

Responding to the Death of a Service User – Management Action Plan

The following checklist details the immediate tasks required when responding to the death of a service user.

Please record as each task is achieved.

STAFF SUPPORT			
TASKS	WHO	WHEN	PROGRESS/COMPLETION
1. Debrief for staff present when service user died/found the body	1. Client Services Manager (CSM)	1. Immediately	1.
2. Debrief for team	2. CSM	2. As soon as possible	2.
3. Offer Samaritans Chaplain/EAP	3. Service Supervisor/Area Coordinator (AC)	3. As soon as required	3.
4. Provide support at funeral	4. CSM/Service Supervisor/AC	4. At the funeral	4.
5. Provide support following the funeral	5. CSM/ Service Supervisor/AC	5. Days after funeral	5.
Accommodation Services only 6. Offer support identifying service user's body (where person is known to you).	6. CSM	6. As soon as possible	6.

General comments on staff support:

CLIENT SUPPORT			
TASKS	WHO	WHEN	PROGRESS/COMPLETION
1. Debrief service users who were present when service user died and/or their friends at the service	1. All levels of staff	1. Immediately	1.
2. Offer Chaplain for support	2. CSM	2. Immediately	2.
3. Roster to enable additional support for other service users	3. Service Supervisor/AC	3. Days prior to funeral	3.
4. Work with clients to organise meaningful rituals	4. Senior Practitioner	4. Days prior to funeral and day of funeral	4.
5. Explain concept of funeral	5. Senior Practitioner/Area Coordinator to organise	5. As soon as required	5.
6. Offer support at funeral	6. All levels of staff	6. Days, weeks and months following the death.	6.
7. Monitor and observe behaviour that is not typical for the service user, record in progress notes and notify Service Supervisor	7. Support workers with guidance	7. Days, weeks, months following the death (and at anniversary of the death)	7.
Accommodation Services only			
8. Debrief service users who lived with and/or were friends with the service user who died	8.	8.	8.

General comments on client support:

FAMILY SUPPORT			
TASKS	WHO	WHEN	PROGRESS/COMPLETION
1. Contact the family (where they were not present when the service user died & after the Police have notified them where the Police have attended the death) 2. Offer Samaritans Chaplain 3. Discuss funeral arrangements with family 4. Provide updates on actions taken e.g. notifying Coroner, Police 5. Inform other service user's families (where relevant)	1. CSM or delegate 2. CSM or delegate 3. CSM or delegate 4. CSM or delegate 5. Service Supervisor/AC	1. Immediately 2. Immediately 3. As soon as appropriate 4. Week of death 5. As soon as possible	1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
Accommodation services only 6.	6.	6.	6.

General comments on family support:

NOTIFICATION (LEGAL)			
TASKS	WHO	WHEN	PROGRESS/COMPLETION
1. Police (Ambulance or Hospital may do this)	1. Staff on shift, otherwise CSM	1. Immediately	1.
2. DADHC	2. CSM	2. Immediately	2.
3. Ensure Coroner is notified (Police role)	3. CSM	3. Immediately	3.
Accommodation services only			
4. Ombudsman	4. CSM	4. Within 48hrs	4.
5. Community visitor	5. CSM or delegate	5. Within 48hrs	5.
6. Office of Protective Commissioner (where relevant)	6. CSM or delegate	6. Within 48hrs	6.
7. Client's Solicitor (where appropriate re wills)	7. CSM or delegate	7. Within 48hrs	7.
8. Public Guardian (where relevant)	8. CSM or delegate	8. Within 48hrs	8.

General comments on notification (legal):

NB Notification of Coroner - Any death of a person with a disability who is a service user of a Disability Service must be reported in accordance with the *Coroners Act 1980 s 12A(1) and s 12A(2)*. (You may find that Police/Hospital/GPs need to be reminded of this fact).

NOTIFICATION (OTHER)			
TASKS	WHO	WHEN	PROGRESS/COMPLETION
1. Director Client Services	1. CSM	1. Immediately	1.
2. Chaplain	2. CSM	2. Immediately	2.
3. Ex staff (where appropriate)	3. Service Supervisor/AC	3. Days following the death	3.
4. Email other services in organisation (where appropriate)	4. CSM/AC	4. Days following the death	4.
5. Neighbours (where appropriate)	5. Service Supervisor/ AC	5. Days following the death	5.
Accommodation services only			
6. Day programme	6. CSM	6. Days following death	6.
7. Physician	7. Area Coordinator or delegate	7. As soon as possible	7.
8. Chemist	8. Area Coordinator or delegate	8. Within 24hrs	8.
9. Friends, regular visitors	9. Area Coordinator or delegate	9. As soon as possible	9.

General comments on notification (other):

DOCUMENTATION			
TASKS	WHO	WHEN	PROGRESS/COMPLETION
1. Incident report 2. Case notes to be completed for actions taken after death e.g. phone calls	1. Appropriate staff e.g. staff member who discovered body/was notified of death of service user 2. All appropriate staff members involved	1. Prior to end of shift (with support as required) 2. As required	1. 2.
Accommodation services only 3. Client Death Notification form (download from DADHC website) 4. Replica Client file – original goes to Ombudsman and replica needs to be made and archived	3. CSM (with help of Senior Practitioner) 4. Area Coordinator/Service Supervisor to allocate staff to make the copies	3. Complete on the day (send within 48hrs) 4. Within eight weeks (try to do within the month)	3. 4.

General comments on documentation:

Debriefing with staff – considerations and thoughts

The information below does not need to be followed in any set order but should be covered in a debriefing session with staff. When informing staff of a service user's death, time and care must be taken to listen to everyone's thoughts and information must be given about what actions are to follow.

Source a suitable location to inform staff and make arrangements for service users at this time, e.g. can they go to day program for an extra day. If the death is in an accommodation service, it may be appropriate to inform staff at the service user's home.

- Explain what has happened and what you know so far
- Encourage and acknowledge sharing/discussion of response to the news
- Encourage discussion of the service user – significant reflections/memories, stories.
- Encourage discussion of other service users – how to inform and support them
- Discuss the service user's family – notification, support, funeral arrangements
- Explain that the Police may require a statement from people (staff and service users) present when the service user died and/or when the body was found – if anyone is required to write a statement talk about the process and what is required of them. Let people know that support is available for this process.
- Professional boundaries – 'give permission' for staff to feel sad/grieve, that they are able to 'comfort' service users at this time
- Explain Coroner's process – that this is a legal requirement and does not automatically mean an autopsy will be conducted. The Coroner will determine whether an autopsy is required depending on the circumstances of the death
- Explain processes
 - i. Notification of others & who will be doing this
 - ii. Client Death Notification (*only relevant where the person was supported in an accommodation service*) – CSM and Snr Prac

need to complete this today and will need to go through the service user's file to get the information needed to do this. Reassure staff that this is not a 'test' of the keyworker or staff, it is a legal requirement. Any requests for information that cannot be easily located will be made to the staff on shift and any feedback about the file itself will be offered at a later stage.

iii. Client files (*only relevant where the person was supported in an accommodation service*) – a replica copy of the client's information for the last 12months needs to be made as the originals will be required by the Ombudsman's Office within next 3 months (does not include financial information). Some staff like to keep busy at this time and may appreciate starting this copying process.

- Discuss supports staff can access – friends, family, EAP, chaplain
- Check in with additional supports staff may need or can suggest
- Describe where to from here, what the practicalities are