

# CoLEAD Staffing Support Model: A Harm Reduction Approach to Workforce Wellbeing

**Chevonna Gaylor, MA, LMFT**  
**Director of Education and Resiliency**



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# Our Mission & Approach

Purpose Dignity Action (PDA)  
plants seeds for a world  
rooted in community and  
care instead of punishment  
and neglect.

We activate responses to  
public health and safety  
rooted in **compassion**,  
**systems coordination**, and a  
**harm reduction framework**.



# Our Work



## MODEL

The country's first pre-book jail diversion program, now in 80+ communities in US and abroad.



## MODEL

Multi-partner, care centered response to encampments born of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Person-centered, trauma-informed alternative to sweeps.



## PROGRAM

Intensive case management + emergency lodging for rapid and sustained stability. JustCARE provider.



## PROJECT

Hyperlocal "hot spot" based nonviolent de-escalation and referral to specialty care teams.

**Why should we care  
for harm reduction  
providers?**



When [wellness] becomes a **shared social practice** in an organisation, and **permeates routines, processes and practices** between people and across teams, then the organisation as a whole **becomes more resilient** and **performs more sustainably**.

*The Mindfulness Initiative*





# This work can take a toll

- People often choose harm reduction work for passion and/or because of past experiences.
- Can contribute to burnout due to being triggered or overly emotionally invested.
- Harm reduction workers can experience vicarious or secondary trauma as they help participants/clients work through theirs.

**TAKE THE HARM  
SERIOUSLY**



**Harm reduction is for us, too**

# Vicarious Trauma & Protective Factors

*Vicarious trauma (also known as secondary trauma) : indirect exposure to a traumatic event through first-hand account or narrative of that event.*

**Perspective** – planting seeds & walking alongside during this portion of their journey

**Work/Life Balance** – soft place to land

# HOW do we care for the harm reduction workers?

- Salary scales
- Competitive benefits packages
- **Wellness supports in (and related to) the actual workplace**

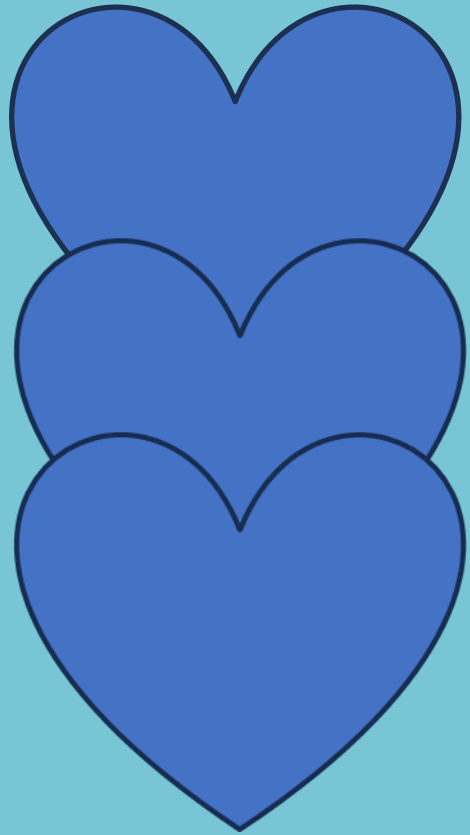
OUTCOME: a culture focused on employee health which boosts morale, enhances teamwork and improves quality of life and impact of our work.





**Wellness campaigns** are proven methods for improving the overall health and wellbeing of a workforce.

**Wellness programs** can be defined as a set of activities and benefits a company offers to its team members to build healthy habits in and out of the workplace to optimize employee engagement, satisfaction, and productivity.



We need people to be well for themselves, their loved ones, and the folks we serve.

## **Tangible Impact**

- Wellness assessments
- Stress management
- Ongoing education
- Physical and mental health programs

# What wellness tools do you have in your workplace toolbox?

*Which do you wish you had?*

- Restoration/Support Groups
- Staff Newsletter: Mindful Monday
- Professional Development
- Care Coordination for staff
- Group/Team check-ins



# Coping Strategies and Practice

- **Self Soothing** – breathing, exercise, music, visualization
- **Doing Something Positive** – socialize, list accomplishments, act of kindness, color therapy
- **Dealing With Your Thoughts** – redirect unhelpful thoughts, reality check, positive affirmations
- **Healthy Distracting** – focus on your senses, mindful eating or walking

## PRACTICE

