

***Retention of Navy
Environmental Health Officers
(EHOs) in the U.S Navy***

By

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Problem Statement

Why has the Navy not been able to retain EHOs after their 1st tour, especially when they are claiming a high level of job satisfaction?

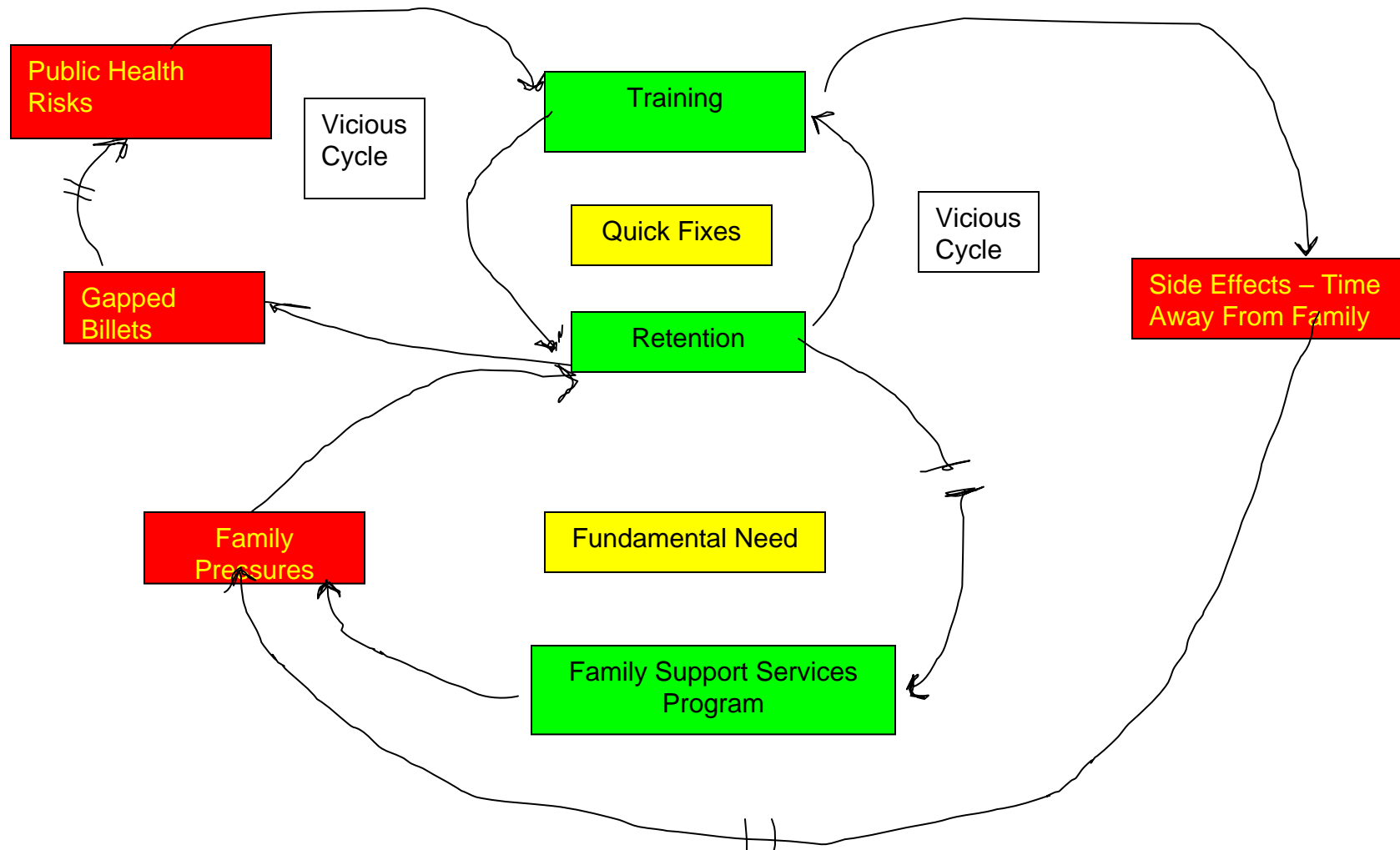


The Problem

- The current turnover rate among junior Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) in the U.S. Navy is 67%
- The EHO community also had the highest deployment rate (46%) within the MSC communities
- During 1204-05, EHO community had the second highest overall loss rate among Health Science Officers in the Navy's Medical Service Corps (MSC)¹

1. BUMIS

Shifting the Burden





Background

- EHO were not being selected for promotion during late 1990 to late 1990's
- The Navy Environmental Health Board (NEHB) was form 1992 to guide the career paths of EHOs
- In 1998, the NEHB changed the basic entry requirements from any undergraduate degree to a MS or MPH in Environmental Health
- Since then promotion rates have increased dramatically, however, it difficult to recruit and retain these highly trained EHOs



PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Develop Service Member & Family Mentorship Program for EHOs onboard and their families who are struggling with military life
- Create an awareness campaign implemented for families of potential EHOs considering joining the Navy. The focus will be on life in the military and resources available to ease the some of the hardships of military life
- Create avenues for professional development for the EHOs
 - ✓ Ten essential environmental public health services
 - ✓ Core Competencies
 - ✓ Professional skills as needed by their positions



PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- All junior EHOs considering leaving the Navy shall have opportunities to:
 - ✓ Include their families in the out briefing process
 - ✓ Provide feedback how their experience with the service could have been better and
 - ✓ What would cause them to remain in the service



National Goals Supported

- Development of a Workforce: Create a stable force of EHOs onboard, who are highly trained and ready to address current and emerging public health issues around the world
- Professional development: Create programs for EHOs and their family members to address profession growth and adjustment to military life, respectively
- Expansion of the pool of personnel prepared to perform the essential public health services



National Goals Supported

- EHOs are required to function in all three areas identified in the IOM report, Assessment, Policy Development, and Assurance
- EHOs also use the Ten Essential Environmental Health services routinely, to provide health protection to the forces
- These services are critical in preventing disease among the military population
- Without adequately trained & sufficient number of EHOs onboard, all three of the IOM's report functions areas and the ten essential services will suffer and so too will the military population who are vulnerable to Environmental Public Health risks, especially when deployed in endemic and disaster affected areas



Next Step

- Brief the NEHB in Mar 06, upon approval:
 - ✓ Develop a Service Member & Family Mentorship Program
 - ✓ Create an awareness campaign implemented for families of EHOs
 - ✓ Create avenues for professional development for the EHOs
 - ✓ Create an out-brief/feedback program for departing EHO with the EHO Specialty Leader



Expected Outcomes

- Pushback from senior EHOs
- Buy-in from junior and mid-level EHOs
- Approval of a modified approach, initially not all objectives will be met
- Proposed objectives will be met in the long term, but it will be up to individuals and mentors to stick with the program
- Ongoing project for many years



Acknowledgements

- CDC for initiating the EPHLI and sponsorship
- CAPT Michael Herring for being my mentor. Thank you sir!
- St Louis University for taking on the EPHLI program and doing a fantastic job
- Nicole Kozma for effectively managing it all