

PURPOSE:

An individual or group activity facilitated by Behavioral Health Services to provide assessment and triage of people in crisis, provide support, and to educate about trauma reactions. A member from the Critical Incident Stress Management Team will be available to facilitate the clinical aspect of the debriefing or postvention service.

DEFINITION:

A critical incident is a significant event outside the range of usual human experience which has the potential to affect a person's normal ability to cope. Those involved with or who witnessed the event, may experience a negative psychological response. Some signs and symptoms of a critical incident response are uncertainty, guilt, grief, inability to rest or concentrate, headaches, nightmares, fatigue and/or change in appetite. This is not an exhaustive list of signs and symptoms.

PROCESS:

- A. Upon identification of a critical incident, any employee may notify their Director/Manager to review the incident and explore the need for further assistance. If the need is determined, the Director or Manager may call the Mental Health Help Line at 812-827-6222.
- B. Based on schedule availability, a debriefing or postvention session will be scheduled and facilitated as soon as possible, usually within 1 to 3 days of the incident for the affected employees. Location will vary based on the need.
- C. The format of the meeting will vary depending on the incident. Generally the session will include introductions, a description of the event that is informational and the staff are given the opportunity to describe what they heard, saw, felt, or did during the incident. Also included in the session are information sharing of descriptions of typical stress responses and suggestions for alleviating or coping with emotional pain associated with a traumatic event. This includes recommendations to link individuals with further support/counseling, resources, or available Employee Assistance Programs.
- D. Attendance of the debriefing session is entirely voluntary. The decision to attend or not to attend will not impact one's employment status.
- E. Director/Manager will assist the employee with scheduling if the session is during scheduled working hours.

REFERENCES:

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