SUPPORTING SIGNIFICANT LIFE EVENTS

NAME OF THE STUDENT

NAME OF THE UNIVERSITY

AUTHOR NOTE

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Introduction:

The particular assignment discusses the impact of significant life events on individuals. Due to the significant life events, we all go through some critical situation. Throughout the assignment, the researcher has tried identifying such impact of significance life events on individuals. In this assignment, the researcher has also identified group responses to significant life event and experiences to a human being and impact on others in health and social care. Moreover, the particular essay evaluates the efficiency of organisational policies as well as procedures to support individuals and their social networks exaggerated by the significant life events. Besides this, the researcher has also made an explanation of how others involved in the social network may deliver adequate support to individuals affected by the significant life events. The particular essay also analyzes the possible organisational responses in order to support individual experiencing significant life events. The researcher has also provided recommendations for the enhancement of available support in the health and social care organisations.

LO 1: Task 1

1.1 The impact of significant life events on individuals

According to Jackson and Warren (2000), every individual has to go through different types of significant life event in different stages of life such as childhood, adulthood, middle age, old age, dying, etc. The life event can be described as major changes in an individual's life. Significant life events can be both happy and grief based on the circumstances. Some of the sorrowful life events include divorce, the death of parents, and jobless, etc. On the other hand, some of the delightful life events are such as birthday party, job promotion, the birth of new child, etc. (Paykel *et al.* 1969).

The significance life events can make an impact on individual's life physically, physiologically, and socially (Compas *et al.* 1986). Physical responses could rise due to loss of someone in the family. It could turn our delightful world into grief. Due to sorrowful life events, the simple task could seem as intimidating. Moreover, such events affect individual physically, as an individual might feel exhaustion. Physiological responses could make a direct impact on the immune system of the individual. If any individual lost his loved one, then he might feel chest pain loss of sex drive, aches, etc. Sometimes, significant life events

could impact directly on individual's social life. In such cases, individual does not want to be part of the social cultural system.

According to the Kubler-Ross's grief model, there are *five stages* of grieving including *denial, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance* (Hastings *et al.* 2004). The person needs to move from the denial stage, as the people remain in this stage for a long time. Anger becomes the first process of grief circle. In the bargaining stage, individual make negotiation with God and try to make circumstances better. In the depression mode, the individual accepts the reality of significant life events. In the acceptance stage, individual finally could share his loss or situation to someone.

According to the given case scenario, individual leads a well balanced life having a high salaried job. However, the individual face unexpected ill health of his child, consequently individual got tensed about the situation and failed to attend office in time. Consequently, he has to face query from the management of the office due to his late attendance. Hence, such life events indeed make challenges for an individual to cope up the situation in an efficient manner. According to Kobler Ross's grief cycle, individual may feel different range of emotion. However, later, he obtained facilitation from the office management and takes 1 week leave for getting recovered from such situation.

1.2 The possible group responses to significant life events that occur to one of its members

Any individual experiencing SLE could face different types of group responses; these groups could be family, community, the school, friends, social workers, colleagues, and the society. Different responses of groups could affect individuals facing significant life events like going to prison, being a terminal disease, bereavement, etc. (Rabkin and Struening 1976). Moreover, the group responses could contribute to the grieving process either negatively or positively. For example, if any person gets affected by some incurable disease like AIDS then he might feel disturbed, and his motivation level might go down. Hence, family support is needed for such situation. By obtaining family support, the AIDS affected individual could obtain motivation to fight against such terminal illness. In this situation, family as a group provides a positive influence to the grieving process.

