

The Holidays Can Be Hard, Especially for EMS Professionals

~ *Critical incident stress management programs are here to help* ~

THE HOLIDAYS CAN BE stressful under the best of circumstances, and for EMS professionals who work in first response and high-stress situations, this time of year increases the stress. Long hours, frequent exposure to morbid events, and a frenetic work environment take a toll on the physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing of emergency responders. Cumulative effects may include poor eating habits, substance abuse issues, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, or suicidal thoughts, among other symptoms.

It is important to keep in mind that, though these are normal reactions to abnormal situations, their severity varies from person to person, as does the healing process. However, some individuals may experience ongoing challenges and difficulties that may never be visible.

Many departments and agencies at the local, county, and state levels (including MIEMSS) offer robust critical incident stress management (CISM) and peer support services for EMS and other emergency responders to help them work through the emotional and psychological

effects for stressful responses and critical incidents. Specially trained peer support personnel work with licensed mental health professionals to provide pre-incident education and training, as well individual and group discussions following a critical incident response. Requests for assistance can come directly from individual responders or by way of coworkers, supervisors, and others who observe the negative effects of stress in their colleagues. All communications with critical incident stress management and peer support personnel are voluntary and confidential.

What You Can Do to Manage Your Own Stress

In addition to taking part in CISM and peer support programs, there are many things you can do to mitigate stress in your everyday life.

1. Exercise vigorously – play as hard as you work.
2. Eat balanced meals – the “good stuff” is good for you.
3. Stay hydrated – studies have shown that dehydration can exacerbate anxiety

and depression.

4. Keep your daily routine – regular activities provide structure.
5. Following a particularly stressful incident, talk about what happened with coworkers involved – they understand.
6. Talk about what you are feeling with a family member or friend – that is what friends are for.
7. Laugh – it is good for the soul.
8. Relax – get some rest, even if you don’t sleep.
9. Don’t fight going to sleep – it will come when you are ready.
10. Dreams and nightmares happen – talking will help them go away.
11. Don’t Monday-morning quarterback – you did your job.
12. Avoid alcohol and drugs.
13. Remember:
 - o You can’t save them all – so save yourself.

See *CISM* page 12

EMS News Digest

■ **R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center Celebrates 85 Heroes Who Provided Lifesaving Care to Two Critically Injured Patients** (*University of Maryland Medical Center*). The R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center celebrated 85 trauma professionals and first responders who saved the lives of two critically injured patients – a 59-year-old man thrown 80 feet in a horrific motorcycle crash and a 77-year-old woman struck by a hit-and-run driver while walking near her home – during its 33rd annual Shock Trauma Heroes Celebration, held November 18 at the Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall in Baltimore (*see photos on page 7 of this issue*). Read more: <https://www.umms.org/ummc/news/2023/shock-trauma-celebrates-85-heroes-who-provided-lifesaving-care-to-two-critically-injured-patients>

■ **What is the EMS Leader’s Role in Managing Clinician Stress?** (*EMSI*). As a career field, EMS must draw a line in the sand that outlines how best to train new leaders in understanding the art and science of leadership and, more importantly, how to recognize and not add to the stress of the workforce. Author Chris Cebollero offers four steps for stopping the stress cycle. Read more: <https://www.emsl.com/stress/what-is-the-ems-leaders-role-in-managing-provider-stress>

■ **Governor Moore Signs Executive Order to Enhance Government Coordination Ahead of Emergencies** (*Office of the Governor*). In a groundbreaking move to promote the safety and wellbeing of Maryland residents and visitors, Governor Wes Moore signed an ex-

ecutive order on November 20 establishing a State of Preparedness. This important initiative will enhance the state’s ability to respond swiftly and effectively to potential hazards and threats in advance of an actual disaster. Read more: <https://news.maryland.gov/mdem/2023/11/22/governor-moore-signs-executive-order-to-enhance-government-coordination-ahead-of-emergencies/>

Submit recent EMS-related news and headlines for consideration to ptandy@miemss.org. ■

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State of Maryland
Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems

