

Public Health Emergency Response Strike Team (PHERST) Social Workers: Addressing Trauma of Officers in the United States Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps

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Description:

This presentation will outline PHERST and the importance of Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW). The Office of the Secretary (OS), Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH), Office of the Surgeon General, Commissioned Corps Headquarters' Public Health Emergency Response Strike Team (PHERST) is comprised of a small, highly skilled, select cadre of full-time active duty United States Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps Officers. PHERST officers are trained, prepared, and ready to immediately respond and assess critical requirements in emergent situations, e.g., outbreaks, domestic events, or natural disasters. The PHERST ensures the Corps has resources to meet its mission for regional, national, global public health emergency responses and ensures the Corps can rapidly respond to urgent and emergent public health operations with highly trained professional staff.

Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW) are a critical component of PHERST. LCSW's are vital to the USPHS mission to protect, promote, and advance the health and safety of our Nation. They provide services on a national and international level, to include behavioral health counseling, case management, discharge planning, screenings, biopsychosocial assessments, referrals, and support to vulnerable populations, as well as other USPHS officers. They also provide psychosocial educational services on topics such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), loss and grief, anxiety, compassion fatigue, moral injury, and stress management.

Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the origination and purpose of the Public Health Emergency Response Strike Team (PHERST).
- Discuss the stress and trauma USPHS officers experience as first responders and how PHERST Licensed Clinical Social Workers are addressing these issues.
- Describe the increased need for Licensed Clinical Social Workers in response to regional, national, and global public health emergencies.

Duration: 1:30

