



The Role of the Support Person

The Support Person

The support person's role is to be present to offer support to the reporting or responding party. They can be present at the time of interviews as support. They do not have a right to take part in the investigation, nor can they offer opinion or information regarding the investigation. They cannot be either a reporting or responding party. They may suggest that an interview be paused if the interviewee needs a break, is too distressed or for any other genuine reason.

The support person can withdraw from the role at any time.

The support person can seek support for themselves for any reason, if they find themselves distressed or upset or if they find the role and information they have, due to their role, is difficult for them to manage. Don't forget that supporting someone who has suffered a traumatic event can be traumatic for support people. Everyone involved in the process; reporting party, responding party, support people, investigators, staff and College Council are required to keep all information in the informal report or formal report and investigation confidential. You are encouraged to seek further support at any time from College Respectful Relationship Officers should you need it.

How to support someone who is considering making a report

Many College members have done first responder training to help them understand how to best approach and support someone who is considering their options after a traumatic event. This includes discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, assault, indecent assault and sexual assault. Remember ALGEE;

- Approach, assess, assist in any crisis -
- Listen non-judgementally
- Give support and information -
- Encourage professional supports
- Encourage other supports

The support person needs to understand that they are not a counsellor and their role is help the person access professional support when and if they feel they need it. As a support person, it is useful to ask the person how they can be assisted and allow them to be in control of what action they take.

Sometimes people will talk about previous traumatic experiences when they're intoxicated. In this case make sure they're safe, don't encourage further disclosures and get them to rest and sleep. It possible that they may be very embarrassed by their behaviour when intoxicated, however follow up after any disclosures the following day, remember ALGEE.