

# Case study: Durham Constabulary

## Tackling Trauma – Tools, Techniques and Tactics

Durham Constabulary seek to support colleagues make informed decisions, to help them be well and keep well. Mental health is a golden thread throughout wellbeing campaigns and activities. The emphasis is on proactive self-care and personal resilience, whilst improving resources and support, embedding a supportive and understanding culture across the Force.

Durham Constabulary understands that due to the nature of the work undertaken, there are occasions where colleagues are exposed to traumatic incidents. These incidents have the potential to have a long-term impact on individuals or groups.

We have developed a comprehensive range of resources specifically designed to support colleagues exposed to such incidents. Activities are designed to encourage colleagues to access support such as awareness campaigns, OK9 Wellbeing Dogs alongside their Mental Health First Aid trained handler and OK Wellbeing Vehicles.

## Trauma Risk Management (TRiM)

TRiM is embedded across the force, identifying potentially traumatic incidents, and offering peer support, co-ordinated by the Welfare team. Introduced in January 2019 with an initial cohort of 18 practitioners, incidents referred, and subsequent contacts made have increased year on year.

**Table 1. Number of Incidents and Subsequent Contacts**

	2019	2020	2021
<b>Incidents referred</b>	90	186	236
<b>Contacts made</b>	749	1343	1751

TRiM is evidence based and conforms to National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance on suggested responses to traumatic events. It has been tested and adopted by a wide range of civilian organisations, particularly the Emergency Services.

By increasing knowledge and awareness of TRiM the number of the referrals have been more efficiently managed. Referrals are generated by the nature of an incident, not how a colleague has performed nor reacted.

Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive; a Force wide survey was conducted after the first year and we constantly monitor colleague feedback.

As specialist policing roles carry the risk of cumulative trauma, we have enhanced our counselling and trauma therapy provisions to assist colleagues with their needs and to support their families. We are continuing to work with high-risk teams to try and identify issues before they arise.

## Trauma Impact Prevention Techniques (TIPT)

A key element of our strategy has been developing trauma awareness. We have collaborated with Police Care UK to deliver TIPT sessions across the Force, initially to all student officers, now more widely to colleagues who may be exposed to cumulative trauma. This includes colleagues whose involvement may be secondary but potentially troubling e.g. call handlers, those reviewing digital media or file building.

The session explains basic neuroscientific processing principles and demonstrates techniques which can help settle memories. This equips colleagues, who may be reluctant or may be unable to speak about their experience, with tools they can employ themselves and they are encouraged to use the techniques on an everyday basis.

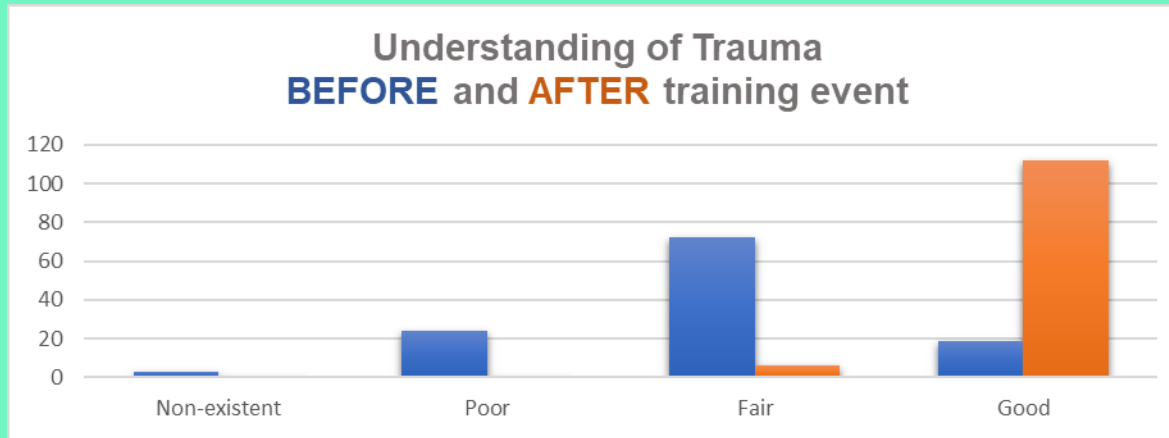
Colleagues are provided with information in relation to our internal support services; Occupational Health, Wellbeing and Welfare Team, Employee Assistance Program and support accessible through primary care.



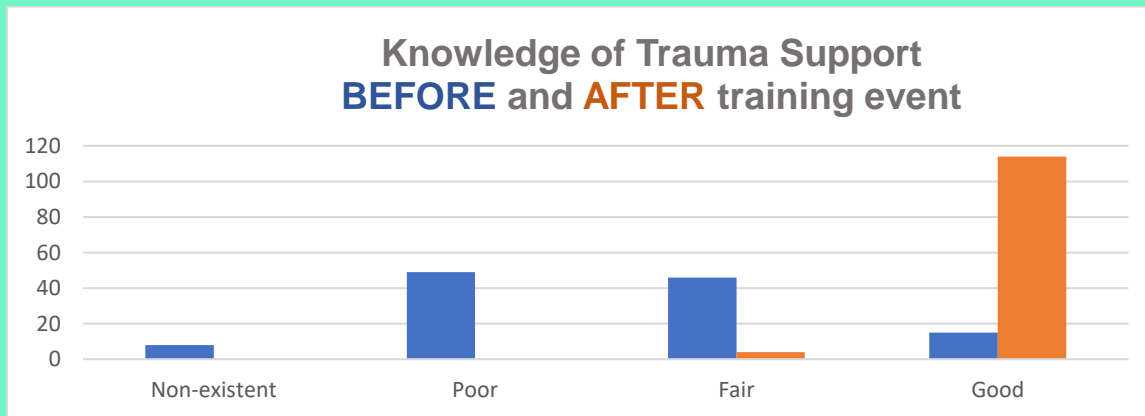
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118 colleagues from were recently asked to measure their understanding of trauma before and after the session and their knowledge of trauma support. Results are shown below:

**Graph 1. Understanding of Trauma**



**Graph 2. Knowledge of Trauma Support**



## The Future

TRiM and TIPT will continue to play a significant role in the Force wellbeing strategy, we aim to train additional peer support colleagues over the coming months and will then look to train some of those to Advanced Practitioner level, which will allow us to undertake group sessions. The Welfare team will be pivotal to this progression with the support of the Force.

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