

Re-implementing the Durham Regional Police Service's Chaplaincy Program

Background

Police Chaplaincy Programs serve a variety of functions within law enforcement, offering emotional, moral, and spiritual support to its members and their families.

The Durham Regional Police Service (DRPS) Chaplaincy Program promotes inclusivity by engaging with diverse communities and supporting leaders in breaking barriers. It ensures that all members have access to faith-aligned resources. The program is currently on hiatus.

Research Questions

1. What is the value of implementing the Chaplaincy Program for the DRPS?
2. What are the barriers that are expected with the application of the Chaplaincy Program?
3. How can the effectiveness of the Chaplaincy Program be measured and evaluated?
4. What faith-based and support organizations can be incorporated into the Chaplaincy Program? How will they be identified and engaged?

Policing & Community Well-Being: 3004
Winter 2025

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Preliminary Findings

The psychological impacts police officers face while on duty often receive little attention (Koch, 2010). They face many mental health issues and don't seek help due to the stigmas surrounding it (Whittington & Basham, 2024).

Chaplaincy programs have shown to offer many benefits, including: maintaining and enhancing spiritual well-being, support mental health, managing stress, improving emotional resilience, and providing a calming influence in communities often characterized by authority and tension (Bonner & Crowe, 2022; Gouse, 2016; Maxwell, 2023).

Methodology

Working in collaboration with the DRPS, the current project is based on a literature review exploring the potential benefits, challenges, and unintended consequences of reimplementing the chaplaincy program.

A Trent library technician has assisted us in identifying relevant search terms. The DRPS has provided documents related to their previous Chaplaincy Programs and additional documents regarding similar programs from neighbouring regions. Both academic and grey literature has been included.

Next Steps

1

Identify gaps within other Chaplaincy Programs

2

Engage with faith-based & support organizations

3

Continuously work alongside and present our research to the DRPS