

Connecticut Department of Correction

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS INITIATIVES





Public Safety

Reduce Recidivism and Prevent Criminal Activity in our Community and be an active partner in the state's criminal justice, public safety and emergency response/disaster relief systems.

Wellness

Reduce Trauma and its effects throughout the system.

Efficiency

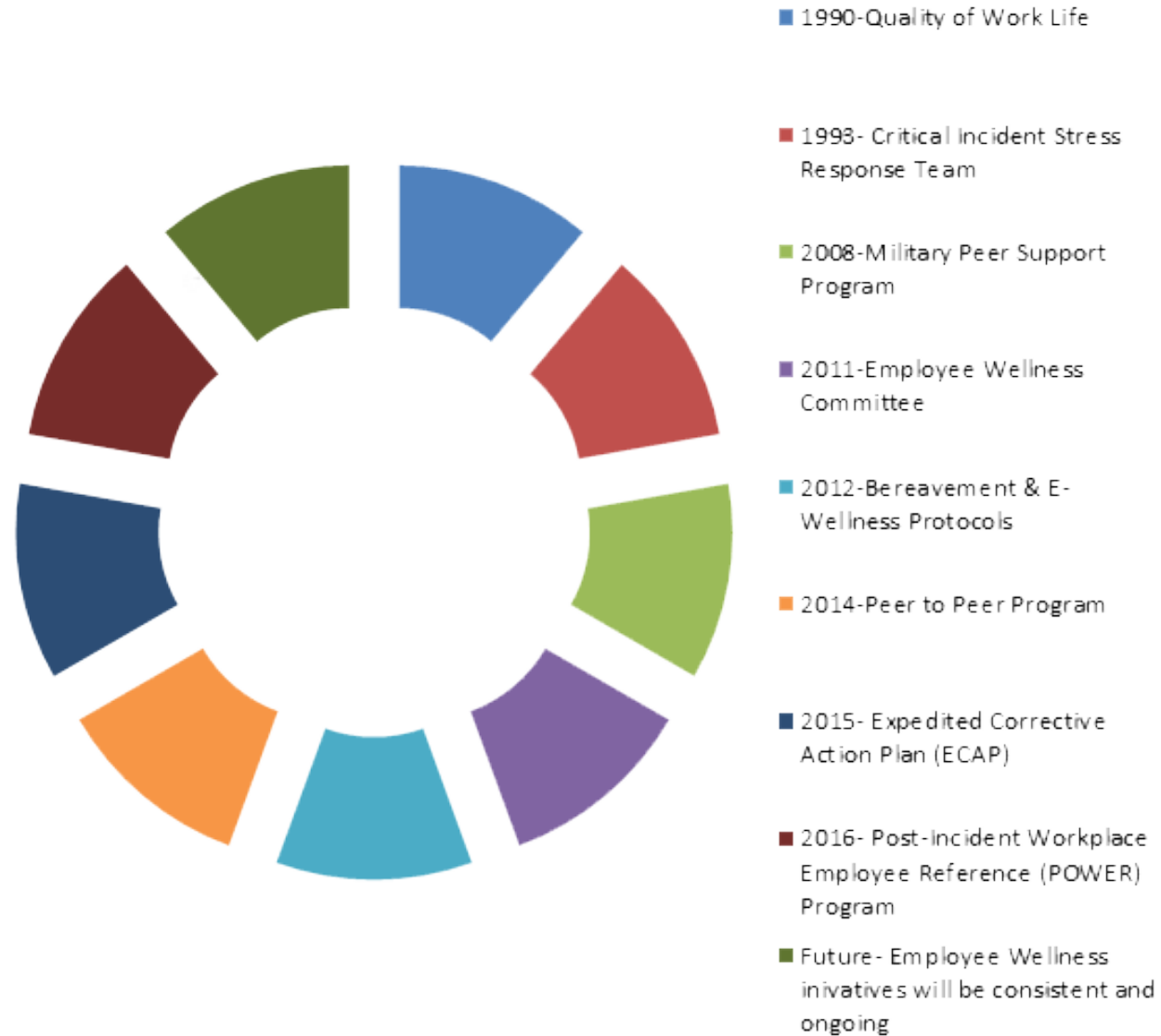
Maximize the utility of limited resources, increase and enhance collaboration, productivity and efficiencies and achieve operational and procedural consistency between DOC facilities and between DOC and its partners.



Wellness

Reduce Trauma and
its effects
throughout the
system.

Connecticut Department of Correction E-Wellness Continuum



Quality of Work Life Committees – QWL

- Since 1990 - Each facility has had a QWL
- Consist of a variety of employee ranks/ job titles
- Gives employees a chance to unwind from a very stressful work environment

Critical Incident Stress Response Team

- Mission – Provide support to staff adversely affected by traumatic event
- Since the mid 1990's.
- Activated after serious assaults, deaths, and suicides (staff or inmate).
- On average activated 1-2 times per month.

