One Page Summary: Critical Incident Response for Managers

During critical incidents, managers play a key role in safeguarding the well-being of staff while maintaining effective operations. Ensuring both their own and their team's well-being is essential for a successful response and recovery.

Key Principles for Managerial Response

1. Prioritise Safety

- **Immediate Safety:** Ensure the physical safety of all team members and yourself.

- **Psychological Safety:** Foster an environment where staff feel secure to express concerns and seek support.

2. Lead with Transparent Communication

- **Be Clear and Compassionate:** Share accurate information promptly while acknowledging the emotional impact.

- **Maintain Calm:** Your tone and demeanour set the example for the team's response.

3. Support Emotional Well-Being

- **Acknowledge Impact:** Validate the feelings and experiences of your staff.

- **Access to Support:** Provide resources for mental health, such as counselling or peer support groups.

- **Monitor Stress Levels:** Watch for signs of burnout or distress in yourself and others.

4. Model Self-Care

- **Set Boundaries:** Recognise your own limits and delegate tasks as needed.

- **Seek Support:** Engage in reflective supervision or peer discussions to manage your emotional load.

- **Take Breaks:** Prioritise rest and recovery during high-stress periods.

5. Foster Team Cohesion

- **Encourage Peer Support:** Facilitate spaces for staff to share experiences and offer mutual support.

- **Celebrate Efforts:** Recognise and appreciate the contributions of your team during challenging times.

- **Rebuild Stability:** Gradually return to normal routines to restore a sense of normalcy.

Practical Steps for Managers

1. **Prepare in Advance:**
   - Develop and communicate response protocols that prioritise staff well-being.
   - Provide training on recognising stress and trauma in colleagues.

2. **Act During the Incident:**

- o Regularly check in with staff to address immediate concerns.
- o Delegate tasks to prevent overload and promote shared responsibility.

3. **Support Recovery:**
   - o Organise debrief sessions to reflect on the incident and its impact.
   - o Ensure access to ongoing mental health resources.

Managers who prioritise well-being during critical incidents create stronger, healthier teams that can recover and thrive in the aftermath of adversity.