

Introduction

BCEHS and APBC are jointly participating in a research project to support Emergency Health Services (EHS) personnel with their **resilience** (*ability to cope effectively with high stress situations so as to reduce the risk of psychological injury*). This project is being conducted by researchers from the University of BC (UBC) and Vancouver Psych Health + Safety Inc. The research is funded by a WorkSafe BC Innovation at Work grant.

Why is this important?

Resilience awareness, education, training and “skills” help first responders to deal with stressful events in a psychologically safe way, to ensure they recognize and cope with high-stress situations. This research project will determine the unique resilience needs (strengths or opportunities for “skills” improvement) of EHS personnel for all levels and types of traumatic exposure. Resilience profiles need to be developed for paramedics in metro, urban rural and remote settings and CUPE call centre staff. The goal is to create an understanding of positive resilience strategies and determine training that will meet the needs of EHS personnel. To make this possible, as a member of CUPE 873 and employee of BCEHS, you are being asked to participate in an online survey.

What’s in the survey?

The survey is brief (~ 50 psychologically researched questions). It will require about 15-20 minutes to complete on your computer or smartphone and asks about ways you cope with the stresses of the job while at work and when at home. The survey is preceded by a UBC research consent form (UBC Ethics certification) which provides further details about the study.

Why should you complete this survey?

By completing the survey, you will help to identify and determine future resilience training that is appropriate and relevant to the needs of all classifications of EHS personnel and may help support other mental health initiatives. Participation is voluntary. You will not be reimbursed for participation. However, separated from the survey information is a link to a draw that you can access after you complete the survey. Clicking this link will make you eligible to win one of several prizes.

What happens if you agree to complete the survey?

If you agree to participate by signing the consent, the link provided at the end of the consent will connect you with the survey. It is recommended that you do it in one sitting – but you can come back to it if you are interrupted. The survey will stay open from February 19 to February 28, 2018. Data from this survey, stripped of any identifying information, will be stored in a secure server or locked facility at UBC for five years, and then destroyed.

How will the study results be reported?

Once the research project is complete, the researchers will prepare a report and summary of the results and create Resilience Profiles for EHS groups, along with recommendations for resilience training and other opportunities to mitigate the impact of occupational stress injuries. This work will be shared with APBC and all BCEHS employees. Vancouver Psych Health + Safety Inc. researchers will also submit the findings for publication in respected research journals.

Is there any way being in this study could be bad for you?

It may be possible that completing a survey about coping with stressful situations may cause a reaction or distress. Should you have any issues after completing the survey the BCEHS Critical Incident Stress Management program (1-855-969-4321) is available. Also, if during the survey you find the questions too sensitive or personal, you don't have to complete the survey.

Will being in this study help you in any way?

You may benefit from increasing your awareness of resilience skills. You may benefit from Paramedic/ Dispatcher training that could be identified as a result of this study's findings. You may be better equipped to recognize really useful resilience training when it is offered. You also may be able to identify a trigger issue before it happens on the job.

How will confidentiality be maintained?

The survey data will be kept on a secure server: it will be collected by an independent consulting company (Vancouver Psych Health + Safety Inc.) and maintained in a "de-identified" form; that is, identifying information will be stripped from the data, so findings cannot be linked to individuals. Data will be stored on a secure Canadian server in this de-identified format for five years and then destroyed. Only group-level aggregated data will be analyzed. No individual-level data will be shared with BCEHS or any other agency.

Who can you contact if you have questions about the study?

If you have any questions or concerns about what we are asking of you, please contact: the project leader, Dr. Dan Bilsker (dan@psychsafety.org); Marsha McCall, CIS Program (Marsha.McCall@bcehs.ca), 604-775-3589; APBC's Bob Parkinson (robert.parkinson@apbc.ca), 604-838-5778; or Lindsay Kellosalmi (lindsay.kellosalmi@apbc.ca), 778-214-4600.

If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this project, contact the Research Participant Complaint Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598, or if long distance e-mail RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free 1-877-822-8598.