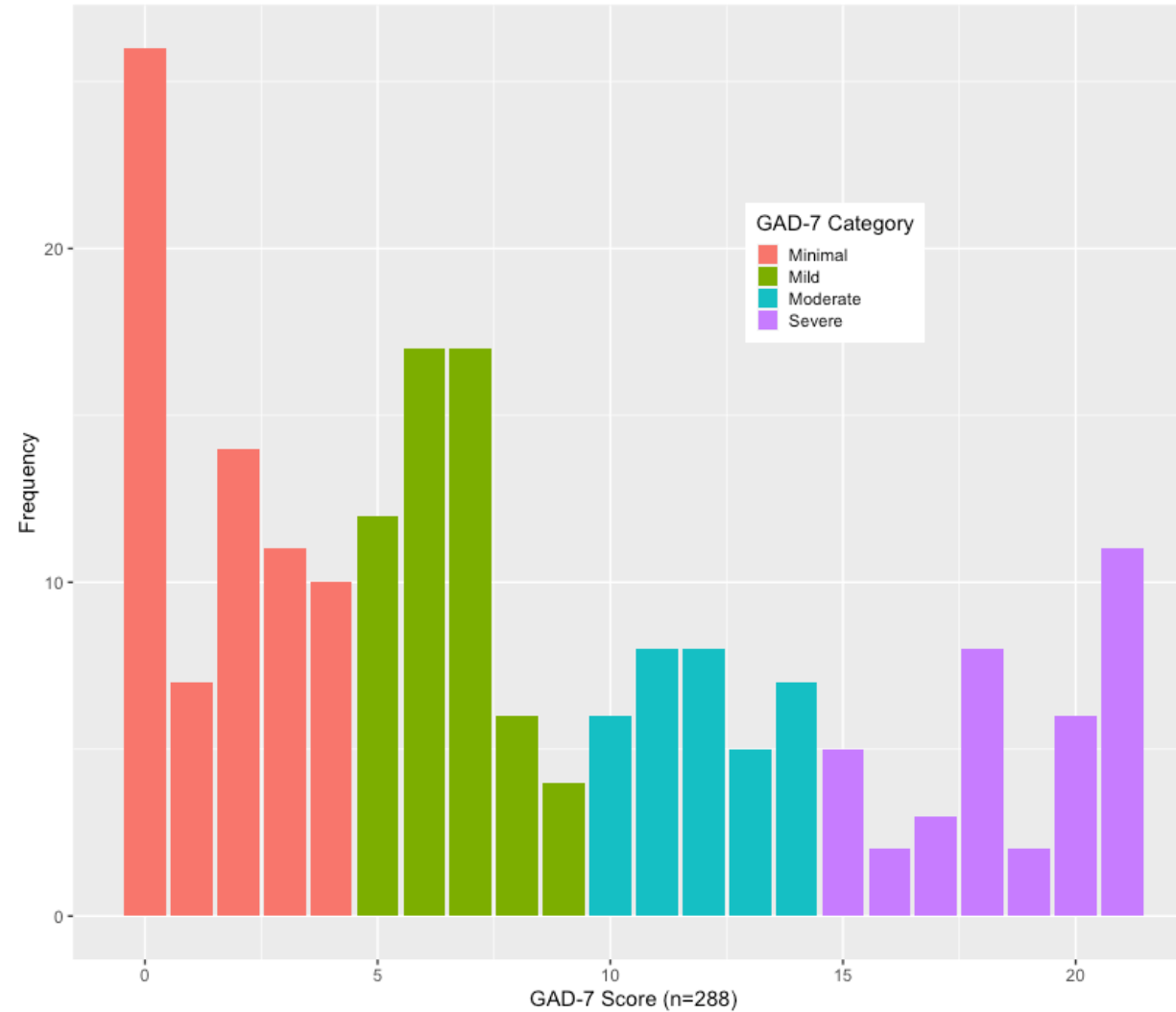
BHHS L. Positive Screenings



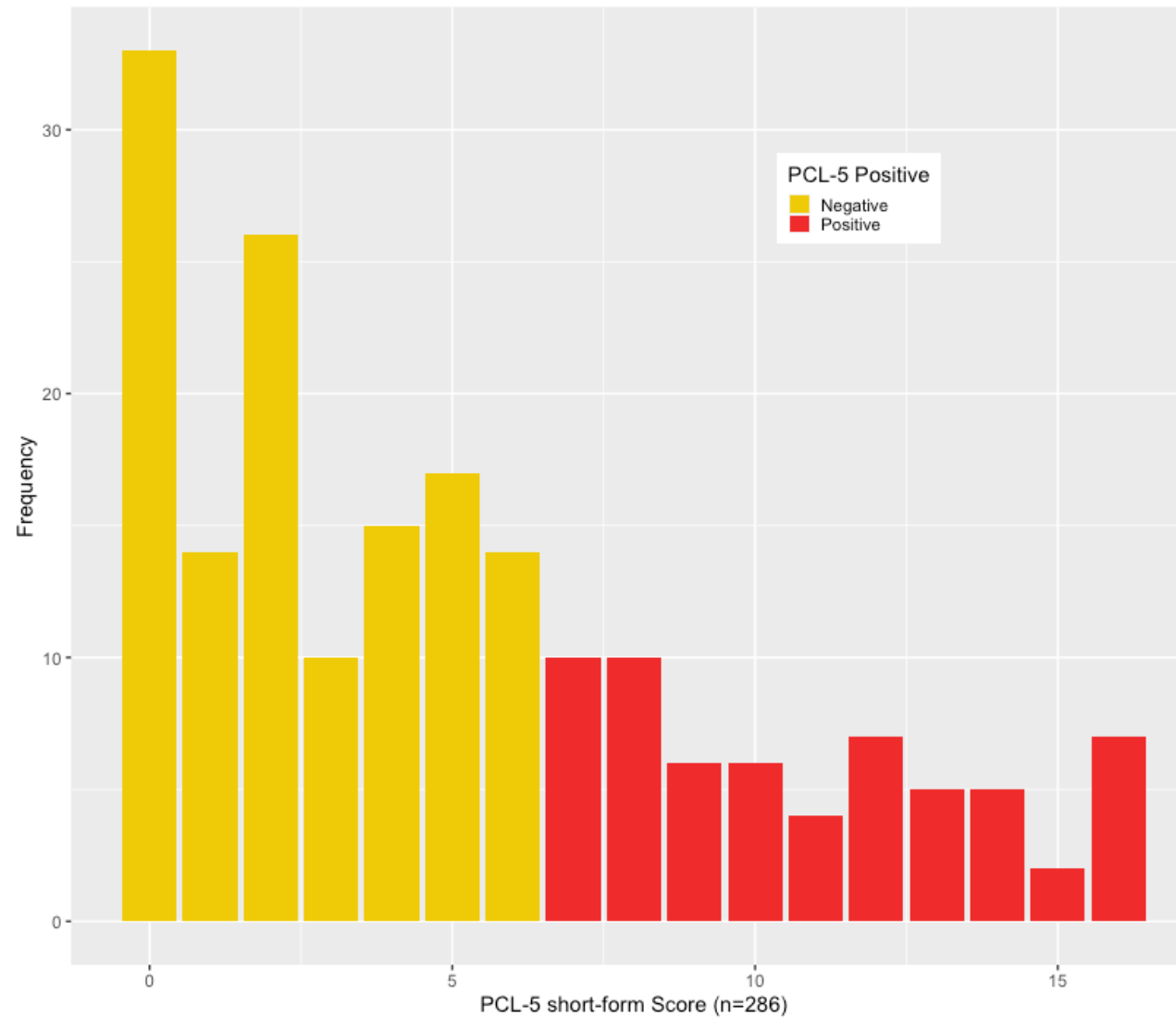
Was this just mild depression?



How anxious were they?



PTSD- how severe?





EMS relative to the US Population

- DC Fire & EMS probable prevalence rates:
 - Major Depression Disorder **24.1% to 36.7%**
 - General Anxiety Disorder **17.7% to 36.4%**
 - PTSD **15.4% to 32.5%**
 - General US population estimates (*pre-COVID)
 - Major Depression Disorder – 7.1%* → 14%
 - General Anxiety Disorder - 3.1%* → ?
 - PTSD - 3.5%* -> 15%
- < 6% of DC EMS per year sought behavioral health care in 2020-2023.



EMS Behavioral health during COVID-19

- Meta-analysis using a variety of screening tools:
- Pooled prevalence was:
- 31% for depression,
- 32% for anxiety.
- --Huang G, *Prevalence of depression, anxiety, and stress among first responders for medical emergencies during COVID-19 pandemic: A meta-analysis*. J Glob Health 2022; 12: 05028.



