

# MOA LEARNING SESSION:

## Skillfully Responding to Distress

December 2, 2023      Event Summary

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On December 2, 18 MOAs and office managers gathered at the SND Division office to build their skills in working with difficult patients and caring for themselves during and after these difficult encounters.

Session goals were:

- To learn de-escalation skills during a challenging patient encounter.
- To learn how to respond appropriately in stressful MOA situations.
- To learn how to manage our own self-care after a challenging patient encounter.
- To foster a sense of safety and connectedness amongst MOA attendees.



100% of  
participants  
learned new  
skills to help  
better support  
patients in  
distress

# KEY LEARNINGS

A facilitator from Crisis Centre BC shared a presentation and led a case study discussion about working with people in distress.



[View Presentation Slides](#)



## The nervous system response to distress

- Hypoarousal, hyperarousal and optimal level of functioning
- Factors that affect distress include internal and external factors, previous experiences, traumatic events and more
- Stress response can affect multiple systems: brain, gut, immune system and more



[Mind the Bump](#)

## Responding to distress

- STOP: Stop and pause, take a few breaths, observe yourself and the situation, proceed thoughtfully
- Trauma-informed approach: offer presence, not solutions; validate; accept unpredictability
- De-escalation: safety, validation, planning
- Support yourself: set boundaries, notice your needs and reactions, remember you can't solve everything



[STOP](#)



[Empathy](#)



[It's Not About the Nail](#)



Surrey-North Delta  
Division of Family Practice  
An FPSC initiative

# SESSION EVALUATION

Session highlights included boundary-setting, learning how the brain responds to distress, and developing de-escalation tools.

100%

Learned new ways of taking care of their own mental health (self-care) when in a state of distress.

Have a better understanding of how to set boundaries using the “Yes, and” approach.

100%

100%

Felt more connected or much more connected to other MOAs in the community as a result of this event.