Meeting Minutes DRAFT
Emergency Services Mental Health Commission
August 19, 2024,

Attendees:
- Stephanie Busch (Chair)
- Emily Leinoff
- Trevor Whipple
- Loretta Stalnaker
- Emma Harrigan

General Impression:
The meeting had lower attendance than usual due to summer vacations and back-to-school preparations. Despite this, the group had productive discussions about recent events and future planning. The atmosphere seemed collaborative and focused on improving mental health support for emergency service workers.

Meeting Summary:

1. July Conference Debrief
   - Emily provided an update on the recent conference
   - Received very positive feedback, especially about keynote speakers
   - Nicole's presentation was particularly well-received
   - Challenges: summer timing, registration process, funding distribution
   - Suggestions for improvement: Consider moving out of summer, simplify registration, improve outreach

2. Compassion Fatigue Training
   - Stephanie shared info on ongoing overdose prevention, xylazine, wound care, compassion fatigue webinar training series
   - Last session on Sept 10th focuses specifically on compassion fatigue
   - Recordings available; Stephanie will send access information (not available yet)

3. EAP and Support Services Update
   - Noted increased usage of EAP and other support services
   - Acknowledged improvements in available resources compared to 4 years ago

4. Discussion on Future Assessment
   - Considered conducting another survey on mental health support access
   - Goal: Gauge awareness of resources and ongoing challenges
   - No decision made, but general interest in the idea

5. Legislative and Policy Discussions
   - Mentioned potential expansion of PTSD presumption law
   - Discussed certification process for peer support workers
   - Noted importance of including first responder perspective in peer support definitions

Next Steps:
1. Stephanie to send email with full training series information and recording access
2. Consider planning for another stakeholder meeting/conference to discuss state-level support
3. Follow up on potential collaboration with Vermont State Employees Association on PTSD presumption law expansion
4. Emma to gather more information on peer certification process and share with the group

Items for Annual Report:
1. Success and feedback from the recent conference
2. Updates on ongoing training initiatives (webinar series)
3. Increased usage of support services (EAP, etc.) and implications
4. Potential need for updated assessment of mental health support access
5. Legislative updates (PTSD presumption law, peer support certification)

The meeting highlighted the ongoing need for mental health support in emergency services and the committee's commitment to improving available resources and awareness.