

### Fostering resilience during time of crisis and trauma

Crisis and trauma support is available to help employees cope with the aftermath of disruptive or critical events such as:

- Workplace violence
- Death or suicide of a coworker or family member
- Diagnosis of a serious or terminal illness
- Vicarious trauma experienced by employees working with high risk populations
- Significant workplace change such as reduction in force
- Shared loss or traumatic experience

These events can create significant stress and upheaval for individuals and the workplace. In the wake of trauma, a wide range of reactions is both normal and expected. Trauma has been described as "a normal reaction to an abnormal situation." Some common stress reactions include:

- Confusion
- Fear
- Feelings of hopelessness and helplessness
- Sleep problems
- Anxiety
- Shock
- Guilt
- Physical reactions

In fact, these reactions are an expression of resilience and the ability to recover. Educating employees on these reactions and helping them develop skills to cope with immediate reactions can result in minimizing long-term consequences and enabling them to return to full functioning more quickly.

### Consultation prior to onsite services

Your account manager will consult with you to arrange for the most appropriate response given the type of incident, your company culture, and the number of people impacted by the event so that we can make the best recommendations in collaboration with you. This may include one-on-one support which can be arranged in the 24 – 48 hours after the traumatic event. A consultant can be available onsite, in a private office arranged by the site manager to provide immediate support and strategies for self-care, as well as referrals for further support as appropriate.

Distribution of information is generally the first step in response to a traumatic event. Your account manager will provide you with written materials that can be distributed to employees who have been impacted by the event. Handing out brochures and flyers with succinct information about trauma and 24/7 contact information for EAP counseling services can be reassuring to employees and a means to regain a sense of safety and balance.

### Critical Incident Response (CIR)

The goal of CIR is to empower employees to develop self-care and resilience strategies. It is not intended as therapy nor is it a substitute for treatment of more serious reactions. It is a guided conversation that invites participants to both share and listen to each other as a means of offering support and beginning a recovery process – individually and as an organization. However, there may be individuals who may need further assistance and can be referred by the EAP to a local counselor.

### Onsite continuum of services

The onsite consultant will provide emotional support and education regarding the grief process, trauma reactions and strategies to promote resilience. In addition to one-on-one support, either small group or large group briefings can be arranged. Small group briefings – with less than 10 people – are more interactive and educational. The consultant will facilitate discussion to normalize reactions and provide resilience strategies. Large group briefings, on the other hand, are designed to provide facts and education to help restore a sense of order, recovery and next steps. The consultant will coach leadership to provide remarks at the opening of the briefing and then again at closing to outline next steps and resources.

### What to when there is a traumatic event

1. Call your account manager to discuss the situation, best practices, logistics and any related fees. Please allow at least 24 hours notice if you are requesting on-site services, except in extreme emergencies. Onsite services are generally recommended after 48 hours of the event when the initial shock has worn off and employees are more open to information about the effects of trauma.
2. Be prepared to discuss the following:
  - What happened and when
  - How many people were impacted
  - Contact information for the person who will be designated as onsite coordinator including: phone number, email address, address and zip code of the site
  - Number of hours you would like to have an EAP consultant on site. We recommend at least 1.5 hours for a group briefing, with some availability after the meeting for employees to meet with the consultant individually as needed.

3. If it is decided to have a local EAP consultant onsite, your account manager will arrange this. In addition, you will receive:
  - Topical handouts to be printed and made available to employees, including a flyer describing how to access EAP Services
  - Suitable language to use to communicate with employees about the onsite services
    - ☐ EAP consultant's name and contact information
4. The consultant representing FEI will then contact you to confirm the arrangements.
5. Payment or coverage for these services are stipulated in your organization's consulting agreement with FEI.
6. After the onsite services are provided, you will receive an invitation to complete a satisfaction survey about your experience.

## The Manager's Role

It is important for managers to remember that their role is to manage and supervise employees, not to resolve their personal problems.

### **Key issues to keep in mind include:**

- Being present and available to employees
- Listening to their concerns and offering resources
- Demonstrating compassion without trying to solve their problems
- Being flexible and recognizing that individuals recover in their own time
- Accessing and recommending the EAP

### **Inviting employees to a group briefing – What to say**

- We have asked an experienced EAP consultant to guide us in understanding that a wide range of reactions to loss and trauma are expected, and an expression of the recovery process. The consultant will also be equipping us with strategies for self-care to facilitate our innate resiliency. Please join coworkers for this valuable process.
- For those who may want to speak privately with the consultant, arrangements have been made and will be announced during the group session. Please be assured that any discussion with the counselor will be confidential.