



**PAMBANSANG PUNONGHIMPILAN TANOD BAYBAYIN NG PILIPINAS
(National Headquarters Philippine Coast Guard)**

139 25th Street, Port Area,
1018 Manila

NHQ-PCG/ CGNS

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**PROVISION OF POST MISSION DEBRIEFING OR CRISIS INTERVENTION TO
PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING AMONG PCG PERSONNEL**

I. REFERENCES:

- a. Republic Act No. 11036 otherwise known as the "Mental Health Act of 2019" and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR)
- b. Inter-agency Standing Committee (IASC) Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings, 2007
- c. Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Department Order No. 208 series of 2020 dated 11 February 2020
- d. Memorandum of Understanding between the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) and National Center for Mental Health (NCMH) dated 04 April 2023
- e. 2012 Nursing Core Competency Standards

II. GENERAL:

The Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) is an armed and uniformed organization responsible in the implementation and enforcement of laws, rules and regulations related to maritime search and rescue, maritime law enforcement, maritime safety, marine environmental protection and maritime security. In the performance of its mandated functions, PCG personnel strategically deployed at various PCG Districts, Units, Regional Training Centers (RTC) and onboard PCG vessels/aircraft are exposed to several factors that may challenge their overall well-being.

Mental Health is one of the interdependent dimensions of well-being. During rescue and relief missions, natural and biological disasters and other critical incidents, PCG personnel dispatched encounter operational stress and traumatic experiences that may affect their mental health. The provision of timely, effective and appropriate mental health care is imperative to prevent mental health conditions and/or illnesses.

Relative thereto, the Coast Guard Nursing Service upholds the 2012 Nursing Core Competency Standards where the nurse's role and responsibility in the interdisciplinary

care of clients that empower and promotes safe quality care includes appropriate psychosocial/ therapeutic interventions to render holistic nursing care in any setting.

The nursing care delivery system of the Philippine Coast Guard Nursing Service integrates Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) services in the form of Mental Health Awareness and crisis intervention for all PCG personnel. The promotion and protection of Mental Health and well-being in the PCG setting bolster a personnel's ability to cope with normal stressors and resilience to extreme life events thereby ensuring competent and sustained delivery of public service in their respective Area of Responsibility (AOR).

III. PURPOSE:

This Circular shall prescribe policies and guidelines for the institutionalization of the provision of Post Mission Debriefing or Crisis Intervention to PCG personnel who are involved in critical incidents or deployments, and those requiring support or assistance in coping with personal crises, including communities affected by a disaster as augmentation to Department of Health (DOH) Psychosocial Response Team in accordance with existing Memorandum of Understanding with National Center for Mental Health (NCMH).

IV. SCOPE:

This Circular shall apply to all PCG personnel who require Post Mission Debriefing or Crisis Intervention. Further, crisis intervention may be made available to PCG dependents, civilian individuals, groups and communities served by the PCG humanitarian assistance and disaster response.

V. DEFINITION OF TERMS:

For this Circular, the following terms shall be used as follows:

a. **Confidentiality** – keeping all relevant information related to personal information safe from access, use by, or disclosure to persons or entities, who are not authorized to access, use or possess such information.

b. **Coping** – the process of attempting to actively manage demands that are appraised by those affected as taxing or exceeding usual personal or community resources.

c. **Crisis** – a situation where the individual cannot resolve the problem using previous learned coping mechanism.

d. **Crisis Intervention** – a method of facilitating the ventilation of emotions of an individual exposed to traumatic experiences involving the analysis of priority needs and planning strategies for coping.

e. **Critical Incident** – any event causing unusually strong or overwhelming emotional reactions which have the potential to interfere with work during the event or thereafter in the majority of those exposed.

f. **Facilitator** – a mental health practitioner who initiates the mental health and psychosocial support processing of clients.

g. **Mental Health** – a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to the community.

h. **Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS)** – term used to describe any type of local or outside support that seeks to protect or promote psychosocial well-being and prevent or treat mental disorders.

i. **Post-mission Debriefing** – an intervention provided by MHPSS-trained Nursing Service personnel to PCG personnel who are exposed to critical missions.

j. **Referral** – the process of directing a client to another service provider that requires help/assistance that is beyond the expertise or capability of the current health service provider.

k. **CG Nursing Service Personnel** – a collective term used to describe MHPSS-trained Nurse Corps Officers, Non-Officers, Civilian Registered Nurses, Midwives and Nursing Attendants.

VI. POLICIES:

1. The PCG Command shall value and advocate the importance of mental health and well-being among personnel to preserve their capabilities and potential.
2. The Coast Guard Nursing Service, through the Office of The Chief Nurse, shall formulate, develop and revise policies and programs relevant to CG Nursing Service Personnel (NSP)'s roles and responsibilities in the conduct of post-mission debriefing or crisis intervention.
3. The Coast Guard Nursing Service shall include sets of capacity-building MHPSS training in its Nursing Skills In-Service Training Program to ensure the competency of Post Mission Debriefing or crisis intervention providers.
4. Crisis intervention providers of CG Nursing Service Sub-units at PCG Units/Districts and Regional Training Centers may coordinate and collaborate with trained MHPSS providers of the Coast Guard Medical Service (CGMED) at their respective AOR when available.
5. CG Nursing Service Personnel shall be responsible in:
 - a. Promoting mental health and well-being of their client by conducting mental health-related programs such as mental health education, mental status assessment and the provision of Post Mission Debriefing or Crisis Intervention to individuals exposed to operational stress and/or crisis.
 - b. Observing professionalism. Advocate the client's right to consent and confidentiality of information, address the individual with respect, trust and concern for safety and refrain from any discriminatory acts against them.