Generalized Anxiety Disorder – Healthcare Workers

- 553 articles were screened, from which 19 studies included in the meta-analysis.
- The prevalence of GAD in health care workers based on the GAD-7 were **32.04%**.
- -Adibi A, *The Prevalence of Generalized Anxiety Disorder Among Health Care Workers During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis*. Front Psychiatry. 2021;12:658846.



Depression among HCWs during COVID

- HCW overall 24%
- 25% in nurses
- 24% in medical doctors
- **43% in frontline HCW**

--Olaya B. et al., Prevalence of Depression among Healthcare Workers during the COVID-19 Outbreak: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. J Clin Med 2021; 10(15):3406.



What should we do now?

- Much worse
- The pandemic is over but not its damage.
- Are you screening?
- What else are you doing?

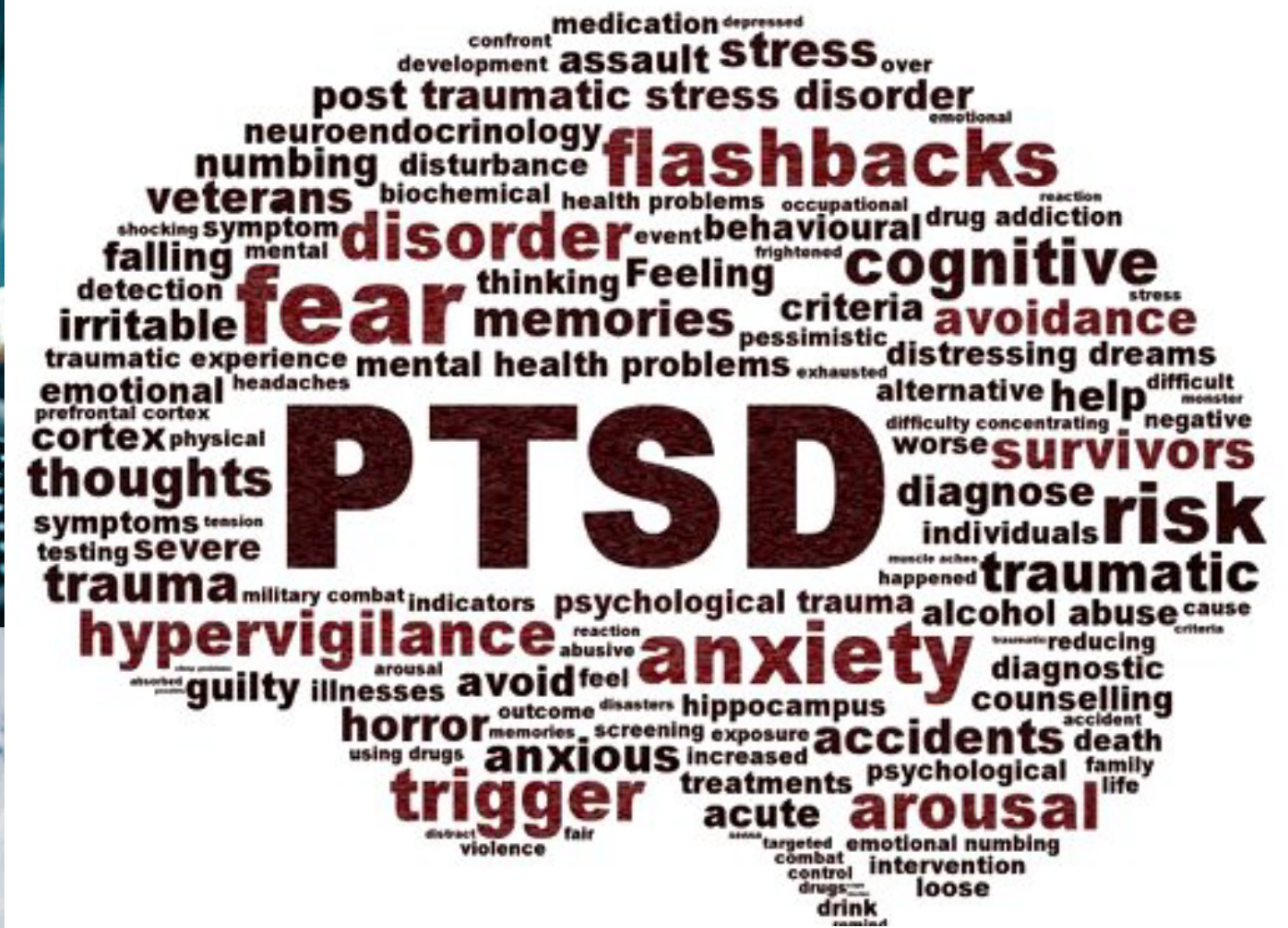
What is New Orleans EMS Doing for Mental Health?

