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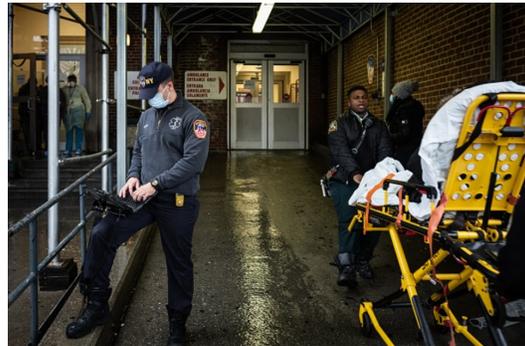
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# Firefighter Risk & Resilience Study Newsletter Spring 2020



## First Responders On the Front Lines of the COVID-19 Pandemic



<https://www.usnews.com/news/healthiest-communities/articles/2020-04-06/first-responders-fear-being-left-behind-in-coronavirus-relief>; <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-04-06/coronavirus-california-first-responders>

First responders worry they will be left behind as hospitals and health care providers receive priority for protective equipment and billions of dollars in federal funding to battle the COVID-19 pandemic. Emergency medical responders – including firefighters, paramedics, emergency medical technicians, and others – are facing severe shortages of protective equipment, such as masks, face shields, gloves, and gowns. When compared to America's hospitals and healthcare workers, first responders have received little attention and federal funding to help them combat the virus, even though these first responders are often the first point of contact for a patient in crisis. Matt Zavadsky, president of the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians, is advocating for the health and safety of emergency medical responders during this pandemic. Zavadsky shares that first responders "are an extension of the health care system, but [they] are not being treated by our government leaders as essential partners in this war."

According to a database

maintained by the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), over 500 fire and EMS personnel have been diagnosed with COVID-19, while more than 5,900 have been quarantined and thousands of others have been exposed to coronavirus patients. This total does not include New York City, and Gary Ludwig, the IAFC president, shared that about 20% of New York City firefighters are calling in sick every day. There are several organizations doing their part to help first responders stay safe. For example, Hilton has donated one million hotel rooms to first responders and other frontline medical staff who need a place to recharge or isolate from their families if they suspect they have been exposed to the virus. Ludwig explained that leaders in fire service are going to extreme lengths to preserve protective gear, and he shared that one fire chief in Illinois who is out of gear has resorted to buying raincoats for his first responders to wear. Emergency medical responders do not have the materials they need to respond effectively to this pandemic.

Congress has authorized \$100 billion to pay for COVID-19-related health care expenses, with \$100 million specifically authorized to buy protective equipment and supplies for firefighters and emergency medical responders. Many advocates have said that this will not be enough to ensure first responder organizations can effectively manage this crisis. Ludwig wants the federal government to set aside a general fund of \$5 to \$10 billion for firefighters, paramedics, and other emergency medical responders that would pay for employee overtime, protective gear, coronavirus testing, and medical treatment for those who fall ill. Ludwig, Zavadsky, and several other advocates from emergency medical response organizations share that it is necessary to ensure that first responders have the proper equipment they need to do their job in helping the nation combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://www.usnews.com/news/healthiest-communities/articles/2020-04-06/first-responders-fear-being-left-behind-in-coronavirus-relief>

# What's New at the WRI?

The WRI welcomes a new therapist!

**Brandon Smith**

Brandon joined the Warriors Research Institute (WRI) in September 2019. He obtained his Bachelor of Science in Psychology in December of 2016, followed by his Masters of Educational Psychology in December of 2018. He is currently working towards his PhD in Counseling Psychology at A&M in College Station. Prior to working with WRI, he volunteered as a service missionary to the people of Mendoza, Argentina, worked for the Texas Psychological Association, and provided counseling services at a community clinic. Brandon's clinical interests include trauma recovery in military populations. He has been married for four years to his high school sweetheart and they are expecting their first child in the Spring. His hobbies include cooking, camping, and running.

**Firefighter Telemental Health Treatment Opportunity!**

If you are a firefighter/paramedic who suffers from depression, anger, substance abuse, or posttraumatic stress, you may be eligible for a NO COST confidential treatment opportunity through the Warriors Research Institute. This is available to anyone in the country during the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you would like more information about our treatment program, please contact us at [WRI@BSWHealth.org](mailto:WRI@BSWHealth.org) or 254-716-6208.