Wes Moore
Governor

Clay B. Stamp
Chairman, EMS Board

Theodore R. Delbridge, MD, MPH
Executive Director



To: EMS Clinicians

From: Theodore Delbridge, MD, MPH
Executive Director

Timothy Chizmar, MD
State EMS Medical Director

Date: November 29, 2023

Re: **eMEDS Patient Care Reports**

The timely completion of an eMEDS® patient care report (PCR) is essential for a multitude of reasons. It conveys to subsequent health care personnel information that only you know, what you found, your assessment, and what you did. The value and importance to patients' continuum of health care cannot be overstated. Additionally, the PCR helps to explain rationales for decisions and treatments. It often provides clarity when there is uncertainty. Because PCRs exist as part of patients' permanent health care record, viewable by clinicians in CRISP records, it is crucial that they are accurate, clear, and timely in telling the story they are intended to convey. Quite simply, a call is not finished until the report, your contribution to the patient's medical record, is complete.

Accordingly, the COMAR regulations and *Maryland Medical Protocols for EMS* require the completion of a PCR for each patient within 24 hours of the call's dispatch. Please find the relevant regulations and protocol on the following page.

Thus, we expect EMS quality assurance officers and medical directors to notify the MIEMSS Office of Integrity about clinicians who have habitually late (>24 hours) or incomplete PCRs. EMS clinicians who do not complete reports are subject to suspension, revocation of licensure and other compliance actions as determined by the EMS Board.

As EMS professionals, we are an integral part of the health care system. Our reports are essential to clearly communicate our assessment and treatments with our colleagues. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

CC:
Highest Jurisdictional Officials
Quality Assurance Officers
Medical Directors



EMS FOR CHILDREN

Pediatric Education and Advocacy Kits Available for EMS and Emergency Department Clinicians

MARYLAND EMS FOR CHILDREN is sharing the link to a set of five on-line pediatric education and advocacy kits (PEAK) as resources for EMS and emergency department clinicians.

On October 4, 2023, the National EMSC Innovation and Improvement Center, released the latest PEAK, which focuses on Child Abuse. It provides resources for hospital and prehospital-based practitioners, in partnership with patients and families, to support children and youth with suspected physical abuse. The kit includes the TEN-4-FACESp infographic, screening tool, and a brief video summarizing the research behind the devel-

TEN-4-FACESp

Bruising Clinical Decision Rule for Children < 4 Years of Age

When is bruising concerning for abuse in children < 4 years of age? If bruising in any of the three components (Regions, Infants, Patterns) is present without a reasonable explanation, strongly consider evaluating for child abuse and/or consulting with an expert in child abuse.

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>TEN Torso Ears Neck</p> <p>FACES Frenulum Angle of Jaw Cheeks (fleshy part) Eyelids Subconjunctivae</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; color: white;">REGIONS</p> | <p>4 months and younger</p> <p>Any bruise, anywhere</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; color: white;">INFANTS</p> | <p>Patterned bruising</p> <p>Bruises in specific patterns like slap, grab or loop marks</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; color: white;">PATTERNS</p> |
|---|--|---|

See the signs Unexplained bruises in these areas most often result from physical assault. TEN-4-FACESp is not to diagnose abuse but to function as a screening tool to improve the recognition of potentially abused children with bruising who require further evaluation.

TEN-4-FACESp was developed and validated by Dr. Mary Clyde Pierce and colleagues. It is published and available for FREE download at turitechildrens.org/ten-4-facesp © Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago

opment of this tool. The PEAK also features links to resources for families, prevention programs, clinical guidelines and simulations, and educational podcasts.

To access any of these resources, visit <https://emscimprovement.center/education-and-resources/peak/>. Questions and feedback are welcome at pepp@mimss.org.

~ Visit Maryland EMS for Children online at www.MIEMSS.org ~

"THE MARYLAND EMS system is the greatest story ever told when it comes to saving lives in the State of Maryland."

CLAY B. STAMP
State EMS Board Chairman

Scan the QR code at left to learn how you can be part of the story through the Maryland EMS History Timeline.

~ *SAVE THE DATE* ~

WINTERFEST EMS

~ *FEBRUARY 2-4, 2024* ~

Full conference program coming soon!