Meg Marino, MD, FAAP
Director and Medical Director
New Orleans EMS



2020:
Deputy Medical Director,
Dr. Meg





Risk Factors for Mental Health Problems

Number of traumatic experiences witnessed

Perceived threat to life

Perceived lack of emotional support

- (Martin et al., 2009; Evans et al., 2013; Wild et al., 2020)



THERE IS NO SHAME IN ADMITTING YOU'RE HUMAN.

Protective Factors

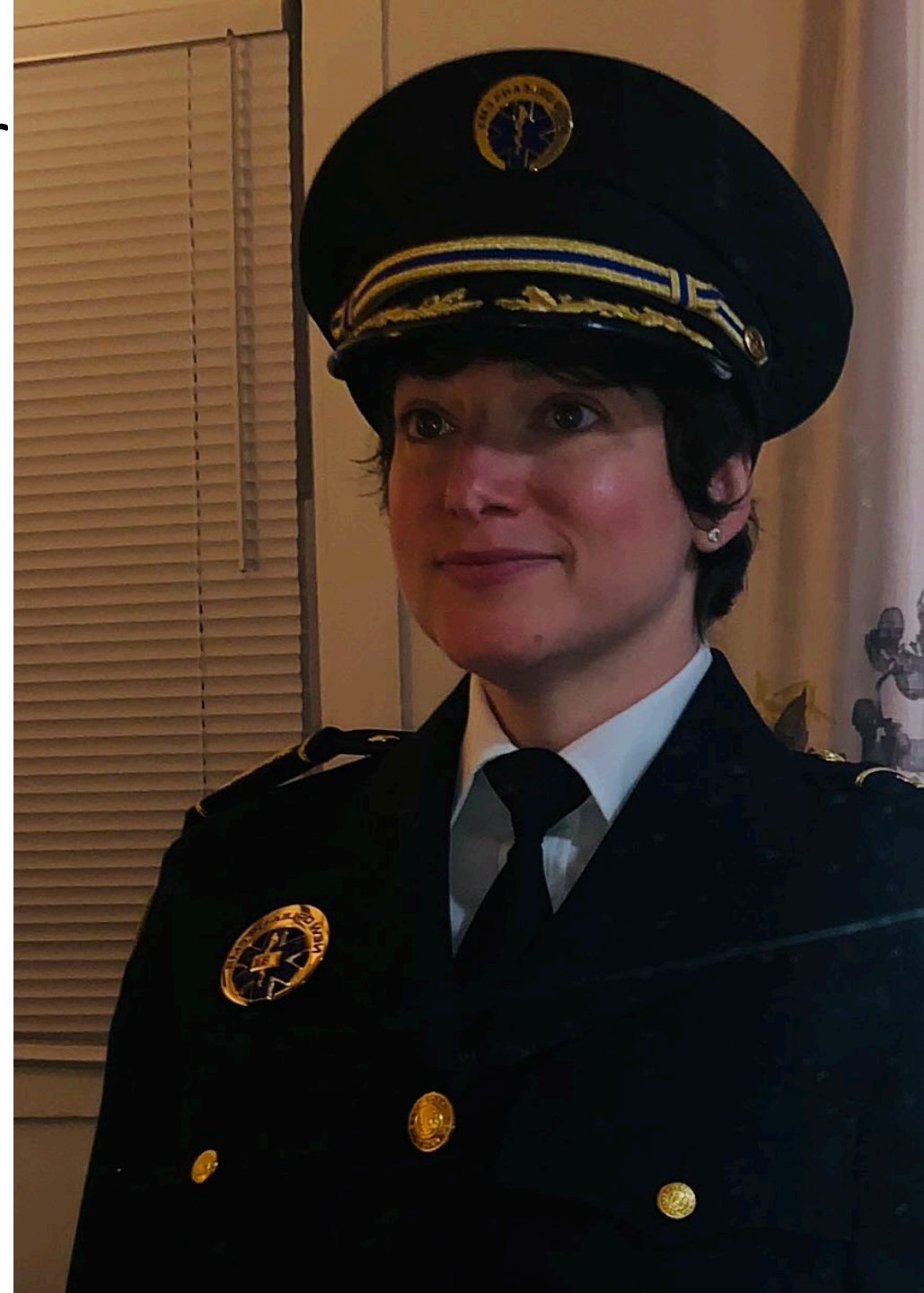
- Emotional support and empathetic listening
- Individuals feeling prepared and competent
- Low organizational stress
- (Martin et al., 2009; Evans et al., 2013; Wild et al., 2020)

