

FRAMEWORK UNIT HEALTH PROMOTION REPRESENTATIVES DOCUMENT



SHILO HEALTH PROMOTION



PURPOSE

This document exists to help to provide clarity and suggestions for the development and/or management of Base/Wing Unit Health Promotion Representative (UHPR) Committees (the name of the committee and its members is only a suggestion, as local Base/Wing requirements/composition may necessitate an alternate name). It is only a framework guideline given the very different sizes, populations and needs across the country. It is hoped that this will help to create a more standardized, but still unique to each location or committee, framework that will help both the Health Promotion (HP) team achieve effective program delivery and environmental shifts, and the CAF members achieve an improved sense of agency, personal and unit wellness and ideally increase operational readiness.

MISSION OF STRENGTHENING THE FORCES

Strengthening the Forces is a health promotion program designed to assist Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) personnel, Regular and Primary Reserve, and the greater CAF community to take control of their health and well-being.



The Unit Health Promotion Representatives grew out of the committee established in the early years of Health Promotion. Its current purpose and focus is to be or to create a mechanism by which members can engage and participate in working towards not only the adoption of healthy lifestyles, but the ability to influence the environment and culture to support and maintain those lifestyles. The committee(s) and its members are the embodiment of the process that was determined to be the most effective in achieving that goal.

RAISON D'ÊTRE

COMMITTEE DEFINITION

The word "committee" for the purposes of this document refers to the group of people gathered to discuss, broadly speaking, any initiatives that involve the delivery or promotion of, training in, or implementation of Health Promotion, Balance, Wellness, Health Services, or Strengthening the Forces mandated programming or content. It may be a standalone UHPR committee, or it may be a committee that is amalgamated with a Base/Wing Wellness/Balance committee, or it may be a combination of a Fitness/Mental Health/Health Promotion committee, or something else entirely. There is no one size fits all approach - it is whatever will work best for any given location.

SIGNIFICANCE OF A UHPR COMMITTEE - VISION

As most bases/wings cover a significant area/series of locations, adequate staffing can often be an issue. To maximize uptake and efficiency, having dedicated, enthusiastic “representatives or ambassadors” is crucial. These personnel effectively multiply the ability and potential outreach of a Health Promotion team of 1-5 members, to 2-3 times that depending on the number of UHPRs per unit and the size of the base/wing.

These members would be able to assist with administering questionnaires, doing environmental scans, assisting with focus group identification or other strategies designed to get information about a particular group (of whatever size) to determine unit health and wellness priorities as well as to act as a conduit of materials or initiatives that Health Promotion would like to promote.



RAISON D'ÊTRE

SIGNIFICANCE OF A UHPR COMMITTEE - VISION CONT'D

Conversely, it is also a way for each individual unit to focus on areas that are important and relevant at that level, thereby increasing buy-in not only from leadership but the members themselves by providing a sense of autonomy and self-sufficiency.

With UHPRs acting as essentially embedded ambassadors, communication, responsiveness and relevance can be improved between Health Promotion and the unit. The UHPR will ideally have a good understanding of how best to engage with their chain of command and the unit thereby allowing transmission of information maximizing uptake and minimizing the reliance solely on emails (which may be deleted) or posters (which may be largely ignored).

Additionally, having a UHPR Committee can act as a jumping off point for a Wellness/Balance Committee or as a way to upvote and then bring key issues or concerns to the larger committee (should there be one) for consideration and action.

The vision therefore, is for there to be facilitation and empowerment of the UHPRs to create opportunities to improve or create structures, processes, and ways to increase engagement that will help all of the CAF Community participate in activities that support healthy lifestyles, by fostering and strengthening partnerships and the required environments which enable that to occur.



HOW IT LOOKS

COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

The UHPR committee will ideally be comprised of 1-2 members of each unit depending on the size, interest and availability (with respect to tempo, existence of other secondary/tertiary duties etc.) of personnel. Depending on the unit, civilian members are also welcome to be UHPRs. One benefit of this is that it could increase participation from units that might be short-staffed, as well as increasing continuity as civilians tend to transition in and out less frequently.

The committee may be chaired by:

- The HP Manager and/or Specialist depending on the size of the HP team at each Base/Wing.
- A military member depending on the structure of the committee at that base/wing

In cases where the committee is chaired by a military member, the HP team will provide technical assistance in the form of information, support, materials and training (on different topics, with respect to activities, environmental scans etc.) as requested.

The committee will meet as often as is necessary and manageable (in terms of staffing, tempo, other priorities etc.) with the purpose of discussing progress, membership, priorities, activities and initiatives completed to date or upcoming etc.

Training of new members will occur either as new UHPRs join the committee or quarterly or as decided locally based on requirements for participation and local priorities.



