

“Stress Audit Checklist”

Suggestions for Mental Health Agency Administrators & Supervisors to Consider to Combat Secondary Traumatic Stress

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Organizational Level

- Value system/operating philosophy explained
- Job descriptions, orientation and training in place
- Educational training sessions provided regularly to staff
- Adjunctive services in place for referral needs
- Adequate supervisory staff are in place
- Healthy work environment
- Leaders/supervisors are accessible
- Adequate personnel policies and procedures in place
- Flextime hours considered if possible
- Opportunities for working from home
- Adequate vacation time
- Adequate medical/mental health benefits in place
- Coalition building is a priority
- Legislative reform/advocacy/social action conducted

Worker-Team Level

- Group team supervision occurs weekly for case review
- Group acknowledgement of impact on worker
- Debriefing sessions provided as regular course of business
- Complicated/difficult cases arranged into manageable parts
- Clinicians are not routinely isolated
- Healthy work boundaries discussed/promoted
- Active discouragement of working long hours without breaks
- Training on new/problematic clinical issues conducted monthly
- Team building activity conducted monthly

Worker Level

- A “stress diary” is maintained by clinical staff
- Action plans are developed after analysis is done of stress inducing situations.
- Adequate supervision is provided weekly
- Clinical supervision is available “as needed” to handle emergencies
- Cases involving severe trauma are only 60% of caseload
- Coping and stress management skills are included in supervision session.
- Reframing exercises practiced regularly in supervision
- Repertoire of successful contingency-based coping methods utilized
- Time for breaks and lunch is provided and utilized daily