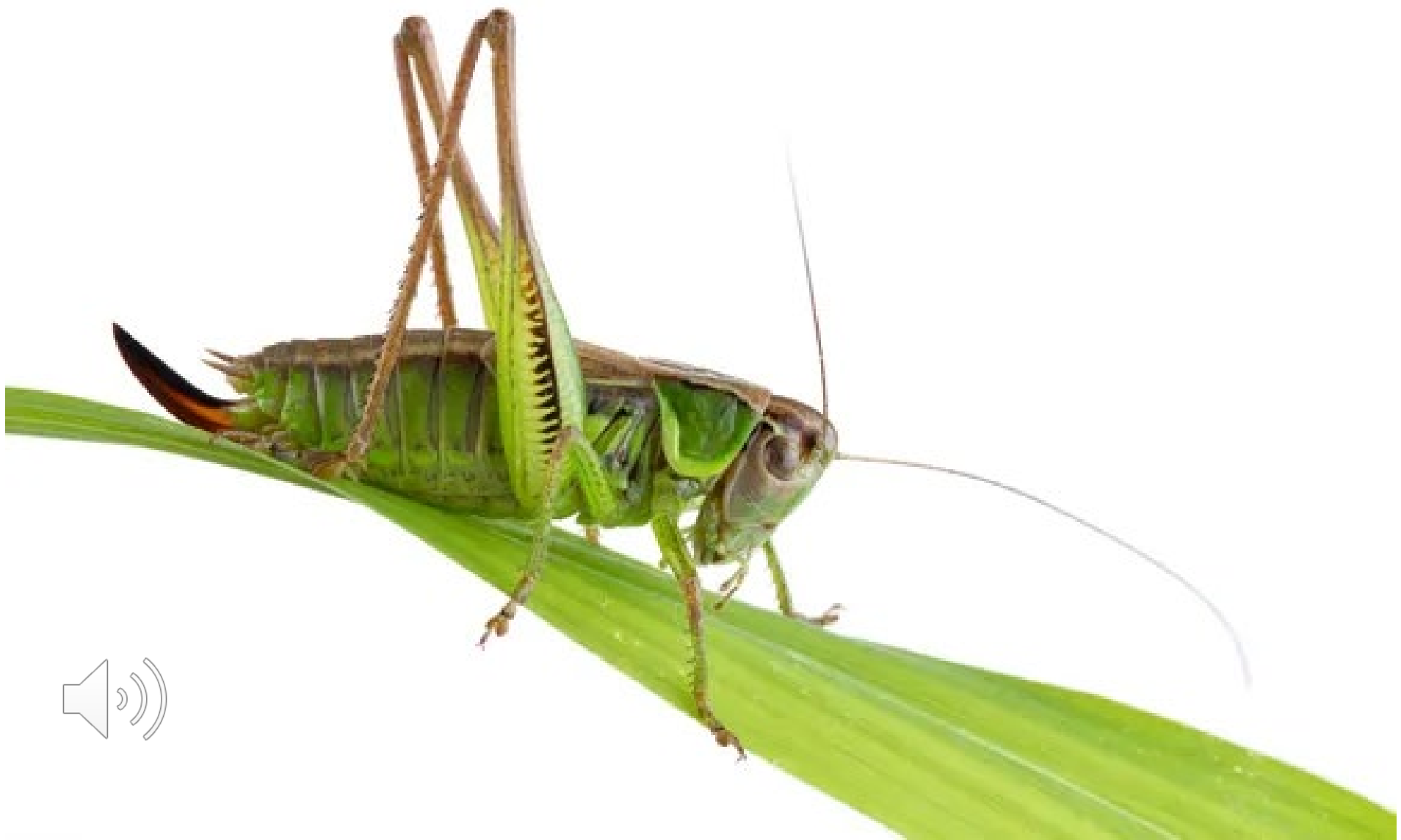


Deputy Medical Director, Dr. Meg



2021: Director/Medical Director
Dr. Marino







Meet Emily

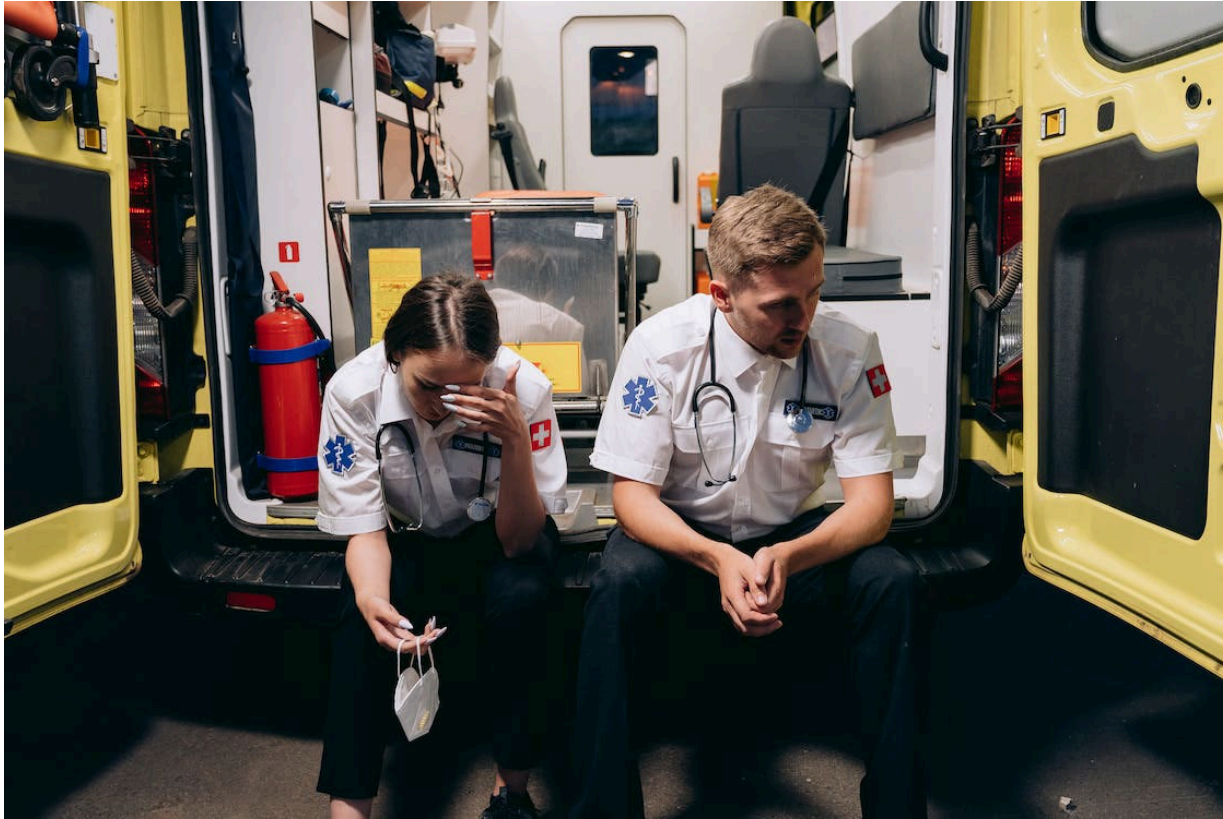
- Full Time Therapist
 - With experience in EMS
- Available by phone 24/7
Unlimited sessions available
Focuses on crisis and trauma therapy
Provides referrals for outside
counseling and psychiatry as needed
Office downstairs near the crews



Meet Frank



Critical Incident Stress Management



- CISM and Peer support
 - Including personnel on each watch, so someone is available 24/7

Code Lavender

- Focuses on taking care of stress in the moment
 - Staff members provide emotional support to staff who experience traumatic events
- In NOEMS policy, allows for at least 30 minutes of downtime after a difficult call
- (Cleveland Clinic)



Minding EMS Minds & Caring for Caregivers

LEE COUNTY CREWCARE RETENTION PROGRAM

Jim Augustine, MD
Medical Director
Lee County EMS





Lee County
Southwest Florida

THE ISSUE: THERE ARE NO
VACANCIES TO BE FILLED IN LEE
COUNTY EMS...