WHO AND WHAT

TARGET POPULATION

- Regular Canadian Armed Forces members, and Class B and C Reserves
- Primary Reserve, Cadet Instructor Cadre, Canadian Rangers
- Foreign military personnel on exchange posting or training with the Canadian Armed Forces
- DND and NPF civilian employees
- Supplementary Reserve
- Cadets and Junior Canadian Rangers



UHPR REQUIREMENTS

The ideal UHPR will be someone who is interested in and perhaps already participating in activities known to lead to improved health and/or wellness. They do not have to be perfect. They do need to be engaged, have a good attitude, enjoy working with, for and teaching people. They should wish to lead by example - if not in every aspect (e.g. a smoker may be a UHPR, but they should embody the other aspects and be considering quitting in the near future) but at least in the spirit of being the best they can be within reason.

Ideally, UHPRs will not be voluntold to participate, as this generally decreases the rate and scope of participation. A level of personal accountability and buy-in is essential. It is recommended that some form of Terms or Agreement form is prepared, presented and signed signifying that they understand what is expected of them and are prepared to complete those terms, with approval and support from their chain of command.

HOW IT WILL HAPPEN

TRAINING

Training will consist of a foundational introduction to what Health Promotion is and what we hope to achieve as a committee/group (this will depend upon each location's priorities and target areas) and be based upon the principles of the Ottawa Charter and other related content etc.

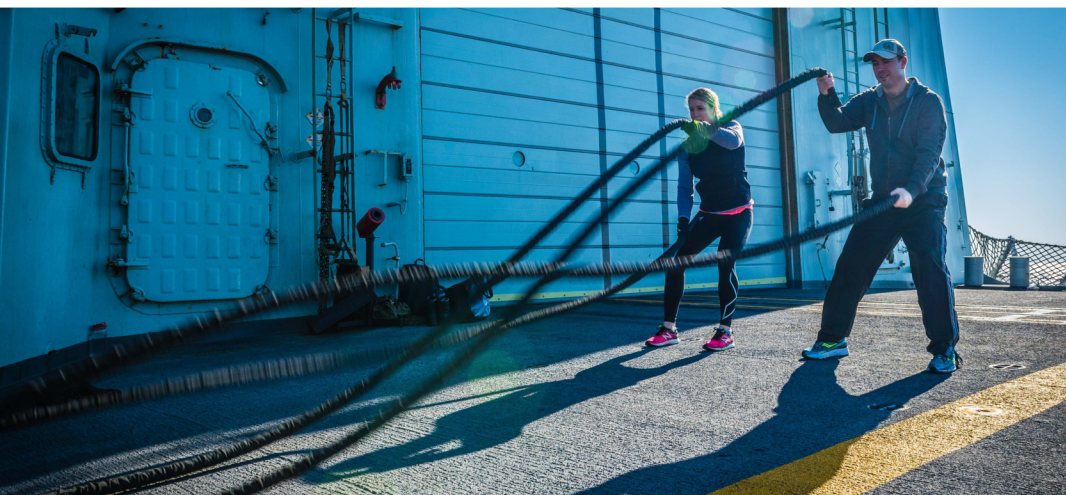
There will be an introduction of what a UHPR is, why it's important and what it means to be one. (Being a Health Promotion "Ambassador").

There will be a basic introduction to the 4 core areas in Health Promotion as defined by Strengthening the Forces, and an overview of the HP courses/workshops (in-person and virtual).

Included will be an overview of the annual campaign calendar (Bell Let's Talk, Nutrition Month, Recreation Month, Healthy Relationships Campaign, Suicide Awareness Week etc.) with description/discussion of what typically occurs and the types of events/activities they as UHPRs could support/assist with.

There should be discussion of specific initiatives or challenges designed by the UHPRs themselves, that are related to the issues or areas of concern within their unit that they would like to address at the unit level.

And finally there should be a discussion of how those specific initiatives/challenges would need to adhere to best practice and protocols as decided upon/monitored by the HP team to ensure that UHPRs stay within their scope.



UHPRS IN ACTION

ROLES AND DUTIES OF THE UHPR

The UHPR will act as a liaison between their place of work and the HP team, advising HP on health needs, lifestyle issues and challenges with the built environment (no unit gym, poorly lit stairwells etc.) that are affecting their CAF team/unit and/or their families (indirectly). They will also provide logistical support/assistance in their unit/area of responsibility as needed, to further the goals of both the program and their identified unit needs (e.g. in the case of an environmental scan or needs assessment having been done).

UHPRs will assist in the completion of the aforementioned environmental scans and/or site visits, to highlight what is going well and where improvements could be made. This would help the HP teams better understand what is needed to support activities or behaviours that promote total health and wellness, as well as identifying other gaps or barriers to the coordination, marketing, delivery and uptake of programs or unit participation generally.

UHPRs could (depending on the base/wing), receive the monthly/quarterly mailings that outline what the upcoming schedule for HP courses/workshops are, and will help promote those in their unit. They will be encouraged to participate in these themselves so that they can speak knowledgeably about them and act as true ambassadors and role models with respect to this aspect of their role.

If it is difficult for members to get time away from work, UHPRs can also coordinate unit specific training or briefings that better meet the schedule of the unit. This would be done by communicating jointly with the HP Team and their supervisor or chain of command.



