

Wellbeing support for police officers and staff following disorder or major investigations

A survey for officers and staff involved in public disorder or major investigations was created to assess the effect on their wellbeing and signpost them to appropriate support.

First published

17 September 2025

Key details

Does it work?	Untested – new or innovative
Focus	Organisational
Topic	Intelligence and investigation Organisation including workforce
Organisation	Cleveland Police
HMICFRS report	PEEL 2023–25 Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy: An inspection of Cleveland Police
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Region	North East
Partners	Police

Key details

Stage of practice	The practice is implemented.
Start date	July 2024
Scale of initiative	Local
Target group	Adults

Aim

The aims are to:

- ensure the needs of officers and staff who respond to public disorder are assessed by the wellbeing team
- ensure officer and staff welfare needs are addressed
- contact affected officers and staff within three days of an incident
- provide an efficient trauma risk management (TRiM) process and ensure peers are trained to undertake assessments
- provide tailored support to officers and staff, with clear guidance to necessary resources
- conduct a six month follow up assessment to review progress

Intended outcome

The intended outcome is to:

- improve wellbeing support for officers and staff responding to traumatic or stressful incidents
- improve TRiM process by conducting impact assessments on affected officers and staff
- improve identifying and addressing individual needs
- improve contact with all officers and staff involved in a disorder incident

Description

Following the public disorder of the Summer 2024, Cleveland Police acknowledged the need to assess the impact on staff wellbeing.

The wellbeing team consists of seven staff members who were part of the silver and bronze command groups, enabling them to quickly identify and address any wellbeing concerns. At the request of gold command group the team developed an online wellbeing triage form due to the increase in the number of officers and staff involved in policing the public disorder. The questions on the form covered the following topic areas:

- overall wellbeing
- injuries
- whether support from external networks was received

It was decided by the wellbeing team to use generic questioning to provide triaged support to individuals or smaller teams.

All supervisors are expected to send out online questionnaires to responding officers and staff at the end of their shifts. Staff and officers at all ranks are encouraged to complete a brief wellbeing questionnaire to identify and address their needs.

Completed questionnaires are returned to the wellbeing team who then contact the individuals. Contact is usually made via telephone which allows individuals to have a confidential conversation with a member of the wellbeing team. During the conversation, the wellbeing member of staff will sign post the individual to resources and further support. At the end of the conversation individuals are reminded that they can contact the wellbeing team for support at any time. The wellbeing team then follow up with individuals six months later, to provide another opportunity for confidential support.

Individuals are also informed that family members can access the employee assistance programme for support at both initial and follow-up contacts.

The chief officer team have endorsed and backed this initiative.

The initiative is straightforward and flexible, allowing adjustment to the contact parameters to fit different needs and situation.

Overall impact

- all identified individuals were contacted within three days and were offered support
- the wellbeing team's contact was appreciated by staff, and it demonstrated Cleveland Police's commitment to support wellbeing
- the simple questionnaire was well-received by staff, and the force saw the potential to complement existing TRIM system enhancing the offer of wellbeing support
- officers and staff have provided overwhelmingly positive feedback, and the force plans to expand this approach to be used in future major incidents
- the initiative has been integrated into supervisors' toolkit for shift debriefs and regular check-ins

Learning

- due to the request from the gold command, tactical commanders and staff did not resist sharing or responding to the questionnaire
- the process ensures immediate wellbeing checks, confidential conversations with wellbeing professionals and the signposting of resources
- the initiative was easy to put in place, and plans are underway to develop it further and senior investigating officers (SIOs) will be encouraged to use this approach as a standard part of major investigations
- it is essential to have a checklist that is accessible either on the intranet or wellbeing hub to ensure that supervisors have access to conducting wellbeing check-ins within their teams

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