

2025 MENTAL HEALTH SEMINAR

January 7, 2025

Agenda Day One

0800-0830

Check In/Registration

0830-1000

Keynote Speaker
Don McCullough

1000-1015

Break- Sponsored by
NHAFC/ NHACP

1015-1200

Session One

1200-1300

Lunch- Sponsored by
Primex

1300-1445

Session Two

1445-1500

Break- Sponsored by
NHAFC/NHACP

1500-1630

Session Three- Full
Group Session

Session One

○ Option 1: What to Expect at Your First Therapy Appointment

Presented by Candice Alizio

This workshop is designed for public safety professionals who are curious or apprehensive about starting therapy. Led by Candice W. Alizio, a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist with extensive experience working with first responders, this session will provide an overview of what to expect during your first therapy appointment. Attendees will learn about the structure of a typical session, common therapeutic approaches used in addressing trauma and stress, and how to set personal goals for mental health. The workshop will also cover confidentiality, creating a safe space, and debunk common myths about therapy.

○ Option 2: Preventing Responder Suicide and Promoting Resilience

Presented by Amy Cook

This presentation for first responders addresses the impact of trauma and stress inherent in their roles. Self-care strategies for effective stress management and recognizing when a peer may be struggling are highlighted. The session emphasizes the importance of difficult conversations in preventing responder suicide, reducing stigma around mental health, and promoting resilience. Key skills in identifying signs of stress and warning signs for suicide are discussed, empowering attendees to support themselves and their colleagues in challenging times.

○ Option 3: You Are Never Alone

Presented by the Department of Safety Peer Support Team

The Department of Safety Peer Support Team is a dedicated group of trained professionals, certified in Individual and Group Crisis Intervention. Whether someone is facing a critical event or simply feeling overwhelmed by everyday stress, regardless if it is work related or not, the team members are there to listen and provide guidance 24/7, 365. In this session, attendees will get an overview of the program including challenges on starting it from the ground up; how the need was originally identified, buy-in from colleagues, along with the growth and challenges the team has faced along the way.

Session Two

○ Option 1: More than Just Dollars: Preparing for and Navigating Retirement

Presented by Chief Goldstein & Susan Brown

This training program equips first responders with the essential tools to prepare for and thrive in retirement, extending far beyond financial considerations. The journey to a fulfilling retirement starts well before the final day on duty, with proactive planning to ensure a smooth transition from a life of service to one of purpose and connection. Key topics include setting and meeting pre-retirement goals, honoring career accomplishments, and maintaining a sense of purpose through meaningful engagement with family, friends, and community. Financial preparedness is paired with an emphasis on physical and mental health, exploring proactive strategies that mitigate long-term impacts often associated with demanding careers in public safety.

○ Option 2: Behind the Scenes

Presented by Kelli Sallee

This program is tailored specifically for civilian employees to recognize and validate the vital role they play within first responder agencies. Although not on the front lines, their work—answering emergency calls, reviewing bodycam footage, redacting sensitive reports, and providing support during critical times—comes with unique challenges and stress. Participants will gain valuable coping skills, resources for managing stress, and tools for self-care, empowering them to navigate their demanding roles while maintaining their well-being.

○ Option 3: Public Safety Wellness Consultation- The What, Why, and How To of Providing this Service for Public Safety Agencies

Presented by Dr. Nicole Sawyer

Attendees will learn what a wellness consultation is, why public safety agencies are quickly adopting this service as a benefit offered to their employees, and how to execute this service ethically and with the intended outcomes of reduced mental health stigma, demystification of the “therapy space”, and access to emotional health education and self-awareness for the employee.

Session Three- Full Group Session

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Session Three- Full group Session

O Building Resilience and Mental Health Support in Emergency Services and Municipal Agencies

Moderated by Justin Bretton & Russ Conte

As the mental health and well-being of first responders and municipal employees become increasingly recognized as crucial for effective service delivery, it is imperative for local police, fire, EMS, corrections, dispatch agencies, and municipal organizations to proactively create supportive environments for their personnel. This panel discussion will explore the critical role of human resource directors, administrators, union leadership, peer support teams and mental health wellness programs have in mitigating the unique stressors faced by our personnel and how these programs can be integrated across various municipal sectors.

