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

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

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

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, connection, self-care, empowerment and hope.

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

REMEMBER:
You don’t have to be the expert!
Always outline your role and capacity
If you do not feel you have the capacity or confidence to deal with a situation, YOU ARE NOT EXPECTED TO

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
 Evaluate and review plan following the incident

LEAD LIAISON PERSON

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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
 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/topic 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 prior to agreed statement has been made
Organise official media communications are bought
Do not give any facts unless you are certain it is correct
Do NOT be afraid to say ‘I DON’T KNOW’
If you do not feel you have the capacity or confidence to deal with a situation...

FAMILY LIAISON PERSON

Co-ordinate immediate contact with family
GARPS consult with the family to see what level of support they want
Liaise with family/beware regarding plans for attendance at funerals etc
Provide ongoing support to families affected by the incident – as appropriate
Organize sister of correspondence to the family with CIRT
Main point of contact with relevant support agencies and community groups when required
Keep key contact details up to date and review annually

COMMUNITY LIAISON PERSON

Main point of contact with relevant support agencies and community groups when required
GARPS consult with the family to see what level of support they want
Liaise with family/beware regarding plans for attendance at funerals etc
Provide ongoing support to families affected by the incident – as appropriate
Organize sister of correspondence to the family with CIRT
Main point of contact with relevant support agencies and community groups when required
Keep key contact details up to date and review annually

CARE | COMMUNICATE | CONNECT
Useful GAA Contacts

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

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.

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 adaptation to suit the particular circumstances?
- Are telephone numbers on contact lists up to date?
- Where will the key contacts 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact/Service</th>
<th>Contact Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Samaritans</td>
<td>helpline: 116123 email: <a href="mailto:jo@samaritans.org">jo@samaritans.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pieta House (ROI)</td>
<td>helpline: 1800 247247 text: “help” to 51444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aware (RO)</td>
<td>helpline: 1800 804848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifeline (NI)</td>
<td>helpline: 0808 808 8000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Local Support Groups

<table>
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<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County Health &amp; Wellbeing Officer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Chairperson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Secretary</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>County PRO</td>
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<tr>
<td>County children’s Officer</td>
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FOR NORTHERN IRELAND: