

Occupational Trauma Exposure in Fire Fighters



Cumulative occupational exposure to traumatic events far exceeds civilians.

- The most common number of traumatic events Americans will experience in their lifetime is 3
- The number of traumatic events fire fighters will routinely encounter on a single call is 4
- The majority of career fighters work a minimum of 20 years

What Kinds of Traumatic Events Do Fire Fighters Encounter?



- Structural fires
- Multi causality accidents
- Natural disasters
- Chemical or biological exposures
- Suicide of co-worker or civilian
- Terrorist attacks
- Life threatening events involving children
- Large scale catastrophic events

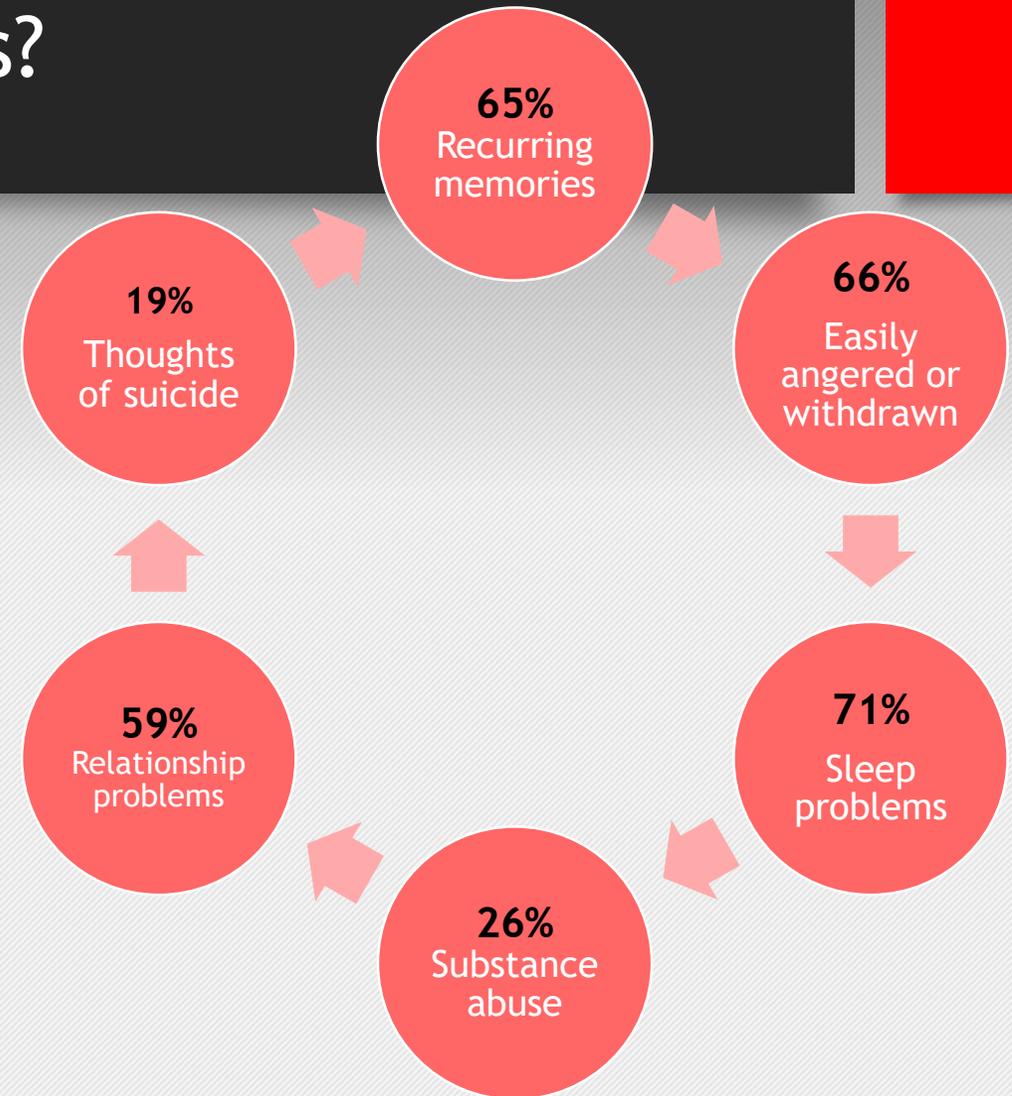
Mental Health Problems of Fire Fighters: What the research says...



- Approximately **22%** of firefighters will meet full diagnostic criteria for **PTSD** at some point in their career
- Between **7-11%** of fire fighters suffer from **clinical depression**
- Combat veterans with PTSD are **six times** more likely to **commit suicide**
- Many fire fighters **consider suicide** at some point in their career
 - 46.8% have had suicidal ideation
 - 19.2% have made suicidal plans
 - 15.5% have made suicidal attempts

What are fire fighters telling us?

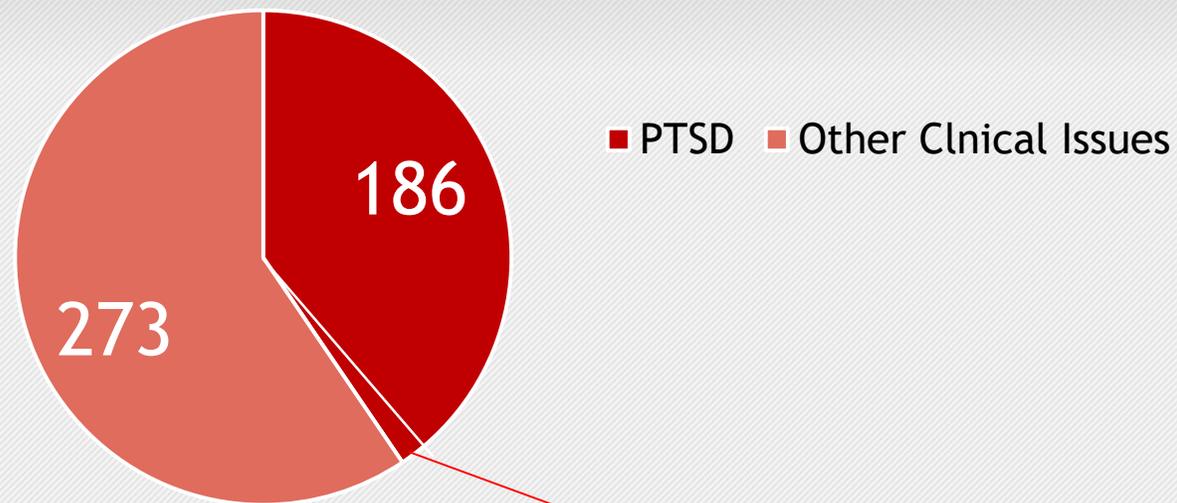
- NBC collaborated with the IAFF on a nationwide survey
- Survey explored behavioral health concerns in the fire service
- Nearly 7,000 IAFF members responded
- Over 75% report stress of the job contributes to unresolved emotional issues



Most Fire Fighters Will Not Receive a PTSD Diagnosis



Total Number of Members Treated at COE= 459
Total Number of Member Treated from KY= 5



Of the 5 KY members treated,
3 were PTSD cases

States and Provinces with PTSD Presumptive Laws