Panelists, including representatives from local emergency services agencies and municipal leadership, will share best practices, strategies for overcoming challenges, and the key benefits of fostering a culture of support within teams. Topics will include how to establish sustainable peer support structures, integrate mental health support services and benefits packages, ensure confidentiality, and provide ongoing education and training for first responders, HR directors, administrators, and union leaders.

Participants will leave with a deeper understanding of the importance of peer support, practical tools for starting or enhancing wellness initiatives in their own organizations, and insights on how such programs can improve mental health, job satisfaction, and performance across municipal settings. This session is an essential resource for those looking to build a culture of care and resilience, enhancing the well-being and effectiveness of their personnel.

Special Thanks to Primex for
sponsoring lunches
and all vendors for attending

2025 MENTAL HEALTH SEMINAR

January 8, 2025

Agenda Day Two

0800-0830

Check In/Registration

0830-1000

Yoga for First Responders

1000-1015

Break- Sponsored by NHAFC/ NHACP

1015-1200

Session One

1015-1500

Full Day Option

1200-1300

Lunch- Sponsored by Primex

1300-1445

Session Two

Session One

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○ Option 3: You Are Never Alone

Presented by the Department of Safety Communications/ 911 Peer Support Team

The Department of Safety Peer Support Team is a dedicated group of trained professionals, certified in Individual and Group Crisis Intervention. Whether someone is facing a critical event or simply feeling overwhelmed by everyday stress, regardless if it is work related or not, the team members are there to listen and provide guidance 24/7, 365. In this session, attendees will get an overview of the program including challenges on starting it from the ground up; how the need was originally identified, buy-in from colleagues, along with the growth and challenges the team has faced along the way.

Session Two

○ Option 1: Are You a Retiree or Near Retirement? What to Expect in Transition

Presented by Chief Goldstein & Susan Brown

This training program equips first responders with the essential tools to prepare for and thrive in retirement, extending far beyond financial considerations. The journey to a fulfilling retirement starts well before the final day on duty, with proactive planning to ensure a smooth transition from a life of service to one of purpose and connection. Key topics include setting and meeting pre-retirement goals, honoring career accomplishments, and maintaining a sense of purpose through meaningful engagement with family, friends, and community. Financial preparedness is paired with an emphasis on physical and mental health, exploring proactive strategies that mitigate long-term impacts often associated with demanding careers in public safety. Participants will learn to avoid common pitfalls such as isolation and loss of routine, creating a retirement plan that supports structure, meaning, and resilience.

○ Option 2: Behind the Scenes

Presented by Kelli Sallee

This program is tailored specifically for civilian employees to recognize and validate the vital role they play within first responder agencies. Although not on the front lines, their work—answering emergency calls, reviewing bodycam footage, redacting sensitive reports, and providing support during critical times—comes with unique challenges and stress. Participants will gain valuable coping skills, resources for managing stress, and tools for self-care, empowering them to navigate their demanding roles while maintaining their well-being.

Full Day Option

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- **Full Day Option**

Pre-employment, Fitness, and Return to work: What every Chief Administrator needs to know about Psych Exams
Presented by Dr. Nicole Sawyer

This is an all day program designed to address the most common questions, pit-falls, and how-to's of psychological exams in public safety. We will review ethics and expectations, what you should/should not get in the report, demystifying results, and how to use exams to support hiring, retention, and long-term wellness in your department/agency. In addition to chief administrators, mental health clinicians, town administrators, and human resources staff are also encouraged to attend.

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Presenter Bio's

Candice Alizio, LMFT, CCISM, MBCBT

Drawing from over two decades of multifaceted experience across education, mental health, agency, and corporate sectors, Candice brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to her practice. With 14 years of clinical mastery, she specializes in program development, particularly within community-based and corporate environments. For the past six years, she has directed her focus towards crafting mental health and wellness initiatives tailored specifically for First Responder agencies, recognizing and addressing the unique challenges they face.

Susan Brown-, LCMHC, MLADC, EMT-I (RET)

Susan Brown LCMHC, MLADC, EMT-I (RET) Susan received her master's degree from Antioch New England Graduate School and she has worked in the mental health and substance use field for over 30 years. She has worked in several clinical settings, including but not limited to; community mental health, corrections, acting as the Director of Psychological Health for the NH National Guard, inpatient psychiatric and substance use treatment, and teaching at both the graduate and undergraduate level. She is currently the VFR Clinical Liaison at Forge Health. She brings a broad range of experience and passion to her work.