The type of care is different for each group. *The family* is one of the most integral parts of the group, which provides adequate support to the individual during the grieving stage of life. For example, if any individual lost any family member then his other family members provide

support to come across such situation. *Friends* represent another group, who provide positive support to the bereaved individual by influencing him to forget about such situation and proceed in life (Headey and Wearing 1989). Sometimes, the *community* also facilitates bereaved person in understanding and accept the loss. On the other hand, *colleagues* also facilitate bereaved person by supporting him in an efficient manner. Hence, colleagues provide a positive influence to the bereaved person in the grieving process. Besides this, colleagues also facilitate individual facing stress in life. The Society also provides high responses to the bereaved individual in order to accept such situation. In this case scenario, the individual has been facing stressful life due to the sudden ailment of his child. However, in this situation, the office colleagues and management provide adequate support to the individual throughout the grieving process.

1.3 The impact for others in health and social care when individual experiences significant life events

Significant life events not only affect individuals but also have an effect on others in the health and social care such as nurses, carers, social workers, managers, support workers, etc. According to Wilhelm *et al.* (2006), health and social care professionals experience the most grief related indications. However, two types of professionals of health and social care sector get affected by the SLE such as one, who had worked in the organisation for a long period and other, who have deep and longer relationship with the patients who died. Nurses and carer in the health and social care service face grief due to the death of the service-users. These health and social care professionals can be affected by the significance life events *psychologically, emotionally, physically and socially.*

Psychologically, nurses and carers can be affected due to provide continuous support to the patients. Hence, nurses and carers often fail to concentrate at work. For example, most of the health workers provide medications, personal care etc. with the lack of concentration which might lead to the intricacies.

Sometimes, nurses and carers have to deal with the dying patient. By working with suffering and dying patients, nurses and carers could suffer *emotionally*, which might lead to sympathy tiredness.

By providing continuous services to the suffering patients, nurses and carers become unable to get involved in their *social* lives. Consequently, such situation make frustrated the nurses and other carers. de Bruin, Parker and Fischhoff (2007) have discussed the strict culture in

the medical and nursing setting, which often affect the behaviour and response of health care professionals.

Most of the professionals of the health and social care services including social workers, support workers, pharmacists have a huge workload on their shoulders. Hence, the continuous involvement into the job role creates *physical* tiredness for professionals of health and social care sector.

LO 2: Task 2

2.1 The effectiveness of organisational policies and procedures in supporting individuals and their social networks affected by significant life events

Based on the type of grief, there are different organisational policies and process available for supporting people with significance life event in the UK. Some of the policies include such as *Bereavement Care (2010), National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE), and Macmillan Cancer Care* amongst other. The policies, procedures, and different standards guide these organisations, which ensure practical and emotional support for the bereaved people. Bereavement services need to be guided by the essential principles including Respect, Confidentially, Respect, Distinction in care, Personalisation and Empathy to support bereaved individuals, death and dying.

Bereavement Care standards (BCS) 2012 policies and procedures include the emergence of the National Bereavement Alliance merging a national forum for stakeholders on bereavement and delivering a national voice on the bereavement intricacies.

Bereavement Care Standards (BCS) 2001 is a collaborative scheme between the Bereavement Service Association (BSA) and Cruse Bereavement Care (Bereavement Care Standard UK. 2001). This policy indeed aims to identify what areas are needed to be evaluated for safe and efficient services for the bereaved individuals. They provide adequate support to any sectors including hospital, care homes and bereaved support group. They facilitate these organisations on practical tools and services. In the case scenario, the individual has admitted his child to the hospital. However, the individual is not sure whether or not his child gets high facilities in the hospital. Hence, the hospital should follow the Bereavement Care Standards (BCS) 2001.

On the other hand, *Palliative Care Funding Review (2011)* policy is for both adults as well as children, who have faced bereavement (The National Council for Palliative Care 2015). The aim of the policy is to enable individual in living lives with possible needs. The policy ensures that patient and family should obtain their needs throughout their last phase of bereavement. It involves symptoms and provision of social, psychological, spiritual and practical support. This policy is for all ages in the society. In the case scenario, the individual needs to have the emotional care support in order to involve in the work process in the organisation.