Critical Military Peer Support Program

- Mission – Provide support to DoC staff service members during all phases of deployment, including transition back to work.
- Created in 2008.
- Members communicate with deployed staff and their families.
- Send care packages.
- Annual picnic.

Employee Wellness Committee

- Created in 2011 following an increase in staff suicides.
- Comprised of a wide range of staff including: wardens, human resource staff and front line officers.
- Focus is on addressing issues facing correction officers, i.e. substance abuse, suicide, depression, domestic violence etc.

Bereavement & E-Wellness Protocol

Established in
2012

Peer to Peer Mentoring Program

- Created in 2014 to foster mentor-mentee relationships.
- Developed in conjunction with grant funded UCONN Health Center study.
- Collected blood pressure and body fat data.
- Results – those with mentors were "healthier."

Expedited Corrective Action Plan

ECAP

Expedited Corrective Action Plan

- Designed to expedite and streamline implementation of disciplinary actions for certain employee infractions.
- Launched in 2015 as the result of a LEAN project aimed at impacting both the Efficiency and Wellness components of the DoC's Strategic Plan.

The POWER Program

Post-Incident Workplace Employee Reference Program

The POWER Program

- The POWER Card was created to provide valuable reference information to employee affected by significant trauma.
- Feedback from recuperating employees experiencing challenges finding the help they needed, was the impetus for this initiative.

Future Employee Initiatives





Connecticut Department of Correction Employee Wellness Initiatives

- **Quality of Work Life Committees (QWL)**

Each Correctional Institution has an established QWL with members from various ranks from various departments. The QWL has been a very successful committee focused on coordinating events at the facility that give employees an opportunity to unwind or distress from a very challenging and stressful environment. Some examples of their activities include organized meals, t-shirt sales, bake sales, organized off-duty trips, organized sporting events, and charity collections.

- **Critical Incident Stress Response Team (CISRT)**

- ❖ Created in the mid-90's - Currently has 40 members (various ranks/facility assignments)
- ❖ Mission: Provide support for the staff adversely affected by a traumatic event.
- ❖ Interventions conducted in a safe/confidential atmosphere to promote staff well being.
- ❖ Members receive training related to Critical Incident Stress Management.
- ❖ Examples of an activation of this unit include a serious assault, death, or suicide – both staff and inmates.
- ❖ The Unit is activated on the average 1-2 times per month and report directly to the facility

- **Military Peer Support Program (MPSP)**

- ❖ Created in 2008 - Mission: Provide support and assistance to our service members and their families during all phases of deployment and the transition back to work.
- ❖ Unit meets with families, communicates with deployed staff, put together care packages, coordinate fundraising and puts together an annual picnic.

- **Employee Wellness Committee**

- ❖ Created in 2011 following a recognized increase in staff suicides.
- ❖ Comprised of facility Wardens, various bargaining unit members, human resource staff, front line officers.
- ❖ Focus is to address issues facing correctional employees such as substance abuse, suicide, domestic violence, criminal arrests, mental health, depression, and obesity. The

vision of this Unit is to “Show We Care.” The mission is empower employees to be courageous and break down boundaries between co-workers. *As of date, the Employee Wellness Committee has completed the following tasks:*

- Implemented a guide for wellness checks (employee no call/no show)
- Established a facility bereavement protocol
- Created several physical fitness challenges to engage employees (challenge course, squat off, bench press)
- Weekend employee wellness fair
- Monthly email *blasts* aimed at encouraging the use of the agency Employee Assistance Program (EAP) by providing information on available services, while stressing the confidentiality component.
- Created a logo (mind/body/spirit) which is used to endorse all events which support employee wellness

- **Peer Mentor Program – Peer to Peer**

- ❖ Program began in 2014 - created to foster a mentor-mentee relationship
- ❖ Based on trust where a more senior person guides and teaches a less-experienced person about expectations of the work environment and career advancement
- ❖ Developed following a UCONN stress study (grant funded) at Cheshire and Corrigan/Rad
- ❖ Consisted of surveys, focus groups, interviews
- ❖ Collection of clinical data: blood pressure and body fat analysis
- ❖ Results showed that those staff with mentors were actually “healthier”

- **Expedited Corrective Action Plan (ECAP)**

- ❖ Launched from a LEAN event in April 2015 with a focus on reducing the time spent during the disciplinary review process.
- ❖ The significant reduction in timeframe has a positive impact on employee wellness and the associated stress and anxiety that often accompanies a workplace incident with disciplinary consequences.

- **Post-Incident Workplace Employee Reference Program (POWER)**

- ❖ Newest (2016) DOC policy focused on communicating and supporting employees after a significant incident within a correctional setting.
- ❖ The POWER card was created to provide a reference for employees that may be out of work based on an injury sustained on the job.
- ❖ Reference information/contacts include Workers Compensation Unit, Victim Services, Critical Incident Response Team, and the Employee Assistance Program.
- ❖ The initiative was the result of feedback from employees who had experienced challenges while home recuperating from an injury.