



EMERGENCY  
SERVICES  
POSTVENTION  
RESPONSE

# Emergency Services Postvention Response Training



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## About ESPR training

- The training is evidence-based, theory-driven, one day workshop, which has been informed by research conducted by the authors, which explored the perceived needs of first responders in several European countries.

## Target audience

- Active duty first responders (e.g. police, ambulance, fire, and air-sea rescue).

## Aims of the training

- To provide first responders with knowledge and skills to respond effectively after a (suspected) suicide;
- To assist first responders in effective incident management;
- To empower and enable/promote resilience, when responding after suicide; and
- Improve the quality of both psychosocial and peer support services.

## What competencies do attendees gain?

- Recognise why immediate support after suicide is a key component of suicide prevention;
- Help increase their confidence responding to families bereaved by suicide;
- Enable first responders to increase their knowledge, confidence and skills for immediate response and incident management after suicide; and
- Encourage first responders to understand the importance of self-care and psychosocial peer support.

## What makes ESPR training unique?

- An international study was specifically designed (which combined science and the authors 'case' and 'lived' experience) to inform the development of the ESPR training; and
- ESPR is first of its kind internationally.

## How is the programme quality assured? What evidence is the programme based on?

- The training has been informed by a research project conducted in several countries which explored the experiences and perceived needs (i.e. emotional, practical and training) of emergency services staff who have responded to a (suspected suicide), come into contact with the bereaved family and/or personally lost a colleague or family member to suicide;
- Existing models and systems of psychosocial and peer support have been analysed, to help ensure ESPR training is applicable to first responder settings internationally; and
- ESPR training will be continuously updated and evaluated.



## About the research team

- Andrea-Walraven-Thissen is based in Germany and is recognised as an international expert in suicide postvention, critical incident management and psycho-traumatology. She has over twenty years of practical experience of attending critical incidents (including many suicides) and worked alongside first responders in several countries. Andrea has recently published a book, which provides practical guidance, to first responders, on immediate postvention.
- Dr. Sharon McDonnell is Managing Director of Suicide Bereavement UK and based in the UK. She has specialised in suicide bereavement research for over twenty years, and recognised as an international expert in this field. Most of her research has been government funded and conducted at the University of Manchester. She has considerable experience of translating research findings into evidence-based suicide bereavement training. Examples include PABBS suicide bereavement training for health professionals, which is the first of its kind internationally.

## Authors of the Training

- Dr. Sharon McDonnell
- Andrea Walraven-Thissen

## About the trainers

Each workshop is delivered by the two authors who designed the ESPR training for Suicide Bereavement UK.

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