

Carole

58, Consultant



What happened?

Carole is on call during a busy December evening. The unit has been particularly busy and there are bed shortages.

- ! Carole was told the Transport team are bringing in a patient from a general hospital in the region.
- ! Carole admitted the patient to PICU. The patient was gravely unwell and was rushed into theatre.
- ! The anaesthetist phoned Carole to inform her that the patient had died in theatre.

And then?

- ✓ The anaesthetist told Carole she did all that she could to save the patient.
- ✓ Carole took some time out by walking to the canteen. She bumped into her PCC colleague, Anika, on the way.
- ✓ Anika asked if Carole was OK, and Carole burst into tears.
- ✓ Anika took Carole to the canteen and they had a hot drink.
- ! Carole felt uneasy crying in front of Anika, a much younger and more junior colleague.
- ✓ Anika reassured Carole that it is okay to show emotion, and proceeded to listen to Carole.
- ✓ Carole went back to unit, feeling cared for after talking things over with Anika.
- ✓ Carole was then able to complete her shift calmly. When she got home, she was able to tell her husband about it and had a good night's sleep.



How to improve

- ↑ PCC Staff could run **debriefs** to help them work through challenging and upsetting events. It's important that all those involved in challenging events get an opportunity to reflect on them and understand what happened.
- ↑ It's important that everyone feels able to **share their emotions**. Support can come from any member of the PCC team, regardless of their role or age.
- ↑ It can be really helpful to everyone on the unit when more senior colleagues show their **vulnerability** in this way.
- ↑ **Listening** without judgement can make all the difference.