

After Action Report  
Murder and Suicide - NOVA Group Crisis Intervention  
Huntsville Health Care Center, Huntsville, TX  
8 January 2012

On 21 January 2012 there was a murder suicide at the Huntsville Health Care Center in Huntsville, Texas. This is the report of the event published in the Houston Chronicle:

The Huntsville Item is reporting that two shooting deaths over the weekend at a local nursing home have been ruled a murder-suicide.

At about 11 a.m. Saturday, Frank Murray, 82, walked into a local nursing home where his wife, Haroldine Murray, 81, was a resident and shot her. He then turned the gun on himself, Huntsville police said.

Officers found Mr. Murray dead at the nursing home, located at the corner of Milam Street and Old Houston Road. Mrs. Murray, still alive when officers arrived, was transported by Life Flight to Memorial Hermann Hospital in Houston for treatment. She died Saturday.

Kent Lucas is a NOVA trained chaplain and substance abuse counselor, who lives in Huntsville. On 2 February he was having a meeting with a detective who was working with the nursing home shooting. The detective mentioned that a number of the staff at the nursing home was having difficulty dealing with the situation and several of the staff members had resigned their positions.

When the detective realized that Kent Lucas had NOVA, the possibility of a NOVA team assisting the staff at the nursing home was discussed. Kent Lucas contact me and the detective contacted Lisa Anderson, the Victim's Assistance Coordinator at the Huntsville Police Department. The Nursing Home Director was supportive of the idea of a NOVA team and on 6 February the decision was made to deploy a team.

**Planning:**

- Although desiring a NOVA team, the Nursing Home Director indicated that there was no funding available. The Texas Baptist Chaplaincy (BGCT) Director, Bobby Smith, agreed to provide funding. Cost would be minimized by using NOVA trained people close to the event. Kent Lucas lived in Huntsville, and I was visiting family close to Huntsville. We anticipated that we might be able to get someone else from the Beaumont area.
- I contacted the Texas NOVA Region Coordinators in the Houston Region. Dion Ainsworth worked the issue of getting additional team members. KathleenVonFeldt from Lumberton, TX was available to be a part of the team.

- I met with Kent Lucas in Huntsville on the afternoon of 6 February to do additional planning. Kent was coordinating the logistical support on site. We came up with this planned schedule:
  - 0900 Team assembles at the office of Kent Lucas and prepares to go to nursing home (approximately 10 minutes distance from his office).
  - 1000 Conduct Group Crisis Intervention with staff at Nursing Home.
  - 1200 Lunch with team members. Goal to review events of morning and discuss plans for the afternoon.
  - 1330 Conduct Group Crisis Intervention with staff at Nursing Home.
  - 1500 Meet back at the office of Kent Lucas for informal AAR and discuss any other relevant issues.

### **Deployment of NOVA Team**

- The team members met as planned at 0900 at Kent Lucas' office. These included:
  - Dan Franklin, Coordinator of Texas Crisis Resiliency Team
  - Kent Lucas, Substance Abuse Counselor and Chaplain
  - Kathleen VonFeldt, Crisis Responder from Beaumont area
  - Lisa Anderson, Victim's Assistance Coordinator, Huntsville Police Department
 Lisa Anderson is not NOVA trained, but had been working with the nursing home and was a great assistance to the NOVA team.
- The 1000 Group Crisis Intervention went as planned. This was the shift that worked the death and cleaned up the room. Before the meeting the nursing home Director indicated that he would like to meet with us at 1300.
- The NOVA team had lunch at a nearby restaurant and discussed issues related to the events of the morning.
- At 1300 we met with the director and his administrative staff. We emphasized that we would not reveal any content of the morning session. The director was concerned if he and the staff were doing enough. The director mentioned that he had also brought in local ministers to assist and a psychologist. We affirmed what they had done and that this should be the last "formal" intervention with the staff. These elements were discussed for the way ahead:
  - Be prepared for staff members to express anger. It is a normal part of the process of dealing with a traumatic event.
  - Staff members will continue to have issues related to this event. The administrative staff needs to continue to be aware that staff members will react differently.
  - A list of local resources for additional support was given to the administrative staff. This list was also given to participants of the morning Group Crisis Intervention.

- Kent Lucas will check back with the nursing home director and staff. He will be available to provide additional assistance as needed and appropriate.
- The NOVA team was available for an afternoon Group Crisis Intervention, but this did not develop. The second shift was coming on at that time and they were not directly involved in the events surrounding the murder – suicide.
- After the meeting with administrative staff and deciding that no one else was coming for another session, we departed the nursing home and met back at Kent Luca’s office. We took care of some administrative details and had a brief discussion on the events of the day.
- COST: As planned we were able to keep the expenses low for the event by utilizing NOVA trained personnel in the general area. Expenses were:
 

Mileage for team members:	\$145.41	(262 miles at reimbursement rate .555)
Meals for team members:	\$ 41.13	
Total:	\$196.54	

**POSITIVES:**

- Because of Kent Lucas’ involvement in the community, the logistical support was excellent.
- The morning Group Crisis Intervention went very well. It will serve as a catalyst to the emotional and spiritual healing of staff members.
- The meeting with the Administrative Staff was outstanding. The Nursing Home Director is very concerned about the impact of this event on his staff and this meeting helped affirm that he was doing many positive things to address the issue. It also laid a plan to continue to work with the impact of this event on the staff.
- This event emphasized the need for a NOVA Crisis Response Team in Huntsville. There had already been some preliminary plans for a NOVA Basic Course in Huntsville. This reinforced the need and resulted in a Basic Course being scheduled for 22-24 May 2012.

**IMPROVE:**

- The Group Crisis Intervention needed to be done closer to the event. This was approximately two weeks after the event. The reason it was not done earlier is that there was not an awareness of the availability of a NOVA Crisis Response Team.

**CONCLUSION:**

While the NOVA Group Crisis Intervention needed to be done sooner, when the nursing home director became aware of the availability of the resource he acted quickly to utilize it. The planning went very well. The Group Crisis Intervention went very well and the afternoon session with administrative staff was very valuable. We recognize that the staff of the nursing home will continue to deal with this issue. Local resources are prepared to assist.

This event also served as a catalyst for scheduling the NOVA Basic Course in Huntsville and establishing a NOVA Crisis Response Team in Huntsville.

Dan Franklin  
Texas Crisis Resiliency Team Coordinator