

Common symptoms and some helpful tips

Some common experiences following a traumatic event and some tips to help if you experience these.

Sleep deprivation:

is one of the most common symptoms and is frequently more problematic in the early days after the event. This may mean having difficulty getting to sleep or waking frequently. Many people may also experience nightmares which can be quite unsettling or distressing.

Tips:

- Try a sleep App such as CALM, Headspace or Sleepio (many are free for healthcare workers)
- Read a book or listen to a podcast or music
- Try to use the No-Words Traffic Light Tapping that your TRiM Practitioner may have shared with you
- Write down what is on your mind or calling one of the 24/7 confidential support lines aimed at healthcare workers (overleaf)
- Watch a light-hearted/easy watch film/television show
- Try to limit caffeine or alcohol use

Flashbacks:

Flashbacks or reliving parts of the event (or historical events) can be unnerving when experienced and it is really important to know that they are really common and do usually settle.

Tips:

- Grounding techniques such as the 5,4,3,2,1 senses technique
- Deep breathing- concentrating on taking a longer outward breath helps stimulate the vagus nerve and can help calm your senses to bring you back into the moment.

Accessing further support

24/7 free and confidential

For all staff:

Urgent mental health helpline: Call 111 and select 'mental health option'

Samaritans: Call 116 123

Frontline: Text 'FRONTLINE' to 85258

For doctors and medical students:

The British Medical Association Doctor Wellbeing Support Service: Call 0330 123 1245

You okay Doc? Text: YOD to 85258

Support with alcohol or drug misuse:

FRANK: Call 0300 123 6600 or SMS 82111

How to refer to TRiM

Many people fear that talking about what has happened will cause them to 'break down' or 'lose control'. We know that seeking support takes strength and sometimes avoiding/suppressing what is coming up for you can lead to more intense or prolonged effects of trauma. TRiM practitioners are able to support you to share your experience in a safe space.

Your practice manager may refer to TRiM following an incident however you can also self-refer via:

PCNTRIM@NSFT.nhs.uk or via the QR code.

Your TRiM manager is: **Kayleigh Darling**

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Trust Headquarters:

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Norfolk and Suffolk
NHS Foundation Trust

Caring for you after an incident

TRiM (Trauma Risk Management)

For staff working in primary care

After an incident
TRiM video



Online TRiM
referral form



Working together for
better mental health

Working in the healthcare environment can be highly challenging and staff are more likely to have exposure to events which may be traumatic compared to some other working environments.

Sometimes traumatic incidents happen with little or no warning, and can be difficult to process.

Many people exposed to a potentially traumatic incident will have a temporary reaction and will find that talking things through with people they trust is all the help they need. However, some people can experience negative and prolonged effects of trauma, which can affect their work and home lives.

Trauma responses may be intensified if:

- The event challenges your core beliefs or values
- You are experiencing additional financial/relationship/personal challenges
- You have limited access to family or friend support
- You wish you could have done more or something differently relating to the event

Sometimes we find it easier to be more understanding of others than ourselves. Seeking support is a sign of strength, you are not alone.



Common human responses to trauma

It is not unusual to experience any number of the following emotions:

Sadness

Perhaps relating to the event, historical events or even to daily situations that you feel would usually find less emotive.

Guilt

Even when there is nothing more that could be done or be different.

Anger

At the event, at systems, at other people, with yourself or event with the world

Shame

For behaviours or experiencing bigger emotions that you feel you should

Fear

Regarding what happened, could have happened or what may happen next

Feeling numb

Or as though it didn't really happen.

Being on guard/defensive/extra cautious in your actions or decision making

This is a very common response. Please lean on others to support you and provide reassurance where needed.

Many people may also experience physical and cognitive symptoms such as **headaches, palpitations, nausea, muscle tension/pain, memory loss, confusion** and **poor concentration**.

Your TRiM manager/practitioner is here to support you with the responses that you may be experiencing after an event.

Helpful activities over the coming weeks

- Maintaining some of your usual routine (i.e. exercising, socialising, walking, working). However try not to use these activities to avoid thinking about/talking about what has happened.
- Maintaining tasks such as eating and drinking regularly, trying to take regular breaks and caring for your physical wellbeing
- Be open to genuine offers of support and try to avoid isolating yourself. Remember it is okay to take some time for yourself too and have some space if you need this.
- Please be aware of your alcohol or medication use, increase in either of these could delay your ability to process the event.
- Talking with your practice manager, peers and people you trust can help support you in your experience.

Your TRiM manager/practitioner can support you with a confidential space to check in, have a conversation and support active monitoring of recovery after a traumatic event.

TRiM is a FREE and CONFIDENTIAL service, your details are not shared with anyone else without your consent.

Be gentle with yourself.
Psychological wounds, just like all wounds, take time to heal.