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UNDERGRADUATE DISSERTATION RESEARCH PROPOSAL FORM

Please complete the following research proposal and submit it to Turnitin.

Which project option are you taking?

8,000 word project:

NAME:	STUDENT ID No.:
Richard Guy Hardwick	2117778
DRAFT RESEARCH TITLE QUESTION:	
INTRODUCTION:	
Mental Health support and welfare of Frontline Officers following traumatic incidents –What Mental Health support is offered to frontline police following attendance to traumatic incidents? Is it adequate? And do officers take it?	
It is worth consideration for an undergraduate dissertation as Mental Health and wellbeing has been the forefront of topical conversation for some time. With it being such a talking point in news and the stigma of it being the focus, encouraging others to talk about their experiences and to share, to help others going through similar situations. With mental health being such an important aspect of life as well as comparing it to your physical health, it has encouraged companies and government bodies to introduce more mental health awareness for the colleagues that work within them.	
It is worth analysing what mental health support is offered to officers following a traumatic incident; if that support is helpful or if the support is taken at all. Even though mental health has had such a spotlight given to it to allow persons struggling with their mental health to talk to someone in confidence, a big stigma still lies around it. The dissertation would set out to outline if front line officers take any support offered to them. Historically police have been classified as persons who hide their feelings and don't open up. This dissertation would hope to outline if this is still the case, or if police officers are more inclined to seek support for their mental health.	
The college of policing state that response officers form the largest group in policing and account for most sickness absence. In 2017, a police workforce report showed that there were 2,358 full-time officers on long-term sick (Home Office 2017). In the past, sickness	

absence was mainly caused by physical conditions. Today, however, a high proportion of sickness absence is due to mental health conditions.

This dissertation will set out to identify why officers take sick leave for mental health and if the leave was justified. The work will attempt to outline what form of support Police departments have offered their officers to support them with their mental health needs.

Barbara RICI, on behalf of the Harvard Business Review, identified that workplace cultures can leave employees with lack of adequate sleep, an inability to maintain an exercise routine, loss of time with friends and loved ones, or substance misuse that can all lead to deteriorating mental health, which can make it hard to keep up at work. There are many identifiable ways that can lead to poor mental health without even attending a traumatic incident in a policing context. Police officers work on a constant high workload, with long hours, often unsociable, leaving little time to rest or see family and friends. This dissertation will hope to outline what the police offer its officers in the way of minimising stress in the workplace, to enable better mental health.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

What mental health support is offered to frontline officers, following a traumatic incident? Research into what is offered to officers following traumatic incidents and what the criteria is to be able to access the help.

Do officers who have attended traumatic incidents take the help that is offered to them? Survey / questionnaire focused around attending traumatic incident asking a series of questions on how the incident has left them feeling / is there more the police could have offered them in terms of support.

How do police officers decompress following traumatic incidents? Survey / questionnaire focused around how officers cope following a traumatic incident and the steps they take to ensure that they are able to come back to work.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Responding to Trauma in Policing – College of Policing.

When you need to take time off for Mental Health Reasons – Barbara Ricci, The Harvard Business Review.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH –SURVEY METHOD:

Questionnaire / survey – these will be the best type of research method as each will cover a wide variety of questions catered around attending traumatic incidents. The research method will offer anonymity to all officers who take part, affording them to answer clearly how they feel the force helps them following traumatic incidents.

SUMMARY OF SAMPLING FRAMEWORK:

The target for this dissertation will be current / retired front line officers. No expert witnesses are being sought.

ETHICAL ISSUES:

The questionnaire is intended to be anonymous and thus affords no participant to be identified.

As the questionnaire will ask participants if they have been in attendance at traumatic incidents, it could raise within officers feelings that they have previously worked on to suppress.

TIME SCALE:

Schedule deadlines set out by university which I plan to adhere to.

REFERENCE LIST:

College of Policing (2018) *Responding to trauma in policing A practical guide BetterProfessionals forBetterPolicing™*.

Ricci, B. (2018) *When you need to take time off work for mental health reasons*. Harvard Business Review. [Online] <https://hbr.org/2018/03/when-you-need-to-take-time-off-work-for-mental-health-reasons>.
