

The NIH Distressed Trainee Project: A Toolkit for Training Directors, Supervisors, Mentors & Trainees

**Debbie Snyder, MSW
Maryland Pao, MD
NIMH Office of the Clinical Director**

**Slide Deck for Supervisors
April 20, 2017**

Overview

- 1) Describe the problem of the distressed trainee (DT) at the NIH, psychiatric emergencies and access to resources
- 2) Review NIH 5-Item Toolkit for Supervisors and Trainees
- 3) Address distribution, print, production tips
- 4) Discuss health insurance carrier status for trainees
- 5) Describe plan for training/dissemination of material in your IC

What is the identified problem related to managing the distressed trainee (DT)?

- **Who?** Post-bacs, pre/post-docs, medical students, clinical fellows, visiting fellows (3500-4000 trainees)
- **Why this group?** Risk factors including age, social support, international, English as second language for some, cultural issues, professional challenges, interpersonal issues
- **What is the scope of the problem?** Difficult to determine, no central database; >30 per year?
- **Additional challenges?** NIH has NO student or mental health clinic; different insurance carriers/external mental health providers; parallel clinical and administrative tasks

ACGME Common Requirements

Changes: Physician Well-Being (July 2017)

The Program and Sponsoring Institution must educate faculty members and residents in identification of the symptoms of burnout, depression, and substance abuse, including means to assist those who experience these conditions

- Residents/Faculty members must also be educated to recognize those symptoms in themselves and how to seek appropriate care
- The Program and Sponsoring Institution must
 - provide access to appropriate tools for self-screening
 - provide access to confidential, affordable mental health counseling and treatment, including access to urgent and emergent care 24 hours a day, seven days a week

Professional Quality of Life Scale (PROQOL)

PROFESSIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE SCALE (PROQOL)

COMPASSION SATISFACTION AND COMPASSION FATIGUE (PROQOL) VERSION 5 (2009)

When you [help] people you have direct contact with their lives. As you may have found, your compassion for those you [help] can affect you in positive and negative ways. Below are some-questions about your experiences, both positive and negative, as a [helper]. Consider each of the following questions about you and your current work situation. Select the number that honestly reflects how frequently you experienced these things in the last 30 days.

1=Never **2=Rarely** **3=Sometimes** **4=Often** **5=Very Often**

- _____ 1. I am happy.
- _____ 2. I am preoccupied with more than one person I [help].
- _____ 3. I get satisfaction from being able to [help] people.
- _____ 4. I feel connected to others.
- _____ 5. I jump or am startled by unexpected sounds.
- _____ 6. I feel invigorated after working with those I [help].
- _____ 7. I find it difficult to separate my personal life from my life as a [helper].
- _____ 8. I am not as productive at work because I am losing sleep over traumatic experiences of a person I [help].
- _____ 9. I think that I might have been affected by the traumatic stress of those I [help].
- _____ 10. I feel trapped by my job as a [helper].
- _____ 11. Because of my [helping], I have felt "on edge" about various things.
- _____ 12. I like my work as a [helper].
- _____ 13. I feel depressed because of the traumatic experiences of the people I [help].
- _____ 14. I feel as though I am experiencing the trauma of someone I have [helped].
- _____ 15. I have beliefs that sustain me.
- _____ 16. I am pleased with how I am able to keep up with [helping] techniques and protocols.
- _____ 17. I am the person I always wanted to be.
- _____ 18. My work makes me feel satisfied.
- _____ 19. I feel worn out because of my work as a [helper].
- _____ 20. I have happy thoughts and feelings about those I [help] and how I could help them.
- _____ 21. I feel overwhelmed because my case [work] load seems endless.
- _____ 22. I believe I can make a difference through my work.
- _____ 23. I avoid certain activities or situations because they remind me of frightening experiences of the people I [help].
- _____ 24. I am proud of what I can do to [help].
- _____ 25. As a result of my [helping], I have intrusive, frightening thoughts.
- _____ 26. I feel "bogged down" by the system.
- _____ 27. I have thoughts that I am a "success" as a [helper].
- _____ 28. I can't recall important parts of my work with trauma victims.
- _____ 29. I am a very caring person.
- _____ 30. I am happy that I chose to do this work.