- c. Providing a safe and therapeutic environment that promotes and sustains well-being of the client upon recognition of maladaptive coping mechanisms.
 - d. Collaborating with client's support system in establishing plan of care.
6. The conduct of Post Mission Debriefing to deployed PCG Personnel is voluntary and not subject to force. Unit/ Operational Commanders are highly encouraged to implement said program to ensure the optimal well-being of personnel.

VII. GUIDELINES:

QUALIFICATIONS

1. A CG Nursing Service Personnel (NSP) as post-mission debriefing or crisis intervention provider must have:
 - a. At least basic training on Harmonized Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Training conducted by the Department of Health (DOH) National Center for Mental Health (NCMH) Center for Wellness.
 - b. Competence to implement appropriate psychosocial and therapeutic interventions in accordance with the client's requirements.
2. A CG Nursing Service Personnel (NSP) shall conduct Post Mission Debriefing or Crisis intervention to the following:
 - a. PCG personnel dispatched in critical incidents or deployments such as search and rescue missions, disaster and relief operations, maritime security patrol in areas of territorial conflict and other PCG related operations that may affect an individual's mental and psychosocial health.
 - b. PCG personnel with personal crises and require assistance/ support who voluntarily submit themselves to scheduled face-to-face crisis intervention.
 - c. Civilian groups and communities affected by emergencies or disasters at national and/or local levels in coordination with the Department of Health (DOH) as an inter-agency approach.

PROCEDURE

1. DURING UNIT DEPLOYMENT OR AFTER COMPLETION OF OPERATION/ MISSION
 - a. CG Nursing Service personnel and other trained MHPSS providers shall conduct post-mission debriefing upon request of Unit/ Operational Commanders.
 - b. Post-mission debriefing is advised within the first (1st) week after completion of mission to ensure timeliness of the program.

- c. To ascertain the degree of intervention and materials required, assessment must be conducted to the PCG personnel involved. CG Nursing Service personnel should respond to the immediate health needs of the personnel if any.
- d. The PCG Unit/ District/ activated Task Forces shall provide logistical requirements to support the conduct of its unit's mental health services. Materials, venue and other necessary supplies are included.
- e. CG Nursing Service personnel assigned to conduct post-mission debriefing shall facilitate the small group session. An ideal small group has five (5) clients per provider.
- f. Post-mission debriefing activities are not time-bound. Safety precaution protocol for both the provider and client is a priority in the conduct of said program.

2. INDIVIDUAL CRISIS INTERVENTION

- a. A CG Nursing Service personnel shall provide crisis intervention to individuals who require psychosocial support and voluntarily submit themselves to said activity.
- b. Crisis intervention shall be made readily available by the nearest and most accessible Nursing Service Sub-unit to the PCG personnel.

3. REFERRAL

- a. A Nurse Corps Officer's thorough assessment of the personnel's condition during crisis intervention shall indicate the referral to appropriate facility for further evaluation, treatment and management in case of unavailability of Medical Officer in their respective AOR.
- b. Nurse Corps Officer on duty must accomplish patient's chart with documentation of mental status assessment which includes general appearance, behavior, unusual belief or perception, mood and aspects of cognition (attention, orientation, memory). An individual's maladaptive coping mechanism that may warrant further referral should be noted.
- c. After proper coordination, Nurse Corps Officer on duty shall accompany the personnel during referral or transfer to appropriate treatment facility.

COMPETENCY OF MHPSS PROVIDERS

- 1. In coordination with the Department of Health (DOH) National Center for Mental Health (NCMH) Center for Wellness, the following mental health related programs shall develop and enhance the competency of CG Nursing Service MHPSS providers:

- Harmonized Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Training (MHPSS)
- Crisis Intervention Hotline Service
- Intervention-focused Mental Health Services
- Training of Trainers (TOT)

2. The series of mental health related programs shall expand the scope and responsibility of the Coast Guard Nursing Service in the promotion of MHPSS in the PCG.

VIII. RESPONSIBILITY CLAUSE:

The Office of the Chief Nurse, Coast Guard Nursing Service shall ensure the competency of MHPSS-trained CG Nursing Service Personnel and require CGNS Sub-unit's Chief Nurses to submit Accomplishment Reports for future reference.

IX. EFFECTIVITY:

This Circular shall take effect within fifteen (15) days from publication.

X. AMENDMENT:

Any amendment to this Circular shall be approved by the Commandant, Philippine Coast Guard after the review and recommendation of a Committee in the CGNS created for that purpose. The approved amendment shall become effective after publication.

XI. RESCISSION:

All other publications inconsistent with this circular are hereby rescinded or modified accordingly.

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