2.2 Explanation of how others in social networks may provide support to individuals experiencing significant life events

The social networks provide a precious source of support to individual facing significant life events. The social network consists of family friends, colleagues, nurses and carers. These networks indeed provide physical, emotional, spiritual and financial support to the SLE-affected people. Some of the other social networks have been providing adequate support to an individual with SLE such as Compassionate Friends, Cruse Bereavement Care, Miscarriage Association, Lesbian and Gay Bereavement Project, etc. (Davies and Ward 2012). The provision of support needs to be guided by the policies and procedures such as confidentiality, bereavement, accessing, specialist services, etc.

Physical:

Physical support can be conducted by giving physical and emotional support to the individual with SLE. The physical benefit can be provided by the doctors, as doctors make a proper treatment to the patients in order to get rid of them from the ailment. Doctors and other healthcare professionals including nurses, carers provide physical support by treating them in an appropriate manner. Consequently, due to such treatment provided by healthcare professionals, an individual can join in the mainstream life within a short span.

Psychological:

There are some non-profit organisations that provide psychological stability to the family member going through significant life event. For example, The Compassionate Friends is a non-profit organisation whose mission is to provide psychological stability to those family members who have been suffering grieving due to the death of their child at an earlier age (Compassionate Friends. 2017).

Spiritual:

Spiritual support can be provided to the individual with SLE by the family members, the faith community, etc. In this process, a holistic approach is established in an efficient manner. Spiritual support is needed for obtaining a sense of hope for the bereaved, equanimity and peace. Moreover, such practice indeed facilitates in stabilising the individual bereaved.

Financial:

Financial support can be obtained from different non-profit organisations, charitable organisations, local government, etc. (Kendler, Kuhn and Prescott 2004). Apart from the external source of the financial source, an individual can also obtain financial support from the internal sources including family members, colleagues, friends, etc. (DeLongis *et al.* 1982). Financial support is needed in order to make balance in life. In some cases, financial support is needed to a family due to the sudden death of an earning member.

In the case scenario, the individual needs mental strengths in order to be stabilised. For getting rid of mental stress created due to the child's illness, the individual needs physical support as well as psychological support for upholding the enhanced performance at the workplace. The individual gets physical support from the management and colleagues, which indeed facilitates him in obtaining mental stability.

2.3 The suitability of external sources of support for those affected by significant life events

The term "Referral" can be defined as a request to a consultant or physicians in order to treat problems of a patient. Sometimes, a referral is needed for getting rid of issues. Some of the external sources of support are such as Blind Support Association, The Deaf Society, The Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), Macmillan Cancer Care, etc. (Fischhoff *et al.* 2000).

Based on the requirement, the external sources facilitate individual in providing physical and mental strengths. According to Macmillan Cancer Care support, a need assessment should be provided to the individual to ensure his/her emotional, psychological and physical and spiritual needs in an appropriate manner (Macmillan Cancer Support 2015).

Some of the health care agencies including Macmillan Cancer Care and Cruse Bereavement Care provide adequate support individuals and dying person to die with dignity and respect (Macmillan Cancer Support 2015). Moreover, these external sources also support the bereaved individual based on person's requirement and preferences.

These external sources of care support indeed provide physical and psychological support to the individual facing significant life event. Sometimes, faith community provides the spiritual support to the individual. Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) is an external source of support for every individual losing his sight or who is blind or partially sighted. RNIB provides practical and emotional support to the individual in order to facilitate them facing the future with confidence (Rnib.org.uk. 2017). Hence, it is a kind of physical support provided by such external sources. In the provided case scenario, the individual obtains physical facilitation from the external sources like organisation. The organisation provides 1 week of leave in order to gain emotional stability in an efficient manner.

LO 3: Task 3

3.1 The possible organisational responses to the need to support individuals experiencing a significant life event

The policies and procedures guide the individual having a significant life event. The organisational responses relating to bereavement service is guided by the specific principles including communication, informed choice, confidentiality, respect and dignity with respect to individual's beliefs, preferences and culture (Grob 1995). It is an imperative factor that the organisation should identify different needs of the individual such as empathy and respect. Confidentiality needs to be put in the service in order to ensure a quality of service relating to the support for individuals experiencing significant life events.

