PROVIDE SOCIAL SERVICES
Contribute to a team approach to critical incident stress intervention

level: 5
credit: 6
planned review date: June 2006
sub-field: Social Services

purpose: People credited with this unit standard are able to: contribute to planning of the critical incident stress intervention; contribute to the establishment of an environment for assisting participants to deal with their responses to critical incident stress; contribute to the critical incident stress intervention; and contribute to closure of the intervention.

This unit standard is primarily intended for a peer supporter or a health professional such as a community worker, counsellor, or social worker, who is working or intends to work in a team situation within critical incident stress management. It does not cover the competencies for a social service worker to work alone, or to work with individuals to assist them in dealing with a post traumatic stress disorder.

entry information: Open.

accreditation option: Evaluation of documentation and visit by NZQA, industry and teaching professional in the same field from another provider.

moderation option: A centrally established and directed national moderation system has been set up by Community Support Services ITO Limited (Careerforce).
special notes:

1. This unit standard may be assessed on the basis of evidence of demonstrated performance in the workplace or in simulated work situations designed to draw upon similar performance to that required in work.

2. People awarded credit in this unit standard demonstrate competence in debriefing and either demobilisation or defusing. Evidence is therefore required in relation to one debriefing and either a demobilisation or a defusing, for all elements of this unit standard.

3. Glossary

  Characteristics and needs of participants may be physical, spiritual, or mental. Characteristics and needs include: age and stage of development, culture, gender, health status including any disabilities, language, sexual orientation, and needs for physical comfort, safety, and privacy.

  Critical Incident Stress refers to severe stress which causes an emotional or physical reaction to demands or pressures which are sudden, unexpected, and due to a specific incident or series of incidents.

  The term culture has a specific meaning in this unit standard. In this context, culture includes a culture defined in terms of age, class, disabilities, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic situation, or ethnicity, including identification with a culture through birth, adoption, genealogy or whakapapa. Culture also includes - the culture of the organisation within which the participants are working if the critical incident stress management is being carried out within that workplace setting; and the culture of the organisation where the critical incident stress arose out of a workplace that is common to the participants.
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Debriefing is defined as "a group meeting or discussion about a distressing critical incident. Based upon core principles of education and crisis intervention ... (debriefing) is designed to mitigate the impact of a critical incident and to assist the personnel in recovering as quickly as possible from the stress associated with the event." (Mitchell & Everly, 1996, p8)

Defusing is defined as "a shortened version ... (of debriefing which) takes place immediately or relatively soon after the critical incident is finished and typically lasts less than one hour". (Mitchell & Everly, 1996, p12)

Demobilisation generally refers to a process of assisting large groups of rescue, or emergency response workers to manage the pressures developed during a major operation. It is often used in the aftermath of disasters and would usually involve an on-the-spot intervention with the group before they leave the scene. The purpose of a general demobilisation is to facilitate the smooth transition from an emergency response or disaster scene to the normal home environment.

Governing legislation relevant to this unit standard is defined according to the assessment context. This may include the Civil Defence Act 1983, National Civil Defence plan and local Civil Defence plan, Accident Rehabilitation and Compensation Insurance Act 1992, Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992.

Participants is used as a generic term to denote the people who have experienced the critical incident.

Peer support is a formalised process in which a trained supporter from the work group provides immediate assistance to a colleague or workmate who has been subjected to a stressful traumatic incident.

Trauma - a psychological trauma is an emotional state of discomfort due to an extraordinary stressful event or situation, which was overwhelming for the person involved.

Worker refers to the person being assessed for credit in this unit standard. The worker may be a peer supporter or a health professional such as a community worker, counsellor, or social worker.
4 People awarded credit in this unit standard demonstrate self care and positive functioning in groups, and are able to relate to difference, as evidenced by acknowledgement and respect for difference, acceptance, genuineness, honesty, humility, patience, and warmth. They use language that is appropriate to the characteristics and needs of participants. They seek to establish and maintain rapport with participants, respond to criticism or negative feedback without defensiveness, and act on changes required to maintain rapport. They demonstrate and communicate clarity about their role within all relationships with participants. They know the limits of their role, function, and competence, and when to refer on to others.

5 All communications are treated confidentially. The scope and limits of confidentiality are defined through negotiation and informed consent, and criteria established by legislation, ethical practice, and service provider guidelines. In the context of this unit standard, sources of criteria established by legislation, ethical practice, and service provider guidelines include but are not limited to: Official Information Act 1982, Privacy Act 1993, service provider codes of conduct, codes of practice issued by the Privacy Commissioner, social service codes of ethics, and service provider guidelines, protocols, staff manuals, strategic plans, kawa or tikanga.

6 In carrying out all elements of this unit standard, actions are carried out according to service provider guidelines. Service provider guidelines include but are not limited to: service provider strategic plans; kawa or tikanga; governing legislation; staff manuals; and service provider protocols. The latter may include a Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) programme.
Elements and Performance Criteria

element 1

Contribute to planning of the critical incident stress intervention.

Range: evidence is required in relation to one debriefing and either a demobilisation or a defusing.

performance criteria

1.1 The need for intervention is identified in terms of the nature of the incident and experience of participants and their characteristics and needs.