~ *WHY ATTEND WINTERFEST?* ~



*"Winterfest EMS keeps me
at the top of my game."*

DR. THOMAS CHICCONE

*MIEMSS REGION IV EMS MEDICAL DIRECTOR
TALBOT COUNTY DES MEDICAL DIRECTOR
LONGTIME WINTERFEST EMS FACULTY MEMBER*

*"It's so exciting to interact with friends from
across the state who come for this educational
experience, and to have it be local for me."*

LYNN THOMAS

PARAMEDIC | LONGTIME WINTERFEST EMS ATTENDEE



*Scan the QR code for more reasons to
attend Winterfest EMS 2024*



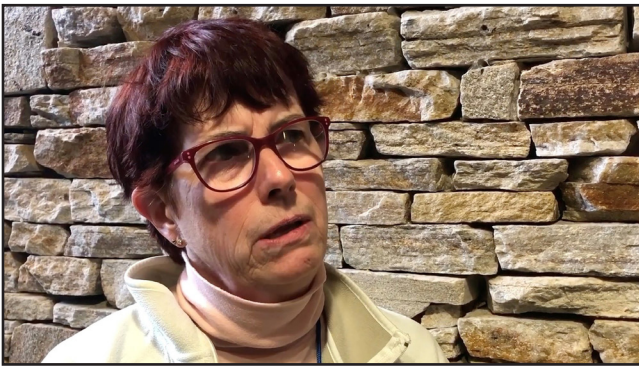
~ *SAVE THE DATE* ~

MILTENBERGER EMERGENCY SERVICES SEMINAR

~ *MARCH 7–9, 2024* ~

Further details coming soon!

~ *WHY ATTEND MILTENBERGER?* ~



"I have found that there's always something new you can learn."

SUSAN MOTT

*CARROLL COUNTY PEDIATRIC
EMS CHAMPION*

"Miltenberger makes you feel like you're really part of the family of the Maryland EMS system."

DR. RAMEEN SHAFIEI

*UPMC WESTERN MARYLAND
DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY MEDICINE
ALLEGANY COUNTY EMS MEDICAL DIRECTOR*



*Scan the QR code for more reasons to attend the
2024 Miltenberger Emergency Services Seminar*



33rd Annual Shock Trauma Heroes Celebration

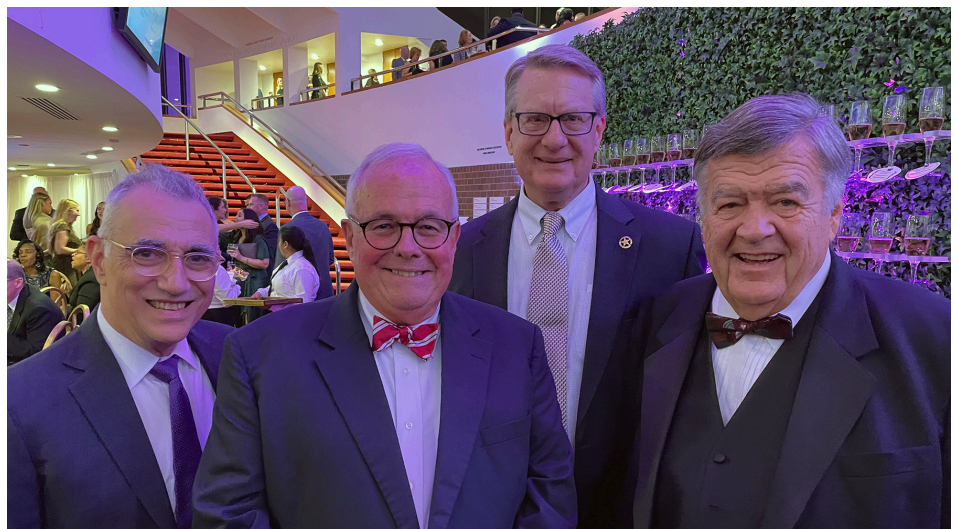


THE R ADAMS COWLEY SHOCK TRAUMA CENTER celebrated 85 trauma professionals and first responders who saved the lives of two critically injured patients – 59-year-old Scott Spinale, who was thrown 80 feet in a horrific motorcycle crash, and 77-year-old Ellen Lightman, who was struck by a hit-and-run driver while walking near her home – during its 33rd annual Shock Trauma Heroes Celebration, held November 18 at the Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall in Baltimore. Distinguished guests included Maryland Governor Wes Moore, Congressman Dutch Ruppersberger, Howard County Executive Calvin B. Ball, and Baltimore Mayor Brandon M. Scott, among many others.

Scan the QR code to learn more about the 2023 R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Celebration



Maryland Governor Wes Moore.



From left: R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center Physician-in-Chief Dr. Thomas Scalea; retired MIEMSS Public Information Officer Jim Brown; State EMS Board Chairman Clay B. Stamp; and Congressman Dutch Ruppersberger.

Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration's (MDOT MVA)

Maryland Highway Safety Office

The MDOT MVA Highway Safety Office (MHSO) is dedicated to saving lives and working with many partners across the State to reduce the number of crashes each year. In addition, the MHSO looks for ways to reduce crash severity and ways to treat crash victims easier and faster.

Maryland aims to reduce the number of crashes, and the resulting deaths and injuries, to zero by 2030.

Are You and Your Car Winter Road Ready?

As winter approaches and temperatures drop, it is increasingly likely that your commute could include slick or icy conditions. While this is most likely to occur in the early morning or nighttime hours when the sun is down, you should be prepared for road conditions to change at *any* time.

Make sure that your car is ready for wintry roads by ensuring that it is serviced regularly. Have your lights, fluids, tires and brakes checked and verify that they are all in proper working order and adequate for the season ahead.

In the event of a roadside emergency, it's important to have a well-stocked [emergency kit](#) in your car. Preparation is the best prevention when it comes to winter driving emergencies. Check out our [winter driving blog](#) for additional winter safety road tips and don't let winter weather catch you unprepared!



Emphasis Area Team Meetings

Looking to become more involved in local road safety? MHSO welcomes participation from the EMS community for all emphasis areas. Mark your calendar for the upcoming meetings:

- Pedestrian & Bicycle – Emphasis Area Team: December 14, 2023 (1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.)

Get a Safe and Sober Ride This Holiday Season

This holiday season, for the third year in a row, the Motor Vehicle Administration's Highway Safety Office is pleased to be the recipient of a \$20,000 grant from the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA). In partnership with Responsibility.org and Lyft, the grant allows the Maryland Highway Safety Office to offer \$20 rideshare credits to all Marylanders.

As part of this initiative, we are encouraging Maryland drivers to *Be the Make a Plan Driver*, choosing an alternative to driving impaired by alcohol or drugs.

Rideshare credits are available throughout the holiday season, while supplies last. The code to claim a credit is MAKEAPLAN23, and codes will expire 24 hours after being added to a rider's wallet if not redeemed.

Help us save lives this season by ensuring that you make the responsible decision to only drive sober, encouraging others to do so as well. Together we can help save lives on Maryland roads.

For additional details and information on the grant award, visit [Zero Deaths MD](#).



PGPD Rescue Task Force Train to Enhance Response Operations for Active Violence Incidents

OVER THE LAST YEAR, the Maryland-National Capital Emergency Response System (MDERS) has supported the Prince George's County Police Department (PGPD) and Prince George's County Fire Department (PGFD) in their effort to integrate response capabilities for active violence incidents. The cohesion between PGPD and PGFD has created a Rescue Task Force designed to enable medical care to victims near a threat while maintaining a robust security posture. MDERS has supported this initiative with personal protective equipment (PPE) for first responders. The totality of this effort will enhance response efforts to active violence incidents in Prince George's County.

An active violence incident involves an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area (*Northwestern University, 2023). These incidents are often dynamic and can evolve rapidly, demanding immediate action from law enforcement and fire/rescue/EMS resources. During an active violence incident, fire/rescue/EMS clinicians are often faced with the issue of waiting for victims to be extracted from warm and hot zones, prior to beginning medical care. The delay of medical intervention can be fatal for victims confined in these zones.