A person experiencing SLE seek support from his social network, one-to-one support, support group, critical responses, routines, respect for rituals, adoptions to the service. Among these events, critical incidents are the most challenging events, as it has the potentiality in to create noteworthy human anguish and can engulf individual's usual adaptive coping mechanism (Pargament *et al.* 1990). Organisations need to focus on providing additional support to those individuals, who have experienced the critical incident. Some of the critical responses are such as follow-up process, diffusing, critiquing and extra support sections (Suedfeld and Bluck 1993). The prime beneficial aspect for providing such critical

responses is to facilitate individuals in order to return to their work practice as quick as possible so that individual could not face post-traumatic stress. If an organization fails to provide such quick responses to the individual seeking critical responses, then individuals may face intricacies in returning to the mainstream work process (Stuckey 2001). In the given case scenario, the organisation provides critical responses to the individual, who gets stressed mind due to the sudden ailment of his child. The organisation notices the late arrival of the individual in the office. After analysing the situation, the organisation provides 1 week leave to reduce stress out of mind and deliver good performance at the workplace.

3.2 Reflect on own personal contributions to the support of individuals experiencing significant life events

In my role as a team leader in an organisation, I often have to face a different challenging situation in managing my team members' performance. Once, a skilled group member was not able to deliver his performance in the project due to some significant life event. At the initial stage, the particular group member was not ready to disclose his situation causing him grief. When I noticed that a skilled employee is unable to deliver performance in the team for 3 consecutive months, I called him and asked him about his problems. In reply, he said that his mother had gone through a check-up process and doctor had identified that his mother is a patient of the first stage of cancer.

After listening to such pathetic condition, I tried to motivate him saying that his mother is at first stage of cancer and there is a huge chance of curing her in an efficient manner. I also named Macmillan Cancer Care and suggested him to contact the organisation in order to obtain enhanced care services for his mother. However, I was emotionally touched by such pathetic news. I had full faith that his mother would be treated properly and would get cured very soon. I provided him 2 weeks leave so that he could be able to check up her mother in an efficient manner. After few days, he said that her mother is recovering fast. Consequently, after some days, he started delivering good performance as usual. From this incident, I understand that critical response is very important for returning any individual to mainstream work process.

3.3 Recommendations for improving the support available in a health and social care organisation for individuals and their social networks when affected by significant life events.

First, the care organisations need to follow the policies and procedures in order to provide adequate support to the individual seeking critical responses. In policies, it should be mentioned how staffs should support the individual with a significant life event. Organisations need to mandate training for HR managers, professionals, and line managers in order to teach them how to deal with any person going through grieving situation. Moreover, the organisation should provide a need assessment of bereavement to understand whether or not grief causes loss to the individual. Moreover, the organisation could arrange training for staffs to provide a better understanding of the need assessment.

The improvement of support is largely dependent on the culture and management style of the organisation. If an organisation is guided by laws and regulations, then it becomes easier for the individuals to obtain high-class care support in an efficient manner. Moreover, information sharing is another noteworthy process to gain knowledge on the need assessment. Sometimes, it is imperative to provide support at the time of diagnosing individuals. Sometimes, organisations like Macmillan Cancer Care provide support to the family member after the death of family member due to cancer.

Conclusion:

It can be concluded that significant life events (SLE) indicate noteworthy aspects in the health and social care sector. The particular assignment has explained and investigated the impact of significant life events on individual and others. The researcher has discussed some of the policies and procedures available for the individual experiencing significant life events. Moreover, the particular paper also provides the in-depth discussion on the external sources available for the individual seeking critical responses. The researcher has also provided own reflection on the care service process. Some recommendations have been discussed in the assignment in order to enhance the organisational performance in providing care service to the individual going through grieving situation.

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