

Safety Hour Discussion Pack

Topic: Trauma Incident Support

Purpose of the discussion:

Colleagues who are involved in, or who witness, potentially traumatic incidents may have an increased risk of developing a mental health condition as a result of the trauma. This can be experienced immediately after a traumatic incident, or in the future. This discussion pack has been created to help you to recognise the signs, and support that is available.

The majority of people exposed to traumatic events will recover within four to six weeks of the event without the need for further help, however, this is not the case for everyone.

90% of men and 75% of women are able to carry on as normal following a potentially traumatic incident.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a form of anxiety that can follow being involved in or witnessing traumatic events. PTSD can develop soon after the trauma, or months, even years later.

Discussion points: Use below to plan your facilitated discussion. Remember, you don't have to have all the answers – the role of the facilitator is to create an engaging discussion where everyone identifies and commits to solutions.

Discussion points	Supporting notes
Have you ever experienced a traumatic incident? How did you cope with it?	<p>One size does not fit all, people will cope with trauma in different ways. Some people may prefer to talk through the experience, whilst others will deal with the trauma on their own.</p> <p>Useful strategies that you could suggest for someone coping with trauma are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep busy and maintain your routine • Talk to friends, family and colleagues • Reduce tension through exercise • Don't expect the feelings to disappear overnight • Keep a notepad by your bed to write down feelings and help you sleep
How can I support someone who has experienced a traumatic event?	<p>How have you received support in the past? What did you find useful?</p> <p>Top tips include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening without judgement • Distraction with something fun • Give them some space and quiet time when they need it • Offer support with everyday tasks without taking over or removing their responsibility <p>Never tell someone they are 'lucky' – they may be experiencing guilt and they need support rather than reinforcement of this guilt.</p>

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<p>If I think someone may be experiencing PTSD, what symptoms should I look out for?</p>	<p>Many people will experience symptoms following a traumatic incident, but if these are still happening a month after the incident, the person may have PTSD.</p> <p>Symptoms of PTSD include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having flashbacks, dreams and reliving the event • Negative thoughts • Finding it difficult to sleep • Feeling numb and distant from other people • Irritability • Weight gain/loss • Increased alcohol/drug use • Loss of energy

For further information:

You can visit Safety Central – <https://safety.networkrail.co.uk/healthandwellbeing/coping-with-trauma/>

Contact Validium, our Employee Assistance Programme on 0800 358 4858 or 0330 332 9980 or visit www.validium.com/vclub (username:NetworkRail, password:onlinesupport)

Refer a colleague for Occupational Health support with OH Assist by visiting www.networkrail.ohassist.com or calling 0845 608 0656

You can also contact an external support service:

Support Service	What support can be offered?	Contact details
Samaritans	24/7 confidential support line for mental health and any other concerns	08457 90 90 90 www.samaritans.org
MIND	Guidance, resources and educational materials	08457 660 163 www.mind.org.uk
SANE	Out of hours emotional support line (6pm – 11pm)	08457 787 8000 www.sane.org.uk