Susan comes from a strong first responder family. Her father retired from the fire service as a chief and served in the Army National Guard, her husband served in the Marine Corps and retired from law enforcement. She has been Critical Incident Stress Management trained for over 25 years, she worked and volunteered as an EMT-I for 10 years, is an embedded clinician at Manchester NH Police Department, and she is a member of the Southern NH Regional CISM and Peer Support Team. Her commitment to the first responder community is unmatched.

Rebecca Desrochers- Peer Support Team Coordinator

Rebecca started with NH911 as a Telecommunication Specialist in June 2006. She was a Certified Training Officer for several years before becoming an Assistant Supervisor in 2013 and a Supervisor in 2021. Rebecca joined the Peer Support Team in February 2022.

Beth Drew- Peer Support Team Member

Beth started with NH911 as a Telecommunication Specialist in February 2015 after 30 years in EMS. She became a Certified Training Officer in 2017 and is now the Quality Assurance Supervisor and 911's liaison to NH Police, Fire, and EMS Responders. Beth is one of the first members to join the Peer Support Team back in December 2019.

Chrystal Howerly- Peer Support Team member

Chrystal started with NH911 as a Telecommunication Specialist in March of 2023, quickly became a valuable member of the NH911 team. She became a Certified Training Officer in May 2024 and joined the Peer Support Team in July 2024.

Darren Lescarbeau- Peer Support Team member

Darren started with NH911 as a Telecommunication Specialist in October 2012. He was a Certified Training Officer and an Assistant Supervisor before becoming a Supervisor in 2016. He joined the Management Team in December 2023, when he accepted the position for Deputy Chief of Operations. Darren joined the Peer Support Team in January 2022.

Johnny Miller- Peer Support Team member

Johnny's started his dispatching career in August of 1996. In June 2002, he started with NH State Police as a Communications Specialist. He joined his local Fire/EMS Squad in October 1984, where he has been serving since. Johnny is one of the original members to join the Peer Support Team in December 2019.

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Presenter Bio's

Don McCullough- Keynote Speaker

After a 32-year career as a firefighter, including 15 years as a Rescue Specialist with FEMA Urban Search & Rescue Massachusetts Task Force 1, Don McCullough retired at the rank of captain from the City of Rochester Fire Department. Soon after, the terrors of PTSD, bottled up inside him after a career experiencing one traumatic event after another overwhelmed him and drove him to self-medicating and addiction. He found himself homeless, jobless and hopeless. Five years ago, he found recovery through the Center of Excellence, the IAFF recovery facility in Maryland.

Don has a master's degree in clinical mental health counseling, is an ICSF approved peer support counselor and has been an active member of the Granite State CISM team for twenty years. He has spoken at the national level on behavioral health issues in emergency responders, including topics such as addiction and suicide.

Don works as a mental health counselor at Community Partners in Strafford County, working with vulnerable populations who struggle with mental illness, addiction and housing insecurity.

Nowadays, he finds himself finally practicing what he preaches, self-care through sound, positive behavioral health. Among other hobbies, he is a singer/songwriter who plays at local open mics and is an avid woodworker and gardener.

Amy M. Cook

Amy Cook is the Director of Training at NAMI New Hampshire and has been employed with the organization since January 2023. She received a Master of Business Administration degree from Southern New Hampshire University and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology and Psychology from the University of New Hampshire.

Prior to working at NAMI NH, Amy was the Director of the Division of Community Based Military Programs at the NH Department of Military Affairs and Veterans Services in Concord, NH from October 2018 to December 2022. Amy has worked with various populations over the course of her career. In addition to her current role, she also continues to be a Subject Matter Expert providing consultation to teams across the United States and Territories utilizing SAMHSA/VA funding to develop initiatives to prevent suicide among military service members, Veterans, and their families.

Amy's current professional affiliations include Chair of the NH Suicide Prevention Council, Governor-appointed Team Lead of the NH Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans & their Families, NH Overdose Fatality Review Committee, and NH Military Leadership Team. Past professional affiliations include NH Alliance for Healthy Aging, NH Justice Involved Veterans Taskforce, and Ending Veteran Homelessness Steering Committee. She received a Master of Business Administration degree in 2024 from Southern New Hampshire University and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology and Psychology in 1998 from the University of New Hampshire.

