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**An Evaluation of the Process Impact and Outcome of
a Debriefing Programme**

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requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
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Psychology
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**Sharon Leadbetter
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ABSTRACT

Most people will be exposed to some form of traumatic incident during their lifetime. These traumatic incidents can be devastating for those involved and could lead to long-term psychological problems. The difficulty in dealing with these traumatic incidents, and preventing occupational stress, (especially in high-risk occupations) led to the development of psychological debriefing.

The evaluative literature on debriefing has produced mixed findings on its effectiveness. To date most of the literature finds debriefing to have minimal or no effect on minimising the psychological morbidity associated with critical incidents, such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). However, there are many methodological and implementation issues in the evaluative research into debriefing, which need to be addressed.

The present study was intended to collect baseline data on the effectiveness of the debriefing programme at a mental health unit. The 18 participants were given a questionnaire that contained several measures examining, attitudes, knowledge and experience of debriefing, as well as measures assessing psychological and physical health, and job satisfaction.

Independent samples t-tests revealed a strong significant relationship between knowledge and debriefing status. The present study revealed the importance of process and impact in the design and implementation of a debriefing programme. Future research should examine the process and impact issues raised in the present study using a larger sample size.

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