



Reflective Debriefing

Supporting people and practice in Long-Term Care

Reflective debriefing is an opportunity for staff to come together to support one other and enhance their learning by revisiting a critical situation or event, such as a death of a resident.

Five steps to reflective debriefing:

Describe the resident or the event.

- Everyone introduces themselves (name, role, preferred pronoun).
- Everyone is invited to think about their memory about the resident: what was the resident like (e.g., funny, serious, angry, thoughtful); what did they enjoy (e.g., activities and food), what did they not like, did they share their values, wishes, anxieties, fears, and other thoughts; and who visited them?
- What rituals and practices were carried out to honour/remember the resident who died?
- How did staff inform the other residents about the deceased? Are there any special practices to support those who were close to the deceased?

Describe the event: what happened, when did it happen, who was working, what did everyone do?

- What happened leading to the death or the event?
- Describe what happened for individuals on the various shifts that led up to the death or event.

How do staff feel things went?

- What went well? What did not go so well? How do people feel about this?
- Everyone should be commended on sharing both negative and positive thoughts and owning them.
- Discuss in detail the decisions made in-the-moment by staff, residents, and care partners.
- What were the original hopes, goals of care and plans for this situation?

What could have been done differently to change the outcome?

- Think about what else may have been possible.
- Any knowledge from previous experiences, trainings, and readings applicable in this situation?

What do we need to change as a result of this reflective debriefing session?

- List key learning points and plan of action to enhance everyone's learning e.g., further training.
- Celebrate good practice that the team engages in.

Who should attend?

- Staff who are willing to participate, those who are forced, generally do not benefit from these sessions.
- All staff are welcome, especially those who have developed a relationship with the resident/s who have died (e.g., direct care and any other ancillary staff and volunteers).
- LTC administrators do not need to participate but should be provided general feedback on the session.

Confidentiality and inclusivity are key!

- What is discussed at the session should remain confidential and not mentioned elsewhere.
- Respect one another and build on discussion.
- Encourage everyone to share if they wish.
- Be mindful of the amount and type of details you are sharing and their potential impact on others.

For more information, check out the Comfort Care Round learning scenario #4 on reflective debriefing at https://spaltc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/ComfortCareRounds_EN.pdf



Take notes below:

1. Describe the resident or the event:

2. What happened leading to the death or the event?

3. How do staff feel things went?

4. What could have been done differently to change the outcome?

5. What do we need to change as a result of this reflective briefing?

Hockley, J. (2014). Learning, support and communication for staff in care homes: outcomes of reflective debriefing groups in two care homes to enhance end-of-life care. *International Journal of Older People Nursing*, 9(2), 118–130.

