

Coping with a Critical Incident

Prepare | Support | Respond

(Supporting our Counties, Clubs & Communities)



IMPLEMENTATION OF PLAN

Effective communication is one of the key guiding principles when responding to a critical incident.

Recommended lines of communication from club to county level:

- Incident reported to Club Chairperson and/or person(s) designated in the Club Critical Incident Response Plan (CIRP)
- Club reports incident to person designated in the County CIRP
- County designated person reports incident to County Chair & Croke Park (if required)

3 guiding principles of a peer supporter(s) (3 Cs)

CARE | COMMUNICATE | CONNECT

The aim of your role is to promote an environment of safety, calm, connectness, self-care, empowerment and hope.

REMEMBER:

You don't have to be the expert! Always outline your role and capacity

These **3 simple yet effective principles** can help support personal and collective responses to any critical incident.

If you do not feel you have the capacity or confidence to deal with such situations...

YOU ARE NOT EXPECTED TO

Potential roles & duties when responding to a critical incident...

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

- Phone emergency services 112 or 999
 - Provide First Aid
- Make scene safe and evacuate members of necessary
- Make contact with relevant support services / agencies if required

LEAD LIAISON PERSON

- 】 Once alerted of the incident assess the situation and level of response required (if any)
- 】 Activate the Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT) within 12-24hrs of incident at agreed time and location
- 】 Recall and initiate Critical Incident Response Plan
- 】 Gather and establish facts and agree actions with CIRT
- 】 Consult with those affected to see what level of support they want (if any)
- 】 With the CIRT, if required, prepare a support letter for members using the template provided (R-3) in the plan as a guide



- 】 Allow a period of 'reflection' before assessing if any intervention is required
- 】 If any action is required plan and approve the ongoing response
- 】 Agree all social media/press statements with Media Liaison Person (use templates provided)
- 】 Decide how and when incident will be communicated to members
- 】 Signpost appropriate supports for those affected (see directory provided)
- 】 Respect privacy and confidentiality at all times
- 】 Record facts and keep a log
- 】 Deal with any other issues as they arise with the support of your CIRT

- Evaluate and review plan following the incident

MEDIA LIAISON PERSON

- With the CIRT, if required, prepare a media statement using the template provided (R-6) in the plan as a guide
- Designate mobile numbers for contact
- If required, organise a designated area/space to address media
- Be mindful of social media and ensure that all information put on social media is accurate and approved by those affected
- DO NOT discuss details of incident with media/3rd parties until agreed statement has been made
- Ensure all media communications are logged
- DO NOT give any facts unless you are certain it is correct
- DO NOT be afraid to say 'I DON'T KNOW'
- Refer to media guidelines before speaking to any media

FAMILY LIAISON PERSON

- Co-ordinate immediate contact with family
- ALWAYS consult with the family to see what level of support they want
- Liaise with family of bereaved regarding plans for attendance at funerals etc
- Provide ongoing support to families affected by the incident – as appropriate
- Organise letter of condolence to the family with CIRT

COMMUNITY LIAISON PERSON

- Main point of contact with relevant support agencies and community groups when required
- Keep key contact details up to date and review annually

Fostering resilience and recovery...

Reinforce Optimism – emphasis post traumatic growth (PTG)
Rebuild character in the club by promoting positive mental fitness
(see GAA's mental fitness pack)

Promote 'healthy coping' mechanisms (see leaflets provided)

Promote that normal club/county activities are maintained as much as possible

Facilitate the access to support agencies by providing a point where people can go to get more information or support

Remember

Individuals and families are central and must be heard first
All information to the media should come through a single reliable source (Media Liaison Person)

The GAA will usually be one entity playing a part in any response to a critical incident

The role of the club is primarily to act as a sign-posting service to the supports that are available

Boundaries should be appreciated and getting the balance between what a voluntary entity can offer as opposed to what professionals can is important. Do not take on too much...

If you do not feel you have the capacity or confidence to deal with such situations... **YOU ARE NOT EXPECTED TO...**

If in doubt – reach out to the GAA's communication structures and supports both locally and nationally

MOST IMPORTANT – CARE FOR THE CARER

Checklist

- Have key roles been clearly identified and tasks clearly outlined?
- Are personnel suitable?
- Is the contact list appropriate and complete?
- Are materials such as press release, letters readily available, for adaption to suit the particular circumstances?
- Are telephone numbers on contact lists up to date?
- Where will the plan be kept and are people aware of this?
- Has each member of the Critical Incident Team have a personal copy of the policy and plan?
- Has a date been set for a review of the plan?

National Support Groups

Contact/Service	Contact Details
Samaritans 24/7 hr	Helpline: 116123 jo@samaritans.org
Pieta House (ROI) 24/7 hr	Helpline: 1800 247247 Text: "Help" to 51444
Aware (ROI) 10am – 10pm (7 days a week)	Helpline: 1800 804848
Lifeline (NI) 24/7 hr	Helpline: 0808 808 8000

FOR REPUBLIC OF IRELAND CONTACT:

Visit www.yourmentalhealth.ie for a 'one stop' list of contacts and resources for both national and local support groups.

FOR NORTHERN IRELAND CONTACT:

Visit www.mindingyourhead.info for a 'one stop' list of contacts and resources for both national and local support groups.

Local Support Groups

Contact/Service	Contact Details

Useful GAA Contacts

Contact	Contact Details
County Health & Wellbeing Officer	
County Chairperson	
County Secretary	
County PRO	
County children's Officer	
National Children's Officer	
Community & Health Manager	



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