

# Media Statement



Milton Keynes. 23 March 2005

## ICAS Backs New NICE Guidelines on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

In conjunction with the recently published National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidelines update, ICAS International Holdings (ICAS), the international market leader in Employee Assistance Programmes and critical incident management, has given its backing to the new guidelines on Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and recommends them as the new best practice benchmark for their clients.

ICAS has been conducting a review of its methodologies around this subject for some time now and is delighted that NICE has now formalised this," commented Michael Reddy, Chairman of ICAS. "Our conclusions were the same as those arrived at by NICE, that such processes were not in line either with research or with best practice. Our first concern after any incident is to help stabilise the situation on behalf of our clients and to ensure normal business can resume as a matter of urgency."

ICAS staff deal with the aftermath of 50 critical incidents a month in the UK alone and have worldwide capability including support for the relief activity following the recent Asian disaster, in the wake of terrorist activity, maritime, aviation and rail disasters, armed raids, night-club violence and industrial accidents over the last 18 years. The ICAS Incident and Trauma Management service is a complete offering to its corporate customers with a strong focus on the people side of business recovery.

The new ICAS suite of training materials which will take into account NICE requirements will be introduced in mid-June 2005.

ICAS Incident and Trauma Management Services are grouped under three headings and the key facets of each service are as follows:

### STABILISING

- Individual sufferers need immediate attention and there are times when local management also needs help to normalise the post incident situation.
- In the aftermath of an incident, people need practical assistance to help to reconnect with their ordinary daily lives and more than anything – "information."
- Support is forthcoming from professional psychologists and counsellors who are seasoned individuals with special training and the ability to deal with highly charged emotion.

### ASSESSING

- An experienced professional will be assessing and mentally sifting specific and particular needs of individuals from the beginning.
- This diagnostic part of the service does not become formalised until enough time has passed for individuals to have recovered some of their own natural resources.
- Extreme reactions are normal human behaviour following traumatic incidents.

### TREATING

- In the weeks following the incident, ICAS consultants are focused on facilitating people's natural recovery and coping methods rather than giving specific treatment.
- Sometimes a group of affected individuals will spontaneously come together. ICAS supports such behaviour as long as all group members have been assessed as strong enough to participate.
- As time goes on a range of helping strategies fall under the heading of treatment. Strategies for dealing with depression, emotional numbness, panic attacks and increased substance abuse.
- As some of the symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder begin to emerge, people will principally be helped through Cognitive-Behavioural methods as recommended by NICE.

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