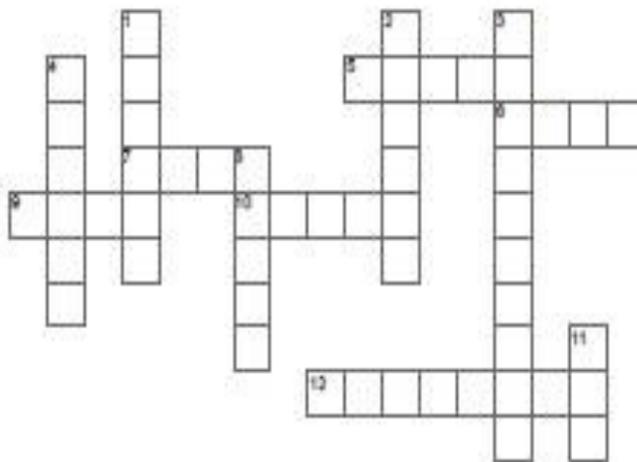
## Spring Crossword Puzzle!

**ACROSS**

- 5. A flower
- 6. Precipitation
- 7. Not cold or hot
- 9. Flying a \_\_\_\_\_ is the perfect windy day activity
- 10. Another month of Spring
- 12. Rain or sun protection

**DOWN**

- 1. A brief all of rain
- 2. A small pool of water
- 3. A day for playing tricks
- 4. The season after winter
- 8. A month of Spring
- 11. Mother's Day is celebrated on the second Sunday of the month of \_\_\_\_\_



<http://allfreeprintable.com/spring-crossword-puzzle>

April	Rain	Shower	Warm
Puddle	May	Spring	Kite
Tulip	March	Umbrella	April Fools

# Spotlight on Service

In our newsletters, we highlight firefighter service outside the line of duty from the cities in our study. In this newsletter, we focus on Boston, MA.



<https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2018/07/26/engine-celebrates-years-with-charlestown-community/8XnPmo8YpyqfIDBfwwPx5L/story.html>

## The People's Firehouse: Community Compassion Sparks Renovation of Engine 50

As the longest-serving fire house in the Boston area, the Engine 50 fire station has long been a beloved part of the Charlestown suburb. The fire house, known locally as the "People's Firehouse," is tucked in neatly with the rest of the brownstones on the block, and it is set apart by its bright red doors. When the discussion about relocating the firehouse began, the residents of Charlestown stepped up to save the historical station by renovating it instead. The heartbeat of the conversation was to create more functional quarters to curb exposure to cancer-causing toxins when returning from calls. The renovations consisted of a

"three zone plan" to keep toxins from infiltrating the entirety of the station. The "hot zone" is where the apparatus and gear industrial washers are, complete with a separate ventilation system so that the air in the rest of the station is still clean. Next are the neutral zone and cool zone. A new kitchen, new bunkers, and an updated workout facility are all housed in the cool zone, which, because of the renovations, is a toxin-free zone. Engine 50 is the first station in Boston with this three-zone system.

The renovations would not have been possible without the encouragement from the community for Engine 50 to remain in Charlestown. However, this was not the first time that citizens banded together to protect Engine 50. Boston's major financial struggles in the 1980s threatened to shut down the station, so the citi-

zens of Charlestown staged sit-ins and protests. Some even went as far as handcuffing themselves to the fire truck. As Boston Fire Department's Captain Guy Cammarata said, "The foundation of this firehouse is built on top of this community. We would not be here today if it weren't for Charlestown." It is clear that the people of the "People's Firehouse" will always step up to protect it. Thanks to the kindness and support from the Boston community, the Engine 50 fire station will continue to call Charlestown home.

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/01/10/metro/peoples-firehouse-community-compassion-sparks-renovation-beloved-engine-50/>

<https://bostonfirehistory.org/firehouses/active-firehouses/engine-50-34-winthrop-st-charlestown/>

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# Moving? Changing your phone number?

If so, please let us know so we can update  
our information.

Contact Megan Cardenas at:

(254) 716-6208

OR

[Megan.Cardenas@BSWHealth.org](mailto:Megan.Cardenas@BSWHealth.org)



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Twitter: [@Suzygulliverphd](https://twitter.com/Suzygulliverphd)  
TikTok: [@drsuzygulliver](https://www.tiktok.com/@drsuzygulliver)



Don't forget that you can contact us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year!