UHPRS IN ACTION

ROLES AND DUTIES OF THE UHPR CONTINUED

The UHPR will either maintain or seek out a suitable location for a Resilience/Wellness board that will be updated regularly with materials that are either provided by HP or that are created jointly by the UHPR(s) with some oversight by the HP team.

UHPRs will also be able to come up with and organize activities or initiatives that will help to increase uptake of Health Promotion's core areas (e.g. active living challenge, improved choices in the canteen, non-alcoholic options at unit events, mental health challenges etc.). They could also be involved in organizing Unit Health Promotion Awareness events in their unit or participate as part of a larger base/wing initiative.

UHPRs can also, if they are willing and able, provide short briefs or play a video at Morning Parades or regular safety meetings.

Each UHPR is expected to be in attendance at every UHPR meeting or training (or professional development session as they are available/organized), or to send a designate or provide a report, if participation/attendance is not possible.



LOGISTICS

TERMS FOR UHPRS



UHPRs will be volunteers (recognized as a secondary duty) and represent both base/wing and lodger units, and support service organizations within the base/wing; they will represent one or more of the identified target populations and may be officers, non-commissioned members or civilians.

Members can choose to be/remain UHPRs in their unit for as long as they are posted there, or for a minimum 2-year term. If/when they are posted out, they will ideally seek out a likely replacement for themselves and/or inform the HP team of the change so that a replacement can be found and training can be arranged for the incoming member.

Members can also be recommended by their supervisor/chain of command (particularly in the case of it being a secondary duty) in which case they will ideally contact the Health Promotion office to find out when the next scheduled training will be conducted.



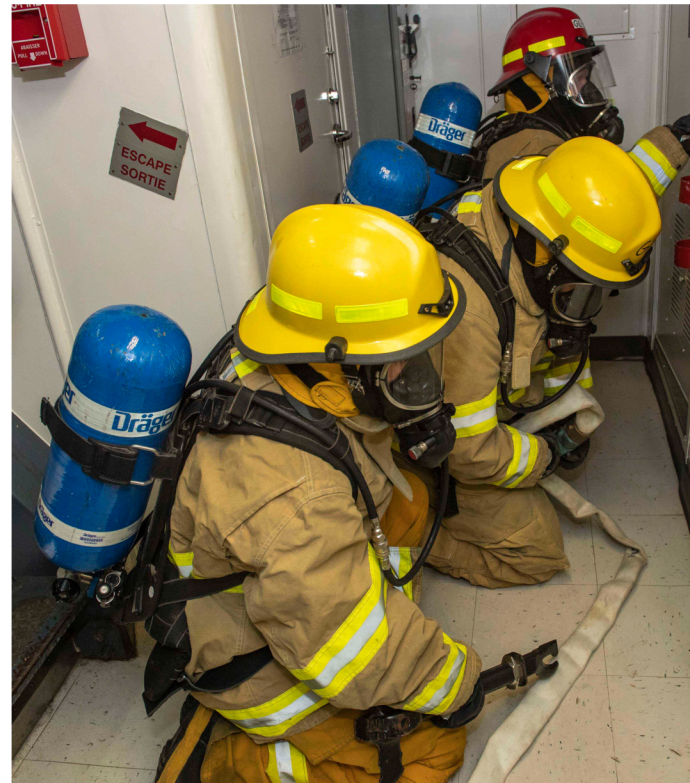
LOGISTICS

PROMOTION, RETENTION AND CONTINUITY OF UHPRS

In order to attract and retain the members that are most likely to take the role seriously, work conscientiously and help move the needle for Health Promotion, there needs to be some benefits of taking this on as a role, sometimes as a secondary or tertiary duty.

In addition to the required initial training, there should be opportunities for additional professional development.

This could include any online or in-person training that is being offered specific to any of our core areas, something related to trauma-informed care, social media, or topics offered as part of any of the national campaigns (healthy relationships, GBV etc.).



Due to the nature of the military and the Annual Posting Season (APS), one activity that will hopefully help to maintain connection with active, keen UHPRs is the creation of a national database that will allow notification of when UHPRs are posted (from where to where) to allow the “receiving” base/wing to reach out and inquire whether they would like to continue on in this capacity in their new location.

This will hopefully result in the training received by the member to provide more of a return on investment, and allow the member to continue to find an additional way to stay motivated and excited about their role in health, wellness and health promotion and hopefully increase their job satisfaction and thereby morale, not just of themselves, but that of the whole unit.

SUPPORTING THE UHPRS

RESOURCES

A list of resources as related to any or all of the core areas, related topics, campaigns and anything else that might assist UHPRs either with the maintenance of the resilience boards, suggestions to help generate ideas for individual unit challenges or initiatives etc. will be maintained, updated and provided to the UHPRs by the HP Teams. This could be distributed electronically if it includes links/web addresses etc., in regular mail-outs or at regular meetings and/or training sessions. Some of these are available in the UHPR Orientation Guide that they will receive at training, and others might be part of whatever each base/wing has prioritized or created.

