



# Supporting a critical incident

A manager's guide

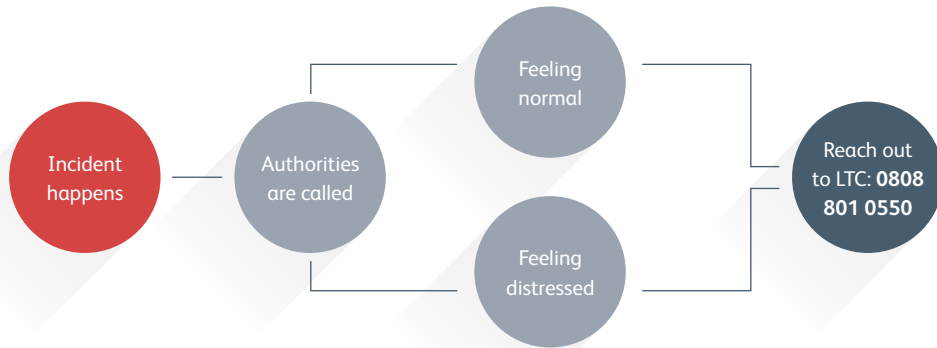
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## The Licensed Trade Charity is working in partnership with Care First to provide guidance and advice for managers to empower them to provide support to team members who have experienced significant trauma.

The following guide gives you some tips on key areas to consider when managing the impact of a critical incident on a member or members of your team. Should you have any concerns about any individual in your organisation, Licensed Trade Charity provide 24/7 expert support – 365 days a year. Do not hesitate to contact us on **0808 801 0550** or email [enquiries@ltcharity.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ltcharity.org.uk)



### How people cope

Being mindful that every individual copes in different ways after experiencing trauma will help prepare you to be effective at supporting your staff. Coping mechanisms are affected by a variety of things, including:

- Previous experience of coping in a crisis
- The view of what happened
- How what happened affected them
- Support available immediately after the event
- Available support later in the process – there is no end date to our support in times like these
- Support from family and friends

Importantly the areas that you can influence are:

- Support from work colleagues
- Understanding and support from supervisors or managers

### What you can do

**Be available:** Ensure your team know where, when and how to contact you.

**Listen:** Give time to listen carefully and exclusively and focus on what the person is saying.

**Consistency:** Be consistent and take up a sensitive and clear approach. Remember that your role is to understand how this person has viewed and been affected by the experience, so put aside your own feelings.

**Be understanding:** Demonstrate that you have heard what the person is saying and be objective in your response. Avoid being judgemental and overly sympathetic.

**Ask questions:** If you are worried there is a disconnect between what you are being told and how the person seems, ask more specific questions.

**Be flexible:** Be prepared to change the person's shifts or certain duties to avoid putting pressure on the person to recover before they are ready. It may be that depending on the incident the site may have to close temporarily.

**Keep people updated:** Remember if there are updates let people know so that they do not feel left out. Also remember to speak to your manager / HR team to let them know what happened.

**Be observant:** Perhaps the most important role as their manager is to watch for any tell-tale signs that the person is struggling. Things to look out for:

- Irritability
  - Touchy
  - Jumpy
  - Snappy
  - Flashes of anger
- Mood swings
  - Low moods
  - Quick and frequent changes in mood
  - Appearing depressed
- Impaired performance
  - Making mistakes
  - Doing less
  - Lack of care and attention
- Denial
  - Refusal to discuss the traumatic event
  - Denies being anxious about it
  - Forced cheerfulness
- Timekeeping
  - Frequent 'over sleeping'
  - Displays signs of lack of sleep
  - Apathy

- Anger
  - Wants to blame others
  - Blames 'the system'
  - Wants someone punished
- Questioning
  - Wants to know all the details about what happened
  - Thinks that they should have done more to prevent the incident
  - That you should do more to help
  - The reaction of other team members

The above are all common responses to the aftermath of a traumatic event. They should diminish over time. It may also be common for your team member's feelings or mood to change from one thing to another or for people to have a delayed reaction.

If you are concerned about a team member because things are getting worse or these signs persist several months later, don't hesitate to contact us.

There is no end date to the support that the Licensed Trade Charity can offer and remember you may experience all the moods or feelings listed here so please make sure you look after yourself too and if you feel you need a bit of extra support give us a call.



If you are concerned about a team member don't hesitate to contact Licensed Trade Charity on

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Care first

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