The urgency to remove and treat victims requires a unified response from law enforcement and fire/rescue/EMS personnel. Nationally, Rescue Task Force (RTF) training has been established to create this



Photo: Maryland-National Capital Emergency Response System

unity amongst disciplines to create a cohesive extrication of victims in life-threatening circumstances, leading to the Prince George's County Police and Fire Department recently adopting this practice.

The Rescue Task Force training empowers Prince George's County first responders in active violence situations by creating realistic scenarios to build structure and confidence. MDERS staff visited PGPD's state-of-the-art training facility during their police in-service RTF training to observe the session. Establishing command, mitigating threats, and organizing casualty collection points (CCP) are all key components in RTF training and require teamwork from all personnel on scene. MDERS observed the ability of 45 participants, including 10 fire/res-

cue/EMS present and 35 police officers, in back-to-back scenarios to maintain focus and agility in rescue operations while being met with obstacles and learning to overcome strenuous conditions. The operational coordination that is required to assess the situation and plan for action was proven throughout these exercises by each department.

"I thoroughly enjoyed witnessing the collaborative efforts of Prince George's County Police and Fire/EMS departments as they joined forces to engage in comprehensive Rescue Task Force (RTF) training," said Lauren Collins, MDERS Acting Co-Director and Deputy Director of Finance & Administration. "The dedication and substantial invest-

See MDERS page 12



The Right Care When It Counts Maryland EMSC 2024 Program



The Maryland EMS for Children program is In Search Of children and youth in Maryland who have demonstrated Steps to Take in an Emergency or Ways to be Better Prepared for an Emergency. Actions taking place January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023, are eligible for nomination. We will be recognizing children and youth who acted so that others would receive "The Right Care When It Counts." Each nominee will receive a patch and certificate and be eligible for a state award at a ceremony during EMS Week 2024. Questions? Email awards@miemss.org

Children and youth who have met one or more of the following criteria are eligible for Right Care Awards:

1. Activates the Emergency Response System by calling 9-1-1 in an emergency
2. Calls the Poison Control Center in an emergency (1-800-222-1222)
3. Provides family emergency phone numbers, address, and contacts to emergency responders
4. Knows and practices an emergency plan at home
5. Applies knowledge learned in a first aid class
6. Performs CPR and/or uses an AED effectively
7. Knows his or her medical history (allergies, medications, special needs, etc.) and shares this information with emergency care professionals
8. Participates in fire and injury prevention education in the community
9. Prepares, with his or her family, to respond to a disaster
10. Provides emergency assistance in the community

Nominations for 2024 Awards are DUE by March 29, 2024 (Friday).
Submit through the online link:

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/dc5605d40ced4ae4b77d62cca788ea8b>

For more information about the 2024 Maryland EMS Awards, or to submit nominations, visit www.MIEMSS.org, or scan this QR code:





MARYLAND STARS OF LIFE AWARDS

Each year, the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS) celebrates EMS Week by honoring men and women across Maryland who have contributed to the EMS system. The eight categories for awards relate to specific incidents occurring from January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023.

For further information, call 410-706-3994, or email awards@miemss.org.

MARYLAND STAR OF LIFE AWARD

This award may be given to an individual, multiple individuals, or teams on the same incident for an outstanding rescue under extreme circumstances by EMS personnel.

MARYLAND EMS CITIZEN AWARD

This award is intended for citizen rescuers who have demonstrated quick thinking, fast action, and heroism.

EMS CLINICIAN OF THE YEAR

This award recognizes a clinician who has made outstanding contributions in the past year to the continuous improvement of emergency medical services in Maryland (for example, in the areas of quality assurance, public or EMS education, prevention, delivery of EMS services, and new technology).

EMD CLINICIAN OF THE YEAR

This award is given for extraordinary efforts in assisting the public through dispatch in this vital portion of the Chain of Survival.

OUTSTANDING EMS PROGRAM

This award recognizes a program that offers an innovative approach to reducing death and disability. The program must be affiliated with an EMS system component, such as a hospital, educational facility, rescue squad, or EMS organization.

