

Occupational Health Department

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH PHYSICIANS/EMPLOYEE ASSISTANT OFFICERS

FUNCTION/ROLE: To:

- Ensure that the appropriate occupational health and advice is available for staff
- Ensure that staff welfare is paramount.

ACTIVATION PROCEDURE:

- You will be informed by the Switchboard – Alert level 1.

This department has established procedures in relation to critical incident stress management for staff, both at the incident site and subsequent debriefing sessions, if indicated.

In the event of a major emergency occurring in the HSE – Southern Area, the following outlines the role of the EAP Service:

1. The Director of EAP or the Senior Employee Assistance Officer (EAO) on duty is informed in the event of a major emergency. In turn the Director of Employment Assistance Programme (EAP) or the senior EAO will contact and inform the other EAOs.
2. The Director will liaise with the Hospital Emergency Control Centre
3. The Director or the Senior EAO will take responsibility for contacting the Critical Incident Stress Management Team (CISM)
4. Depending on the situation, the Director will dispatch team members to designated sites, e.g. – Neutral area near the emergency site if necessary and areas directed by the site officers, i.e. changing rooms, rest rooms or canteen.
5. The EAO's will stay in contact with the Director through mobile phone in relation to the site situation/needs etc.
6. Depending on the emergency, other teams members will be dispatched to:
 - Emergency Department
 - Ambulance Bay
 - X-Ray Department
 - Operating Theatre
 - ITU
 - Canteen.

ACTION CARD 28**DEFUSING:**

Defusing is a small group discussion about traumatic event

- A Fairly immediate intervention designed to offer support and stabilisation, so those individual trauma workers can cope in the short term.
- Defusing can take place on change of shifts or when indicated. If necessary, defusing teams can rotate to the same site at alternative shifts (team's familiar to staff).

DEBRIEFING:

Debriefing is a group meeting/discussion about the traumatic event

- A managed venting of feelings and reactions to a critical incident by those involved. Best practice advises that debriefing is best conducted after a period of 'watchful waiting' (typically 3-4 weeks) if deemed necessary by the Employee Assistance Professionals.
- Typically a specifically trained professional in Critical Incident Stress Management will lead these in a secure and confidential setting.

The EAO's will arrange the following:

- Location (quiet)
- Time (duration approx 2 – 2 ½ hours)
- Group (max 10 per group)
- Communicate to managers.

The EAO will decide on debriefing with a ripple effect to staff involved in the incident:

- Ambulance Staff
- Site Medical Team
- Emergency Department Staff
- X-Ray Staff
- Operating Theatre Staff

Critical Incident:

- Any incident / accident which lies outside the normal pattern of human experience, and which would cause a powerful raw emotional response in anyone.