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## Crisis intervention programme for hospital staff: Psychological support in the aftermath of critical incidents

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Critical Incidents are potentially traumatic situations during work, being extreme (e.g. severely injured child), like one's private life (e.g. acquaintance with a dying patient) or dangerous (e.g. realistic threat or physical harm). They can lead to heavy psychological reactions and even disorders (mood and anxiety disorders, acute stress disorder, PTSD). In 2013 the Kardinal Schwarzenberg Hospital in Schwarzach / Austria established a 3-level support programme to foster the employee's coping strategies in the aftermath of a critical incident and to quickly provide higher levels of care, if necessary. The levels are (1.) psychological first aid by a colleague shortly after the incident, (2.) psychological stabilisation by a clinical psychologist or psychiatrist within the following days, (3.) focused trauma therapy or counselling within the first weeks. The main emphasis lies on level 1 - psychological first aid. This first response peer support is a structured conversation with a colleague who was not involved in the incident. Approximately 20% of the hospital's staff (all departments and professions) are trained in this. It follows three simple and helpful questions and takes about 10-15 minutes. Providing psychological first aid to colleagues is also an integral part of student nurses' training in their final year. The presentation gives an overview of the three levels of KIMA, of specific aspects of psychological first aid in a hospital, and of the positive effects on hospital staff and mental health in general.

### Biography

Clemens Hausmann is a Clinical Psychologist, Traumatherapist and Emergency Psychologist. He teaches at the Salzburg University, the Upper Austrian University for Applied Sciences, and trains nurses at several Austrian hospitals. He was the founder and director of the Salzburg Psychological First Response Team and has written several books on psychological first aid, psychosocial support by nurses, and psychotraumatology.

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