

# Debriefs for staff

## Following a death of a service user



Enabling Assessment  
Service London

Funded through



In partnership with



# Debriefs for staff

## Following a death of a service user



# What Easl Does?

- Easl are a non statutory homelessness team of mental health professionals
- Working alongside homelessness organisations in London to support them in working effectively with homeless people experiencing emotional and mental health problems
- Main thrust of the work is assessments of health and social needs of people who are homeless to enable access to appropriate support
- Structured advice and supervision
- Case Discussions
- Training
- Supportive debriefs following deaths and serious untoward incidents



# Overview of Debrief

- Mindful grounding
- Group guidelines
- Who the person was
- What happened
- Effects on staff
- Normalising grief and trauma responses
- Self care and mutual support
- Liaising with relatives and other services
- Follow up arrangements- usually 3 sessions
- Attending and contributing to a funeral or memorial services
- Strengths as a team



# Mindfulness and Grounding



Enabling Assessment  
Service London



# Guidelines to support debriefing session

- Confidentiality – what can be spoken about outside this debrief and what should stay within
- When we will finish and take a break
- When we may practice grounding
- Being an active listener and let other people finish talking
- As many of the team attending if possible even if some people don't speak.
- Protecting this time from phones and emailing



# Who the person was?

- Personal history
- How long in project
- Health and social issues
- Personality traits inc interests, strengths and capabilities.
- Family, friends , other organisations, associates



# What happened?

- Telling as much or as little as feels right
- Others may contribute and offer more info
- Requires sensitivity by the facilitator





# Effects on staff

- **Physical**
- **Thoughts**
- **Emotions**
- **Behaviours**



# Grief and Trauma

- Talking about and normalising
- Explaining how grief and trauma manifest and what may be expected in coming weeks
- 4-6 weeks as a rough timeline for lessening of these experiences and integration into one's life experience. Grief may linger on and off for longer.
- Consider referring staff to a support service after this period. Easl can advise on what a referral might look like
- How are other service users managing? How might they be best supported?



# Self care and mutual support

- What nourishes you? How might you do more of this in coming weeks?
- Spending time with supportive people in personal life
- Support amongst staff team
- What might team managers put in place to support staff affected in the weeks following?



# Liaison

- Coroner
- Police
- Relatives
- Commissioners
- Senior managers



# Planning Ahead

- Person may not have contactable relatives
- Reflecting on deceased person's strengths, interests and values in the session or often in a follow up session to inform a eulogy
- Eulogy and someone who may want to offer this
- Arranging flowers for the funeral or memorial
- Service users in project may value attending funeral or memorial service. Opportunity to say goodbye and to grieve
- Value of rituals



# Appreciation and Gratitude

- Facilitator feedback
- What strengths and capacities have been noticed
- Recognising and thanking staff for the remarkable work that they do  
(they don't hear it often enough)





Enabling Assessment  
Service London

[easl.org.uk](http://easl.org.uk)

[enquiries@easl.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@easl.org.uk)