

In case of distress

The topics discussed with residents and family members during advance care planning can be sensitive in nature and may understandably be distressing. In the case a resident or family carer becomes distressed during the Family Care Conference, the following guidelines have been developed.

Distress

- ▶ A participant indicates they are feeling a high level of stress or emotional distress
- ▶ They exhibit behaviours that are suggestive of distress or emotional distress e.g. shaking, uncontrollable crying

STAGE 1:

Response

- ▶ Stop the conversation
- ▶ Offer immediate support
- ▶ Assess their mental status:
 - Tell me what thoughts you are having
 - Tell me how you're feeling
 - Do you feel safe
 - Do you feel as if you could go about your normal day

Review

- ▶ Offer the participant the following options:
 - Continue immediately
 - Continue after a break
 - Reschedule
 - Withdraw
- ▶ If participant feels able to carry on, continue with the Family Care conference
- ▶ If participant is unable to continue, go to stage 2 ➡➡



STAGE 2:

Response

- ▶ Remove participant from discussion and accompany to quiet area if relevant. If the Family Care Conference is taking place remotely, stay connected via video or phone call.
- ▶ Encourage participant to contact their GP or their health provider or with participant consent, contact them on their behalf
- ▶ Provide contact numbers for the Samaritans if appropriate (see below)

STAGE 3:

Review

- ▶ Follow participant up with a courtesy call if they consent
- ▶ Encourage participant to call if they experience distress in the hours/days following the discussion
- ▶ Discuss and reflect with a senior member of staff whether there were any triggers which that led to the incident

The resident or family member should be signposted to support organisations which they can contact.

