

Presentation: Staff recovery in the wake of the pandemic

This session outlined the main causes of poor mental health in healthcare workers and set out practical ways of improving mental wellbeing within individuals, and teams, of healthcare staff engaged in carrying out highly challenging roles. The talk included information about moral injury which describes the potential psychological impacts of being exposed to situations which strongly clash with someone's moral or ethical code. The session drew upon evidence, and experience, from other occupational settings where staff are engaged in pressured, and often trauma-prone, duties as well as providing contemporary information about the mental health of healthcare staff over the last two years.

Professor Neil Greenberg is a consultant academic, occupational and forensic psychiatrist based at King's College London. Neil served in the United Kingdom Armed Forces for more than 23 years and has deployed, as a psychiatrist and researcher, to a number of hostile environments including Afghanistan and Iraq. At King's Neil leads on a number of military mental health projects and is a principal investigator within a nationally funded Health Protection Research unit. He also chairs the Royal College of Psychiatrists (RCP) Special Interest Group in Occupational Psychiatry and is leading the World Psychiatric Association position statement on mental health in the workplace.

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Key takeaways:

1. Within most healthcare settings, resilience does not reside within individual team members, it relies on the bonds between them. That is to say that enhancing resilience at a team level is much more effective than simply providing individuals with one intervention or another.
2. Supervisors have a key role in protecting the mental health of their staff and need to be competent, and feel confident, to speak about mental health with their team members.
3. It is important that teams periodically reflect not just on what went right or wrong, but also on the impact of events on team members themselves. These reflective sessions are best led by team leaders, rather than psychologists, who should start by sharing an impactful situation for them to encourage open discussion

Resources:

- [What should be done to support the mental health of healthcare staff treating COVID-19 patients?](#)
- [Mental health of health-care workers in the COVID-19 era](#)
- [An evaluation of REACTMH mental health training for UK healthcare supervisors](#)