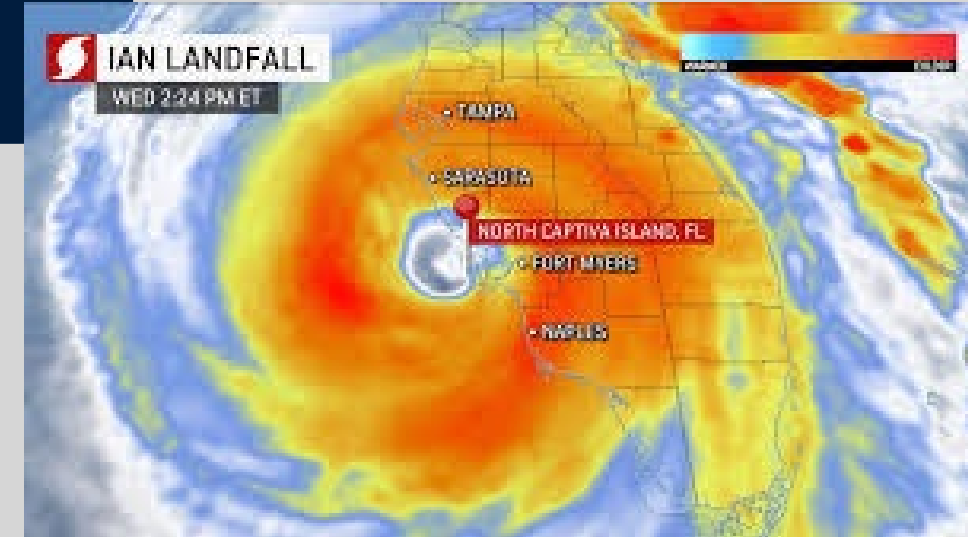


RECRUIT AND RETAIN IN CURRENT EMS TIME

TAKING GREAT CARE OF
EMPLOYEES THROUGH:

3 YEAR PANDEMIC
VOLUME AND ACUITY
ELEVATION

A CATEGORY 5 HURRICANE
THAT DEVASTATED THE
COUNTY



CREW CARE INCEPTION: PANDEMIC SPRING 2020

EMPLOYEE SUPPORT UNIT

INITIAL MISSION:

CHANGING TESTING/QUARANTINE PROTOCOLS

NO SUPPORT FROM HOSPITALS?
OKAY, CREW COMFORT: STOCKED,
AIR CONDITIONED TENTS FOR DECON
DOWNTIME



Support for Crewmembers

- Documentation time
- Restroom
- Food and Drink (when community compromised)
- Vehicle Decon
- Supply Replenish
- Back in Service.... For real
- AND Add a Rescued Dog

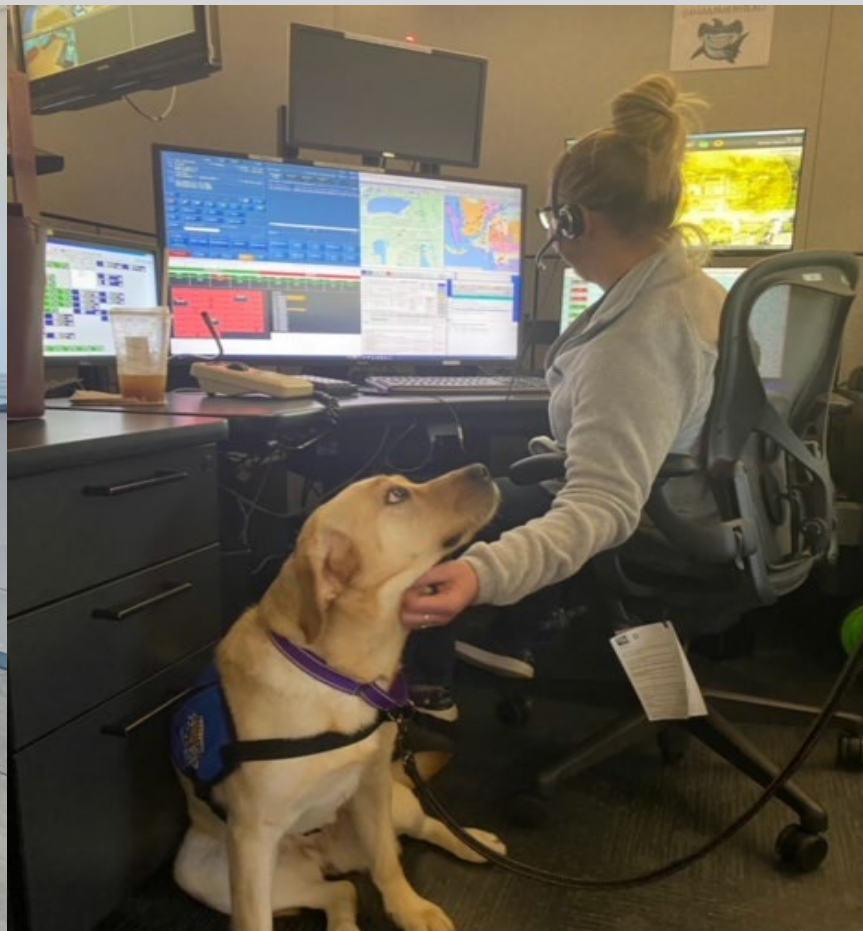


CREW CARE ACTIVITIES

VISITING CREWS AT
HOSPITALS

VISITING OUR 911 CALL
TAKERS AND
DISPATCHERS

VISIT & NAP AT LEE
FLIGHT

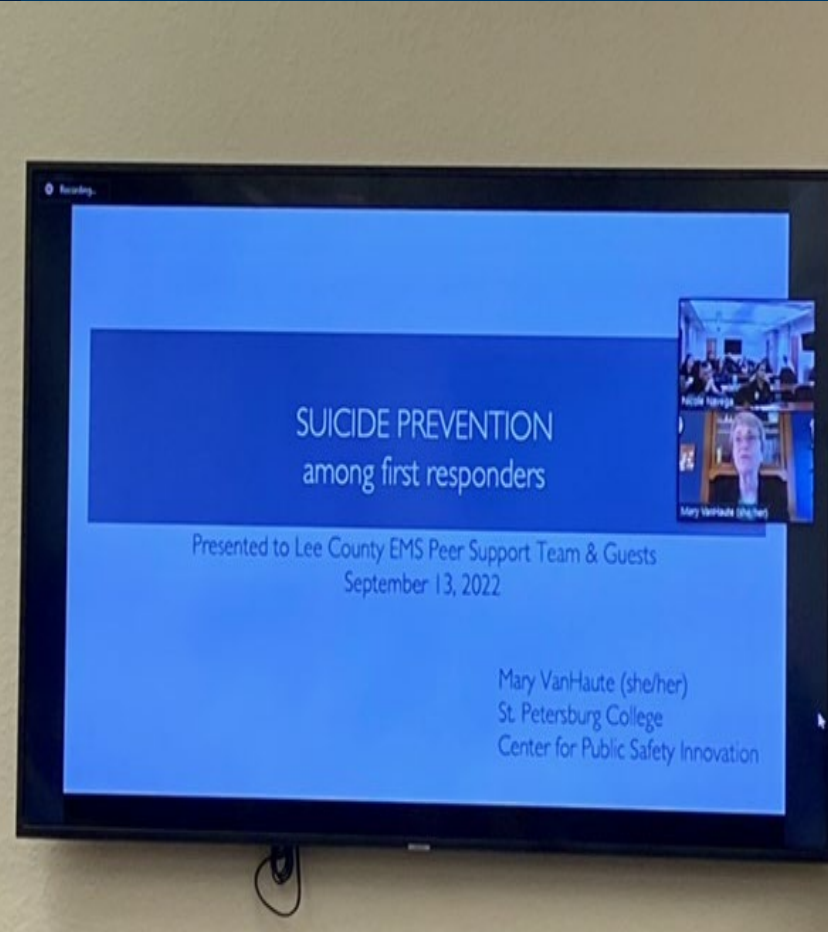


CREW CARE ACTIVITIES

TURN HANGAR INTO
SPA ROTATE TRUCKS
THROUGH



SUICIDE PREVENTION
PEER TRAINING



LODD
COORDINATION



HURRICANE IAN:

ACUTE DISTRESS RESPONSE, CISM DEBRIEFINGS & COMFORT WITH MAGGIE



EMS Attract, Recruit, Retain

- Everyday Great Operations
- During the Worst Times, Outstanding Support
- Novel Programs Matching Staff Needs
- Consistent Dedication
- A little fun....



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- All photos obtained have creative common license