1.2 Contributions to planning focus on the choice of type of critical incident stress intervention that is required.

1.3 Contributions to planning focus on the timing of the intervention in accordance with the chosen type of critical incident stress intervention, the operational situation, and the circumstances of the participants.

Range: demobilisation - immediately after participants have been released from the critical incident and prior to return to normal duties; defusing - within 8 hours of the incident; debriefing - within 3 days of a single incident (in a prolonged incident this timeframe may be extended).

1.4 Contributions to planning focus on essential elements of the identified critical incident stress intervention.
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Range: essential elements of the identified critical incident stress intervention - purpose of the intervention, sequence of activities, timeframe for completion of the intervention, role of the worker in the intervention, methods for evaluating progress.

element 2
Contribute to the establishment of an environment for assisting participants to deal with their responses to critical incident stress.

Range: evidence is required in relation to one debriefing and either a demobilisation or a defusing.

performance criteria

2.1 Contributions to establishment of the environment attend to the characteristics and needs of participants as individuals and as a group.

2.2 Contributions to establishing the basis for the relationship with participants clarify the worker's role, function, and any legal responsibilities.

2.3 Contributions to establishment of the protocols or kawa for the relationship with participants are in accordance with the participants' characteristics and needs.

2.4 Contributions to working with participants focus on engagement of the participants in the intervention according to their characteristics and needs, and in accordance with the worker's role, function, and any legal responsibilities.

2.5 Interpersonal skills are used which maintain a purposeful relationship with participants, respond to the situation and the concerns and needs of the participants, respond to verbal and non-verbal communications, and contribute to the identification of group objectives and tasks.

Range: interpersonal skills - attending, clarifying, encouraging, following, questioning, paraphrasing, reflecting.
2.6 Group work skills contribute to identification and achievement of group task(s) and maintenance.

Range: group work skills - identification and maintenance of group values, maintenance of ground rules, leadership, conflict resolution, negotiation, contributions to decision making processes, group building and development, identification of and contributions to group dynamics.

2.7 Contributions to group formation address essential elements of group management.

Range: essential elements of group management - membership of and commitment to the group; ground rules; kawa or protocols for each group session and group relationships; leadership; methods and procedures for dealing with conflict in the group.

2.8 Information sought or contributed is relevant to the objectives and tasks of the group and individual participants.

**element 3**

Contribute to the critical incident stress intervention.

Range: evidence is required in relation to one debriefing and either a demobilisation or a defusing.

**performance criteria**

3.1 The worker's contributions are in accordance with her/his part in the plan for contributing to the chosen type of critical incident stress intervention.

Range: demobilisation - assess participants' well being, safety, and security; provide information; provide opportunity for rest and food; assess needs for debriefing or other services; defusing - introduction, exploration, information phases; debriefing - introduction, fact, thought, reaction, symptom, teaching, and re-entry phases; or stages of alternative model.
3.2 Where a demobilisation is the chosen type of critical incident stress intervention, the worker's behaviours focus on mitigating the impact of a critical incident on participants.

Range: worker's behaviours - calm, self assured, thoughtful, warm, show emotions, not overwhelmed by the circumstances of the critical incident.

3.3 Where a defusing or debriefing is the chosen type of critical incident stress intervention, the worker's behaviours focus on supporting the participants to discuss and deal with their responses to the critical incident stress.

Range: worker's behaviours - calm, self assured, thoughtful, warm, show emotions, not overwhelmed by the circumstances of the critical incident stress or traumatic incident(s).

3.4 The worker's contributions are in accordance with the time limits for the chosen type of critical incident stress intervention.

Range: demobilisation - 10 minutes for information, 20 minutes opportunity for food and informal discussion; defusing - 20-45 minutes duration for the intervention; debriefing - 2-3 hours duration for the intervention.

3.5 The worker's contributions are in accordance with the pace and progress of the group through the chosen type of critical incident stress intervention.

3.6 The worker's contributions are in accordance with communication with and feedback from other members of the intervention team throughout the intervention.
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**element 4**

Contribute to closure of the intervention.

Range: evidence is required in relation to one debriefing and either a demobilisation or a defusing.

**performance criteria**

4.1 Where demobilisation or defusing has been the chosen critical incident stress intervention, contributions to closure focus on assessment of the need for a debriefing according to identified needs and the outcomes of the intervention for individual members of the group.

4.2 Contributions to closure focus on identifying any issues for further action according to identified needs and the outcomes of the intervention for individual members of the group.

Range: further action - follow up assessment, on-going assistance, individual referrals for therapy, individual referrals to other agencies.

4.3 Closure is effected in terms of completion of the worker's planned role in the intervention.

4.4 Reflection by the worker on her/his actions identifies that the worker understands the role she/he played in the intervention.
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Comments to:

Careerforce
PO Box 2637
Wellington 6140

Please Note: Providers must be accredited by the Qualifications Authority before they can offer programmes of education and training assessed against unit standards.

Accredited providers assessing against unit standards must engage with the moderation system that applies to those unit standards. [Please refer to relevant Plan ref: 0222]