DT Work Group Aims

1) To convene a working group, reaching across the NIH, to discuss and track the scope of the problem

**NIMH, OITE, OMS, EAP, Civil, Ombudsman, GMEC, IC
Training Directors**

2) To develop educational materials for supervisors and trainees about identifying symptoms of distress noted in the workplace and providing internal / external resources for referral

5-Item Toolkit for Supervisors & Trainees

DT Work Group

- Maryland Pao (NIMH)
- Debbie Snyder (NIMH)
- Kathleen Samiy (NIMH)
- Jim Schmitt (OMS)
- Heike Bailin (OMS)
- Eva Chen (EAP)
- Jessica Hawkins (Civil)
- Megan Skidmore (Civil)
- Sharon Milgram (OITE)
- Michael Sheridan (OITE)
- Brenda Hanning (IC/TDC)
- Dave Schneeweis (IC/TDC)
- Janet Clark (IC/TDC)
- Bob Lembo (GMEC)
- Kathleen Moore
(Ombudsman's Office/CR)

Recognizing and Helping the DT: What is in the Toolkit?



- **Flyer (supervisors/trainees)**
To be displayed on bulletin boards in the office
- **Quick Tips (supervisors)**
To advise and direct managers to clinical and administrative resources
- **Wallet card (supervisors/trainees)**
- **Resource sheet (trainees)**
- **Comprehensive Guide (supervisors)**

Flyer: for Supervisor & Trainee

Resources

To Support the Supervisor and the Distressed Trainee

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH 

OITE 301-496-2427 training.nih.gov

- o Career Services
- o Educational Counseling & Advising

SUPERVISOR SUPPORT
Consultation and training to support quality mentorship and resolve workplace issues

TRAINEE SUPPORT
Graduate/professional school advising, career exploration, wellness programs, interpersonal skills development, cultural adaptation, mentor/mentee relationships



Office of
Intramural
Research
Training &
Education

EAP 301-496-3164* ors.od.nih.gov/sr/dohs/EAP

- o Mental Health Professionals
- o Confidential
- o Voluntary

SUPERVISOR SUPPORT
Supervisory consultation, crisis intervention, assistance referring trainees to EAP

TRAINEE SUPPORT
Short-term counseling, crisis intervention, community resources & referral



Employee
Assistance
Program

*Phone and face-to-face consultations

Civil 301-402-4845 hr.od.nih.gov/hrguidance/civil

- o NIH Human Resources

SUPERVISOR SUPPORT
Consultation to clarify nature of the problem, mitigate workplace difficulty, refer to appropriate resources & establish interventions

TRAINEE SUPPORT
Resource for disruptive or dangerous behaviors, intimidation, threats, workplace violence, domestic violence, harm to self or others



Civil
Program

Ombudsman 301-594-7231 ombudsman.nih.gov

- o Consultation
- o Coaching
- o Mediation
- o Facilitation

SUPERVISOR SUPPORT
Coaching and conflict resolution design and implementation, confidential discussion of personal and interpersonal issues, identify work-related problems, policy and procedures concerns

TRAINEE SUPPORT
Neutral, confidential, independent resource, coaching, problem-solving



Office of
Conflict
Resolution

OMS 301-496-4411

Occupational Medical Service
ors.od.nih.gov, 301-496-1211 (after hours)



24/7, Medical Emergencies, CC Bldg 10, OP6
Evaluations for abrupt behavior change, substance abuse, injury, illness

Police



24/7, Emergency Law Enforcement

NIH Police Main Bethesda Campus
911 landline, 301-496-9911 mobile
Non-emergency, 301-496-5685

Local Police All other NIH facilities
9-911 landline, 911 mobile

Quick Tips: for Supervisor

Quick tips to help the **SUPERVISOR**

Recognize the Distressed Trainee

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH 

Observe DISTRESS

**EARLY
WARNING
SIGNS**

Identify changes in the trainee

Attendance: Absenteeism, tardiness, decreased productivity

Behavior: Inappropriate conduct, changes in appearance, unkempt, sadness, abrupt changes in mood, irritability, agitation, interpersonal difficulties, fatigue, difficulty concentrating, decreased motivation, expression of self-harm

Consult & Connect

WITH RESOURCES

Clarify supervisor and trainee needs and outline strategies to:

- optimize referrals for care
- enhance workplace functioning
- insure safety

Contact:

- OITE
- EAP
- OMS
- Civil
- Ombudsman

Triage EMERGENCIES

Police, 24/7, Imminent threats, workplace violence, harm to self or others

Main Bethesda Campus: 911 - landline, 301-496-9911 - mobile; Local Police All other NIH facilities: 9-911 - landline, 911 - mobile

OMS, 24/7, Evaluations for abrupt behavior change, substance abuse, injury, illness

301-496-4411, 301-496-1211 (after hours)

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Resources

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH 

OITE 301-496-2427
training.nih.gov 

Career Services | Educational Counseling & Advising

- Office of Intramural Research Training & Education
- Consultation & training for Supervisors
 - Graduate and professional school advising
 - Career exploration and advising
 - Interpersonal skills development
 - Wellness workshops and advising
 - Cultural adaptation to USA
 - Strategies to improve mentor/mentee relationships

