When disaster strikes: crisis management - is your company prepared?

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Awareness Raising for Trauma

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Aim

To promote best practice in the planning & training and delivery of supportive aftercare in the event of a major incident.
Six Levels

- What might happen
- How people might react
- How you deal with those reactions
- How you might feel
- How you deal with those feelings
- Partnership issues
Overview

• The Incident

• The Victims

• What do they need?

• Who will meet the needs?
Disaster Action - Support

Our personal experience of disasters has taught us that the immediate aftermath is often made more painful by professionals and institutions who are insensitive and unsympathetic to the rights and needs of bereaved families and survivors.
Roles & Responsibilities

• What agencies are involved in the response to a major incident?

• Discuss responsibilities of responding agencies

• Consider roles in longer term response
Who does what?

- Emergency services
- Coroner
- Pathologist
- DVI team
- FLO
- CSO
Where?

- SURVIVOR CENTRE
- FFRC
- FAC
- MORTUARY
- HOSPITALS
- FAMILY HOMES
Implications of a major incident

- Consider the implications of one death
- Consider implications of multiple deaths
- List possible issues for staff
- Do you have plans/systems in place to respond?
- Have you ever used them?
- Do you have a designated emergency response team?
Concept of Loss
Disasters happen to:

- Anyone
- Anywhere
- Anytime
People Lose:

- Lives
- Property
- Friends
- Faith
Assumptions

• the world is benevolent

• the world is meaningful

• the self is worthy

• belief in personal invulnerability
Fundamental Assumption

A sense of:

INVULNERABILITY
REACTIONS

- shock
- confusion
- helplessness
- anxiety
- fear
- depression
NEEDS OF FAMILY

- PRIMARY - information:
  - what happened
  - how did it happen
  - who was hurt/killed
  - how did that person die
  - was it quick
  - did they suffer
  - who else was there
  - who was responsible?
• Practical needs
  • food
  • clothing
  • warmth
  • shelter
  • travel
  • advocacy
  • real world tasks
• Identification procedures
  • info re procedures
  • loved one to be identified as soon as possible
  • opportunity to view
  • understand the need for post mortem
  • make funeral arrangements
Kegworth

- CEO always visible, appropriate media coverage
- Staff involved in supporting bereaved and survivors
- Support offered for 2 years after the crash
Impact

- Staff were untrained but did a great job
- However they were very distressed by the grief they witnessed.
Holiday Tragedy
Death of a child in Europe:

- Large number of young staff who had experienced same event as the child who died
- Young staff accompanied family to hospital
- Many staff knew the child
- Some staff had tried to save her
- Young staff away from home and family support
Impact:

- Staff had feared for own safety and were traumatised.
- Gave valuable support to bereaved family but were distressed by this.
- Stress of senior managers impaired their decision making skills.
- More holiday makers due imminently.
Individual trauma:

• Tsunami survivor now taking company to tribunal as a result of her `failed` attempt to return to the workplace

• Survivor of 7/7 returned to live with parents as she could no longer travel in London

• Numerous examples of bereaved and survivors struggling to return to work in the first few weeks
Tessa Jowell expressed her concern at the reports that survivors were losing their jobs because of being unable to work due to post-traumatic stress.
Impact of one death

- Large international company with several UK sites
- Incident occurred at a small site
- One person killed
- 5 colleagues on the scene
RECOMMENDATIONS

• Immediate contact with police FLO

• All those present should be contacted and visited as soon as possible

• Staff meetings should be daily

• Make support available to all staff
RECOMMENDATIONS

• Staff should be seen again in one months time (as recommended in NICE guidelines)

• Management should meet with staff and families to ensure accurate information re incident and future employment issues

• Memorial
Reactions from staff

• Staff were appreciative of support provided by company
• Initially supportive of each other
• Keen to express their sadness at death of a colleague
• Longer term they were less satisfied by company response
The benefits of getting it right are incalculable.

The cost of getting it wrong may be incredible.
Crisis Management for Brake
2 March 2016

Radd Seiger
Partner
Practical and Legal Considerations

- The stakes are now very high - business threatening
- Have a plan
- Create a crisis team and develop the plan
- Need one senior person to act as a conduit for information gathering and dissemination and liaising with authorities
- Bring in insurers and lawyers!
Historically HSE have not involved themselves in road traffic incidents
Has been the domain of the police and DVSA (formerly VOSA)
HSE chomping at the bit however to look for corporate failures
New sentencing guidelines as from 2 February 2016 = fines now into £millions
Corporate manslaughter?
Civil claims for compensation
PR and Brand

- Must manage comms
- Need a comms plan
- Speak to your customers and investors - they will be watching you
- Becomes so much easier if you do the right thing for the people
- Manage the press - engage with them proactively and positively
- But be careful to not incriminate yourself inappropriately
Examples - Good

- Alton Towers 2015 and Tebay Rail Disaster 2003
Examples - Bad

- Paddington Rail Disaster and Potters Bar (Jarvis)