Kelli Sallee, Executive Secretary to the Chief of Police Goffstown, NH

With over a decade of diverse experience in law enforcement civilian roles, Kelli brings invaluable insight into the challenges they face. CISM trained, she actively contributes to both departmental and regional CISM teams, offering crucial support to distressed colleagues. Additionally, as a certified Life Coach, Kelli is dedicated to empowering individuals to discover their purpose and motivation.

Nicole L. Sawyer, PsyD

Nicole L Sawyer, PsyD is a licensed clinical psychologist in Exeter, New Hampshire. She has been in clinical practice since 2005 and works exclusively with public safety professionals and first responder agencies. Dr. Sawyer currently serves as the supporting psychologist for the NH State Police Peer Support Unit, she provides clinical support for various Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) teams across the state and is an instructor for the NAMI-NH Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) program. She is the professional crisis intervention specialist for the Seacoast Emergency Response Team (SERT), the Strafford County Regional Tactical Operations Unit (SCRTOU), and the NH State Police SWAT (NHSP-CNU), responding alongside law enforcement. In addition to her field roles, she provides psychological consultation, assessment, and evaluation for state and local agencies across NH.

2025 MENTAL HEALTH SEMINAR

Presenter Bio's

Ret. Chief David Goldstein

Chief (ret.) David Goldstein has been a police officer for 46 years in total. Beginning in 1974, Chief Goldswtein joined the Belmont, MA Police Department as a Special/Auxiliary Officer.

In 1979, Chief Goldstein joined the Derry Police Department as a member of the patrol division. While a member of the DPD, Officer Goldstein spent his time as a member of the Patrol Division. He also assumed the role of a Field Training Officer.

In 1982, Chief Goldstein was appointed to the New Hampshire State Police as a Trooper Trainee. Upon completing his probationary year, Trooper Goldstein assumed the duties and responsibilities associated with the role of a NH State Trooper. His tenure with the NHSP lasted until 2004 when Captain Goldstein retired.

During his time with the NHSP David received a number of assignments. Included here were, Field Training Officer, investigations of crimes against children, undercover narcotics investigations, Major Crimes Unit (primarily crime scene investigations including the highest IAI certification in crime scene investigations for field personnel), Polygraph Examiner (certified by the American Polygraph Association), SWAT (primarily Hostage/Crisis Negotiator), Detective Supervisor, and various administrative duties and responsibilities commensurate with supervisory and command-level ranks.

Upon retiring from the NHSP, Captain Goldstein was appointed the Chief of Police in Winthrop Massachusetts (2004-2009).

In 2009, Chief Goldstein returned to his home in NH and assumed the position of Chief of Police in the City of Franklin. Chief Goldstein retired in November 2024.

Predating his law enforcement career, Chief Goldstein was involved in what is now known as the mental health and wellness of police officers. He has continued in this role for the entirety of his career. This has expanded to assisting all members of the first responder professions.

Dave holds a BA in Psychology from Boston University, an MS in Public Health with a concentration in mental health from Tufts University and a self-designed PhD in Counseling, Human Services, Criminal Justice and Forensic Traumatology from Walden University.

Since 1999, Dr. Goldstein has been a member of the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Sttress. As a result, he is a Diplomate and Fellow of that organization as well as board certifications in Traumatic Stress and Forensic Traumatology.

In 2024, Dr. Goldstein was Certified in Critical Incident Stress Management by the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation. He has also received training in both individual and group processes by the same organization.

Dr. Goldstein has held a number of academic positions throughout his career to include Adjunct professorships with Boston University (undergraduate and graduate), New England College and NH Technical Institute.

Dave has also held instructor positions with the NH Police Academy (basic and in-service) in areas including Stress Management (basic and advanced and Forensic Psychology). Included also were adjunct positions with the Massachusetts PSTC at the North Reading Academy. He has also conducted guest lecturer roles for the Boston Police, Medford Police and Topsfield Police Academies.

Dr. Goldstein has conducted Grand Rounds for the Emergency Psychiatric staff at the Tufts New England Hospital and the New Hampshire Hospital.

Dave and his wife of more than 43 years have lived in Auburn since 1983. At present, they live with two k9s, Major and Ariel.

For relaxation, Dave is a skydiving Accelerated Freefall Instructor, demonstration skydiver and drop zone Safety & Training Advisor. He is also a certified Open Water SCUBA instructor. Dave holds a 4th degree black belt in a mixed martial art (Chinese Herchun Karate Kung Fu).