EAP 301-496-3164
ors.od.nih.gov/sr/dohs/EAP 

Mental Health Professionals | Confidential | Voluntary

- Employee Assistance Program
- Short-term Counseling
 - Crisis Intervention
 - Community Resources & Referral
 - Supervisory Consultation
 - Assistance referring trainees to EAP
 - Phone and face-to-face consultations

Civil 301-402-4845
hr.od.nih.gov/hrguidance/civil 

Response Team | Coordinators

- NIH Human Resources
- Consultation with supervisors to clarify nature of the problem, mitigate workplace difficulty, refer to appropriate resources and establish interventions
 - Resources for disruptive or dangerous behaviors, intimidation, threats, workplace/domestic violence, harm to self or others

Ombudsman 301-594-7231
ombudsman.nih.gov 

Consultation | Coaching | Mediation | Facilitation

- Center for Cooperative Resolution
- Neutral, confidential, independent resource
 - Coaching, individual and team problem-solving
 - Conflict resolution of personal and interpersonal issues
 - Identify work-related systems problems

OMS 301-496-4411 ors.od.nih.gov
301-496-1211 (after hours) 

- Occupational Medical Service
- **Medical Emergencies** | CC Bldg 10, OP6
 - 24/7: Evaluations for abrupt behavior change, substance abuse, injury, illness

Emergencies

Police 24/7, Law Enforcement 

NIH Police Main Bethesda Campus 911 landline, 301-496-9911 mobile
Local Police All other NIH facilities 9-911 landline, 911 mobile
Non-emergency, 301-496-5685

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Wallet Card: for Supervisor & Trainee

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& Education, training.nih.gov

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Resource Sheet: (for Trainee)

Resources

To support the **TRAINEE**

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OITE 301-496-2427
training.nih.gov 

Career Services | Educational Counseling & Advising

Office of
Intramural
Research
Training &
Education

- Graduate and professional school advising
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- Interpersonal skills development
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Response Team | Coordinators

NIH
Human
Resources

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Guide for Supervisors

A Guide for NIH Staff:

Recognizing the Distressed Trainee

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH 

As a supervisor or training director, you are responsible for the productivity and well-being of your trainees. One of the hardest parts of supervision is providing guidance when there is evidence of mental health or substance use issues that are affecting your trainee's performance or relationships with other team members. These issues can create stress not only for the trainee, but for the supervisor and other staff as well, and they can adversely impact the productivity and morale of the larger work unit. Supervisors facing a trainee with behavioral health or substance use issues may feel unprepared or lack the knowledge of the procedures needed to manage these situations. This can lead to feelings of discomfort, avoidance and a range of personal reactions. Navigating the joint responsibilities of getting help for the trainee and directing their professional trajectory can be challenging.

For example, you may notice changes in a trainee's behavior on the job. These may be subtle, such as a trainee who does not "seem himself" or looks unkempt. Or there may be more overt signs of a problem such as a marked decline in performance, irregular attendance, or inappropriate behavior. These symptoms can be signs of a transient stressor or an underlying mental health condition. Your observations and guidance can help a trainee access resources that can improve their personal and work-related performance.

We want trainees to seek and receive assistance before concerning behaviors escalate. While it is not your role to make a health assessment of the trainee, it is important to "trust your gut" in these situations and to take action. You can play an instrumental role in your trainees' success by directing them to appropriate resources, thus reducing the risk of potentially serious consequences. Your reassuring words, expression of concern, and engagement of appropriate resources can make a significant difference in the life of a trainee and the larger NIH community.

Ideally, if a trainee's need for additional support is recognized early, a timely referral to the relevant resources can help prevent further escalation. More complex situations may require multiple professionals to act in concert to inform clinical and administrative interventions.

This document and the supporting materials in the attached *Toolkit for Helping the Supervisor Recognize the Distressed Trainee* will help you to better observe and recognize concerning symptoms that may indicate trainee distress. It will also help you identify referral resources available to you and the trainee. The goal of the information presented here is to help you manage emergency situations and to prevent less acute behavioral problems from escalating.

Action Items Completed: DT Project

- ✓ Finalizing Toolkit – April 2017

- ✓ Review with NIH administrative leadership
 - ✓ NIMH OD/OSPPC
 - ✓ Dr. Gottesman
 - ✓ OGC
 - ✓ MEC – 4/18/2017
 - ✓ SD Meeting – 4/19/17
 - ✓ IC Training Directors – 4/20/17
 - 508 compliance – whoever sponsors on website

- ✓ Strategize education & dissemination plan – March 28, 2017 (DT Work Group meeting)