

Well-Being Crisis Response: A Step-by-Step Guide

In the unfortunate event of unexpected or threatened loss of life on your team, you may find yourself in the position to communicate tragic and/or sensitive news to various parties. As you navigate this difficult time, this document is intended to provide guidance and clarity. Please use this step-by-step guide to help you in the aftermath of a tragic event.

Also, as you respond to a crisis, please be mindful of the emotional impact this event may have on yourself and others. There are often normal feelings of shock, guilt, and sadness when a tragedy happens. Compassion and sensitivity for all involved, including those responsible for communications, are crucial.

Day One

(For further information on any of the steps described below, please see appendix)

- ▶ **Step One:** Make Contact with Family/Next of Kin (NOK) to confirm details and express condolences. Gather relevant leaders who will serve as core team to take the following steps:
- ▶ **Step Two:** Determine which Mount Sinai team member/s will be ongoing “first family contact” to maintain contact with family/NOK, provide support, and gather information.
- ▶ **Step Three:** Contact the Well-Being Crisis Response Team (WBCRT) Leads: Drs. Jon Ripp, Lauren Peccoralo, Saadia Akhtar, and schedule a meeting (particularly recommended for a loss that directly affects the leader/s themselves or is expected to have a large impact/where multiple constituencies in the System are affected).
- ▶ **Step Four:** Identify Circles of Impact (see next page & appendix for more on Circles) Inner, Middle, and Outer Circles
 - Inner Circle: As soon as possible, via either an in-person meeting, phone call, or Zoom, conduct outreach to the closest communities to the deceased. If connecting in this way is not possible, a carefully crafted email can be written by the direct leaders to share.
 - Middle Circle: Craft an email from the appropriate leader/leadership team.
 - Outer Circle: If needed, craft an email from the appropriate leader/leadership team.
- ▶ **Step Five:** Ensure high-level leadership is aware of situation (WBCRT may take this on as needed).
- ▶ **Step Six:** Strongly consider canceling (or repurposing) any meetings and/or even closing the office or practice (or arranging for coverage for a time).
- ▶ **Step Seven:** Depending on wishes of NOK and press status, plan communications with circles of impacted communities* (consider utilizing Support Offices and/or Marketing team for assistance & see suggested emails in appendix).

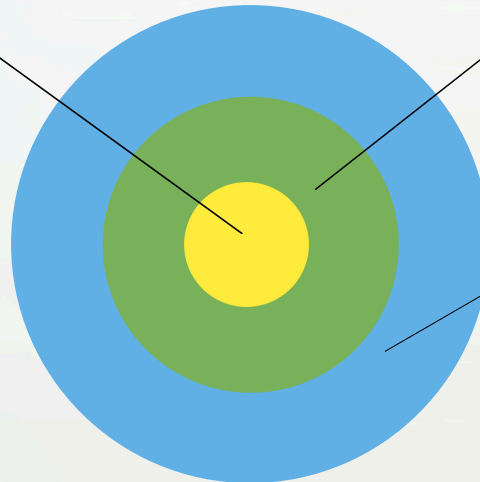
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Circles of Impact

Inner Circle:

Close colleagues /classmates/ co-residents/ lab colleagues/divisions or small departments/affinity groups which as PREP, SEOM/faculty and staff who worked closely with the deceased.

Notify as soon as possible after discussing with family - aim to communicate within 2-4 hours in person or via email



Middle Circle:

Acquaintances/other programs in the school/departments/residency programs/other faculty.

Notify within 12-24 hours via email.

Outer Circle:

Hospital/Syssem: for any event that occurred on any of the Mount Sinai campuses OR an event that is likely to or already garnered media attention, a brief email should be sent to the entire institution without details within 12-48 hours.

Day Two-Day Seven

(For further information on any of the steps described below, please see appendix)

- ▶ **Step One:** Plan for follow-up meeting with WBCRT one to three days after initial meeting depending on circumstances and needs.
- ▶ **Step Two:** Continue to connect with family/NOK and share information and support.
- ▶ **Step Three:** Send flowers/food/messages to family as per family custom.
- ▶ **Step Four:** Continue to support Inner Circle with support resources (share mental health guide and well-being guide), meeting cancellations or repurposing, allow for grieving and plan for absences for grief and funeral attendance. Consider arranging for group processing and grief sessions led by support offices below.*
- ▶ **Step Five:** Reach out directly to specific colleagues/staff that might be particularly impacted to check in and provide resources (Chief residents, student leaders, local unit leaders, etc., are good sources of this information).
- ▶ **Step Six:** Consider follow-up emails if further clarifications are needed or if funeral/service details need to be shared.

First Month and Beyond

- ▶ **Step One:** Continue to monitor support needs.
- ▶ **Step Two:** Plan for memorial (engage Spiritual Care where needed)
- ▶ **Step Three:** Plan for a debrief meeting with WBCRT.

Please Note: For assistance managing news/social media activity, contact the Mount Sinai Press Office at 212-241-9200 or the Marketing and Communications Team.

***Support Offices include: OWBR, CSRPG, STMH, Spiritual Care, and EAP**