



### **CISM OVERVIEW: THE WHAT**

Peer Support for public safety personnel has been offered as the frontline service to provide a safety net utilizing all six core components of the ICISF CISM Peer Support Model.



This safety net can improve the system by increasing resistance to the psychological effects of trauma and resiliency by equipping personnel with the skills to rebound from these effects and return to adaptive functioning. Thus, more first responders will remain healthy, resulting in a reduction in lost time. A case example of an established peer support program demonstrates the cost savings in the first year (SCES, 2017).

A peer support program on the full continuum of care, linked to other supports and services, ensures multiple access points meet the various needs of personnel. ICISF CISM is well positioned to complement the different forms of support and can be an effective conduit for facilitating referrals to continued care for some individuals who otherwise would never accept treatment. Peer support can address social isolation and break down the stigma that interferes with recovery (PSACC, 2016).

CISM is a term that refers to a comprehensive, integrative, strategic planning system complete with a multitude of crisis intervention tactics. Such a wide array of crisis interventions assures that the continuum of supports will address and meet the needs of most personnel and limit any “falling through the cracks.” An effective CISM system can provide acute crisis intervention with individuals, interventions with small groups of those directly affected, or interventions with large groups of those indirectly affected. Effective CISM systems require the following:

1. Proficiency in using various interventions (individual, informational groups, and interactive groups).
2. Surveillance, assessment, and triage.
3. Ongoing strategic planning.

In this model, the peers support a person as they search for their inner coping strategies using simple tasks, quick contacts, innovative techniques, practical suggestions, and comfortable environments by providing proximal peer-to-peer interactions, the immediacy of access to supports, and expectancy of reasonable positive outcomes (Everly, & Mitchell, 2016).