Peer Support Software to Support First Responders

**Title:** Peer Support Software to Support First Responders

**Invention:** The invention consists of peer support intervention software used to prevent PTSD in emergency responders. This web application includes a risk assessment of mental health symptoms for those exposed to traumatic events. After the assessment, this software system utilizes a peer support call-out system to connect first responders to peer support members. This invention also provides a means for determining the effectiveness of the program itself so that the using organization can determine if the user is receiving adequate support. It provides a more flexible option for its users and is something that can be very beneficial in remote situations such as those involved in Department of Defense deployment activities. By providing an organization with this invention, the organization’s users can be given proper screening and receive the support they need, ultimately leading to a healthier and more efficient and effective workforce.

**Background:** Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is an anxiety-related disorder that affects 7.7 million adults in the United States each year. Symptoms of this disease include angry outbursts, memories of the traumatic event, bad dreams, intense worry, and emotional numbness. First responders are particularly at risk for developing PTSD because they encounter traumatic events on a daily basis. In order to protect first responders from internalizing trauma, proper education, communication as well as preventative measures are needed.

**Applications:**
- PTSD in first responders
- Telemedicine
- Telepsychiatry

**Advantages:**
- Novel
- Preventative
• Time-saving for peer support coordinators
• Money-saving for patients and providers
• Can be used by volunteers
• Provides a more flexible option for users

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