

IASP Taskforce Postvention

Meeting held at the XXIII World Suicide Prevention Congress
Durban, South Africa, 13-16 September 2005

Minutes – 15 September 2005 – 16.00h-17.00h

Attendees (per country, alphabetically)

1. Dawn Smith, Lifeline, Australia
2. Sylvie Lapierre, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, Canada
3. Brian Mishara (IASP President), Crise, Montréal, Canada
4. Yukio Saito, Lifeline, Japan
5. John Wren, Ministry of Health, Suicide Prevention, Wellington, New Zealand
6. Kari Dyregrov, Center for Crisis Psychology, Bergen, Norway
7. Onja Grad, University Psychiatric Hospital, Ljubljana, Slovenia
8. Aaron Werbel, Headq. US Marine Corps, Personal and Family Readiness Division, USA
9. Karl Andriessen (Chair), Suicide Prevention & Working Group on Suicide Survivors, Belgium

Agenda

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Follow-up of the minutes of the previous meeting
3. Presentation of the recommendations formulated by the 2004 SPA Conference
4. Introduction of the participants
5. Discussion
6. Conclusions

1. Opening of the meeting

Karl Andriessen chaired the meeting, and welcomed the participants.

2. Follow-up of the minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 27 August 2004 in Copenhagen concluded with an action list of eight points. Following is an overview of what has happened regarding these eight points.

1. To send the list of addresses of the participants of the meeting to them.
 - > The minutes and the addresses were distributed to the participants. Good news: in addition, IASP website now includes a postvention/survivor page:
www.med.uio.no/iasp/html/postvention.html
The minutes of the meetings and other information are available in this page.
2. To fill in the database of the European Directory of Suicide Survivor Services.
 - > The original data were filled in by Karl Andriessen. He needs assistance for the update. Candidates are kindly invited to contact KA.

3. To maintain a notice board or discussion forum in IASP website.
 - > Technically it is possible to have a discussion forum. However, we need an editor. Candidates are welcome.
4. To organise a postvention seminar and to find sponsors and a host event.
 - > Excellent news on this point! The Organising Committee (of which Onja Grad is a member) of the next European Symposium on Suicidal Behaviour has agreed that we can hold a one-day seminar as a pre-event to the symposium. The Symposium is scheduled on 9-12 September 2006 in Portoroz, Slovenia. Our seminar will be held on 8 September 2006. Simultaneously there will be another one-day pre-event, entitled 'suicide: interaction between genes and environment'. Conference website: www.esssb11-slo.org
The members of the Organizing Committee of the postvention seminar are Onja Grad, Kari Dyregrov, Norman Farberow and Karl Andriessen.
5. To keep each other informed.
 - > All participants are invited to maintain communication with each other.
6. To follow-up the WHO/Euro Ministerial conference on mental health and suicide, January 2005, Helsinki, Finland.
 - > Karl Andriessen to ask IASP EC.
7. To increase the number of presentations on postvention and survivor issues.
 - > The Taskforce suggests all participants to submit proposals for presentations when attending a conference.
8. To have postvention and survivor issues clearly announced as a key theme of conferences, and to have more plenary presentations.
 - > Karl Andriessen had brought this point to the attention of Lars Mehlum, and to Lourens Schlebusch who is the Convenor of the current IASP Congress. However, we haven't received a reply and, regrettably there was no plenary presentation on postvention/survivors during the current IASP congress.
Recently the issue was already discussed with Andrej Marusic, the Convenor of the above mentioned next European Symposium in 2006.

3. Presentation of the recommendations formulated by the 2004 SPA Conference

A one-day pre-conference workshop and a half-day conference workshop on postvention were held during the 11th Annual Suicide Prevention Australia 2004 National Conference, 29-31 October 2004, Sydney.

The workshop concluded with a set of recommendations (please see appendix 1).

As it could be useful for our discussions, Karl Andriessen introduced these recommendations to the meeting.

4. Introduction of the participants

- Each participant had the opportunity to introduce him/her self before the discussion was opened. Participants were invited to tell where they came from and their occupation especially in the postvention field.
- It was decided to circulate the list of addresses of the participants of the current meeting.

5. Discussion

Several topics were raised during the discussion that followed after the introductions. Below is a summary.

- There are several open questions, such as: Do we have a definition of postvention? Is, or how is suicide bereavement similar/different from other bereavement? How to make support groups sustainable? How to organise support in remote areas? Outreach towards survivors, e.g., through hospitals and GPs? The roles of professional, peer and social networks in support?
- Norway is setting up crisis teams (by law) for crises and catastrophes. These teams have the possibility of providing necessary acute and long term follow-up for suicide bereaved, as well as referring them to LEVE, the national organisation for suicide survivors. Survivors mostly don't have the energy to contact the services themselves and should be contacted by the teams.
- In Slovenia most referrals are made by GPs.
- Norway has a website for professionals on how to develop crisis plans. The usefulness of such recommendations was in line with experiences in the US Army: a general framework and recommendations seems to be better accepted than direct orders.
- In Québec, Canada, the crisis lines of the 28 suicide prevention centres are the major points of contact. Also brochures for undertakers are useful. Support can also be offered during/after psychological autopsies. Guidelines (in French) were developed for schools. In addition there is a large e-mail listserve.
- Guidelines and recommendations for social networks, peers and professionals have been developed in several countries, with different socio-economical climates. The meeting decided that it would be useful to have an overview of what has been developed, what is available. We can make a call to the membership via the News Bulletin, and via the members of the Taskforce. A subcommittee then can make a synthesis/overview. Kari Dyregrov and John Wren volunteered for this subcommittee.
And maybe the issue of recommendations could be included in the program of the September 2006 postvention seminar?

6. Conclusions

The meeting was rather short, but as with previous meetings it was very useful to hold this kind of meeting during a conference. It allows the exchange of ideas and to meet people who are doing similar work and have similar interests. In addition, the meeting is a platform to browse ideas on how to raise awareness for survivor issues and on how to further develop the postvention field. It was agreed to continue with this format of open meetings to be held during major suicidology meetings.

Action list

Nr.	Action	Responsibility
1.	To send the list of addresses of the participants of the meeting to them.	Karl Andriessen to send the list together with the minutes, a.s.a.p.
2.	To fill in the database of the European Directory of Suicide Survivor Services.	Candidates are invited to contact Karl Andriessen.
3.	To maintain the notice board and discussion forum.	Candidate-Editors are welcome!

4.	To organise a postvention seminar.	Scheduled on 8 September 2006 in Portoroz-Slovenia, as pre-event of the next European Symposium of Suicidal Behaviour. Organizing Committee: Onja Grad, Kari Dyregrov, Norman Farberow, Karl Andriessen.
5.	To keep each other informed of activities.	All.
6.	To follow-up the WHO/Euro ministerial conference on mental health and suicide, Helsinki, Finland, January 2005.	Karl Andriessen to ask IASP EC.
7.	To increase the number of presentations on postvention policies and activities during next IASP Congress in 2007.	All.
8.	To have postvention and survivor issues clearly announced as a key theme of conferences, and to have more plenary presentations.	Karl Andriessen to ask conference Convenors.
9.	To analyse postvention guidelines for social networks, peers and professionals: a) To form a subcommittee b) To make a call to IASP membership and the members of the Taskforce c) To propose a time schedule.	a) Kari Dyregrov and John Wren. Other candidates are welcome. b) Karl Andriessen to contact the News Bulletin and Taskforce Members. c) Members of the subcommittee.

Minutes,

Karl Andriessen