



Summary

The public health emergency posed by COVID-19 is an extremely challenging time for our families and our communities. Individuals serving in front line public safety roles face especially difficult circumstances. **Boreal Wellness Centres is providing support groups to assist public safety personnel (“PSP”) with their increased operational stress.**

Support groups are a way for people with common experience to help and learn from each other. The aim of these sessions is to: a) provide a forum for PSPs to be supported during this time of uncertainty and heightened anxiety; and b) to introduce healthy coping tools that PSPs can incorporate to optimize their mental health. While support groups are not “group therapy”, they can provide significant mental health benefits to participants.

The support groups will use curriculum developed by a psychologist and be conducted via secure video conference. This will allow participants to join from a convenient location while adhering to the social distancing recommendations. Boreal Wellness Centres is a pioneer in delivering group programming for anxiety and depression via secure video.

Boreal Wellness Centres

Boreal Wellness Centres (“BWC”) is a Vancouver-based mental health clinic that specializes in anxiety, depression and trauma. BWC offers individual and group therapy programs, and is a contracted provider with WorkSafeBC, RCMP and Veterans Affairs Canada. **BWC is one of Canada’s largest collections of clinicians who have received training on the occupational challenges faced by public safety personnel.** Our clinical team includes psychologists, clinical counsellors, social workers and psychiatrists.

Support Group Specifics

These 60-minute sessions will only be made available to public safety personnel and their families. We can arrange these sessions to be employer specific (e.g. City of Vancouver, City of Richmond).

Topics include: healthy coping strategies, thought challenging and distress tolerance skills.

A link to a web-based calendar will be made available to participating organizations along with an organization specific code. This information can be shared with members/employees, who can sign up on the calendar and receive the Zoom video login information.

Group size per session will be limited to 10 participants/families. Multiple groups can be available each day and evening. The groups would be led by a Boreal Wellness Centres’ counsellor, social worker or psychologist.

The total cost per session for all participants is \$200 including GST (e.g. \$20 per participant/family).

Technology Specifics

Boreal Wellness Centres uses Zoom for its video conference sessions. Zoom is PIPEDA/PHIPA compliant and provides high quality video and audio. Participants are required to use headphones and to locate themselves in a quiet place where they will not be disturbed.

Next Steps

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