LEON W. HAYES AWARD FOR LIFETIME EXCELLENCE IN EMS

This award is given to an individual who has devoted a lifetime of dedication to excellence in patient care, compassion and respect for each patient, and commitment to continuous improvement of the Maryland EMS system through his/her professional and personal life.

MARYLAND EMS-CHILDREN (EMS-C) AWARD

This award is given to an adult or program that has demonstrated ongoing dedication and commitment to improving the care for children and for promoting Family-Centered Care in a Maryland EMS program or hospital.

MARYLAND EMS-GERIATRIC (EMS-G) AWARD

This award is given to an individual or program that has demonstrated ongoing dedication and commitment to improving the EMS care of the elderly in Maryland.

Nominations for 2024 Awards are DUE by FRIDAY, MARCH 29, 2024.

Submit through the online link:

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/8bbe19fab5914734a84acc67beff8a7f>

For more information about the 2024 Maryland EMS Awards, or to submit nominations, visit www.MIEMSS.org, or scan this QR code:



CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 2024

- 2-4: *Winterfest EMS*. Easton, MD.

MARCH 2024

- 7-9: *Miltenberger Emergency Services Seminar*. Rocky Gap.
- 29: *Deadline for Maryland Stars of Life and Right Care When It Counts Awards nominations*.

MAY 2024

- 19-25: *National EMS Week*.

JUNE 2024

- 2: *Maryland Fire-Rescue Services Annual Memorial Service*. Annapolis, MD.
- 15-20: *132nd Maryland State Firemen's Association Annual Convention & Conference*. Ocean City, MD.

Maryland EMS News

MIEMSS

653 W. Pratt St.

Baltimore, MD 21201-1536



Governor Wes Moore

Lt. Governor Aruna Miller

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Institute for Emergency Medical
Services Systems
653 W. Pratt St.
Baltimore, MD 21201-1536
www.miemss.org

Chairman, EMS Board:

Clay B. Stamp, NRP

Executive Director, MIEMSS:

Theodore R. Delbridge, MD, MPH

Managing Editor:

Patrick Tandy (ptandy@miemss.org)

Design & Layout:

Patrick Tandy

Photography:

MIEMSS Media Services
(unless noted otherwise)

MDERS...

(Continued from page 9)

ments made by the Maryland Emergency Response System (MDERS) in the RTF program were unmistakably evident throughout this training session, and it was gratifying to see these endeavors manifest into a successful reality."

In an effort to enhance preparedness, MDERS assisted PGPD with procuring tactical vests and a variety of ballistic protection equipment for PGFD. The acquired ballistic protection allows fire/rescue/EMS personnel the ability to deploy inside warm zones to treat and extract potentially critical patients while protecting providers from injury. Medical supplies can also be attached to tactical vests for easy access to essential medical supplies. The PPE allows first responders to execute their mission more safely in dangerous situations.

Active violence incidents are a growing threat to the Maryland-National Capital Region that involves the interoperability of police, fire, rescue, and EMS personnel to increase the response effectiveness to mass casualty incidents. The RTF training is an indispensable resource for Prince George's County, structuring first responders to work as a unified team.

Endnotes

**Active Violence: Emergency Management* – Northwestern University. (2023). Retrieved from <https://www.northwestern.edu/emergency-management/how-you-can-prepare/active-violence.html#:~:text=An%20active%20violence%20incident%20involves,a%20vehicle%20into%20a%20crowd.> ■

CISM...

(Continued from page 1)

- You can afford to be good to yourself.
- Today is what you have – make it count.
- Get a hug.
- Don't sweat the small stuff – it's almost all small stuff.
- Taking care of yourself is a critical aspect of being an effective clinician.

Where to Get Help!

If you have experienced a difficult or troubling call or are experi-

encing stress and would like to talk to a Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) or peer support team member, call us through EMRC/SYSCOM at 1-800-648-3001. We will connect you with a trained and experienced peer or licensed mental health professional from your local team, or the state team. ***All discussions with peers and mental health professionals are voluntary and confidential.***

Remember, not all EMS professionals will recognize the need for or seek help. Check in with your colleagues – sometimes, something as simple as asking "How are you doing?" can make all the difference. ■