

Mental Health

Crisis Action Plan

A mental breakdown is when someone’s mental or emotional health becomes unbalanced to the extent that they cannot carry out their everyday activities.

It is a signal that urgent help is needed. A breakdown often occurs when the stress and pressure the person is experiencing has increased to the extent that they can no longer cope. Although it seems to come on suddenly, chances are good that this crisis has been building for some time.

If a crew member experiences a mental breakdown, St John’s Ambulance’s ‘DR EFG’ protocol should be implemented:

‘DR EFG’

D

Danger

Check for DANGER to the responder



R

Recognise

Is there an imminent risk to life?

- Catastrophic bleeding
- Actively attempting to take their own life
- Active self-harming
- Unresponsive

If safe to do so, provide immediate first aid treatment and call your designated telemedicine provider or RCC (Rescue Co-Ordination Centre).

Is there a medical emergency?

- Emotional Distress
- Panic attack
- Difficulty in breathing / Hyperventilating
- Minor injuries

The Medical officer needs to be notified to treat the patient.



E

Empathy

Show empathy towards the patient and try to understand how the individual may be feeling. Ensure you are calm and gentle with them.



F

Find out their symptoms

Ask the patient what symptoms they are experiencing, both mentally and physically. While this is being done, make sure you are non-judgemental and consider if what you are saying is appropriate in this situation. At times, people can find it difficult to talk about their own mental health, if this is the case and the patient does not wish to discuss their symptoms, move onto the next stage of the action plan where another individual can assist.



G

Give support and reassurance

Support and reassure the patient. Ask if the patient would like to see their head of department or if they would like to go to someone they trust. Ask if the individual wants to access self-help or would want to access professional help.



For more information on additional support, please see our **Mental Health poster (05)**.