

BRAZIL

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DEFINITION AND STANDARDIZATION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST RESPONSE KITS IN THE FIELD**1. ISSUE PAPER THEME**

Medical

2. SUMMARY / BACKGROUND / PREVIOUS HISTORY

Traumatic events are frequent in peacekeeping and military missions. Immediate psychological intervention can significantly reduce the long-term emotional consequences. However, there is currently a lack of standardization and preparedness regarding field-level psychological support, which can compromise the well-being and operational performance of military personnel.

3. DETAILED PROPOSAL

To address the growing need for structured mental health support in military operations, particularly in the early stages of trauma exposure, it is recommended that the COE Manual be expanded to include a dedicated chapter or section on psychological first aid in field environments. This new section should define and standardize the composition and use of a Psychological First Response Kit, which would include instructional materials, validated rapid psychological screening tools, immediate trauma response guides, and emergency contact information with other certified mental health professionals.

Additionally, the proposal recommends the mandatory implementation of initial training in Psychological First Aid (PFA) for all medical personnel prior to deployment. This measure would ensure a consistent and evidence-based approach to psychological stabilization, aligned with international mental health and military readiness standards. Alongside the comprehensive preparation of medical personnel for mental health care, there is an increasing need for the presence of professional psychologists. This is due to the complex challenges associated with prolonged distance from social and familial environments, cultural differences, and the potential exposure of the troop/police contributors to traumatic events.

References and Tools for Psychological First Aid

Name	Description
Suggested References	
WHO Psychological First Aid Guide	WHO manual for delivering psychological first aid in crisis situations.
Psychological First Aid: Field Operations Guide (NCTSN)	Practical guide for implementing psychological first aid in the field, by the NCTSN.
Psychological Screening Tools	
Global Assessment Tool (GAT)	Self-assessment tool measuring psychosocial fitness across emotional, social, family, and spiritual domains.
Primary Care PTSD Screen for DSM-5 (PC-PTSD-5)	Screening tool for PTSD symptoms in primary care settings.
Brief Trauma Questionnaire (BTQ)	Assesses trauma exposure and identifies those needing PTSD evaluation.
Combat Exposure Scale (CES)	Measures level of combat exposure to assess PTSD risk.
Behavioral Health Pulse (BH Pulse)	Assessment tool for behavioral stressors used by Behavioral Health Officers.

Trauma Response Guides

Clinician-Administered PTSD Scale for DSM-5 (CAPS-5)	Structured interview considered the gold standard for PTSD diagnosis.
Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD)	Model for psychological debriefing post-critical incident for military/emergency personnel.
Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and TBI (DCoE)	Provides official guidance from the U.S. DoD on psychological health and TBI management.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications relate to the procurement of standardized kit contents and training resources. In addition, costs must account for the inclusion of a professional psychologist, whose presence is essential for managing complex mental health challenges in operational contexts.

Some of the Psychological First Response Kits may also incur specific costs due to their standardized nature, which ensures consistency, validated tools, and compliance with international guidelines. Cost efficiency is expected through reduced long-term psychological harm, improved personnel resilience, and lower rates of mission attrition.

5. PROPOSED 2026 COE MANUAL TEXT

Troop/police contributors shall provide Psychological First Response Kits as part of their deployed medical capability. These kits shall contain instructional materials, rapid psychological screening tools, and trauma management resources. All field medical personnel must be trained in Psychological First Aid (PFA). In addition, the presence of a professional psychologist is essential to support mental health interventions in complex field environments, address trauma related cases, and provide culturally sensitive care to deployed personnel. The kit components and reimbursement values are to be detailed in the relevant annex and aligned with international mental health standards and military psychological readiness protocols.

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