

## **Oxfordshire Bereavement Support during Covid-19: A guide for professionals**

The Covid-19 pandemic has been a traumatic time for many people but especially for families who have lost loved ones due to the disease. Covid-19 deaths are often very rapid and due to the nature of the disease often families have been restricted in their access to say farewell both at the time of death and during the post death period including funerals. It is likely then that many people suffering bereavement will have not been able to draw on the types of support which often accompanies death.

Some people in distress and grieving will approach primary care services including GPs and community nurses who will have experience of dealing with bereavement. Many of the usual routes of additional support have increased their ability to deal with the COVID response and there are been some additional services added. Remember that many bereaved people just want the opportunity to talk without recourse to specialist services and creating the space for them to do this is all that is requires. Age UK Oxfordshire has a Bereavement Support Guide [“How To Help”](#) with helpful advice on how to support someone and SeeSaw has a guide on [Supporting children and young people](#).

This guide provides information about signposting to services during the pandemic and links to resources and training for professionals. It complements the public facing list of Oxfordshire Bereavement Support Services during Covid-19.

\* denotes services which can provide information in other languages and formats

### **Key open access bereavement support services are as follows:**

#### **CRUSE Bereavement Care, Oxfordshire**

Cruse continues to deliver bereavement support for adults via trained volunteers. All face to face activity is suspended but support is offered via telephone and video calls. Self-referral via 01865 245398 (10am -1pm weekdays) or email [oxfordshire@cruse.org.uk](mailto:oxfordshire@cruse.org.uk)

Cruse services are open to anyone aged 18+. This is a tier 2, volunteer led service. People with complex needs will normally be more appropriately referred to a tier 3 service.

#### **SeeSaw, Grief Support for Children and Young People in Oxfordshire**

Support for children and young people (aged 18 and under) is being provided by telephone and email. Families can email [info@seesaw.org.uk](mailto:info@seesaw.org.uk) to receive a call back.

## Bereavement Support Framework during Covid-19

Patient group	Type of support	Population & level of need	Support provided by	Provision during Covid-19
1	Information about bereavement and sources of support	<b>All bereaved people</b> Low level of need	Verbal, written and on-line information provided by professionals involved in end of life care, registrars and others providing day to day care to families.	<b>Local</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public facing list of Oxfordshire Bereavement Support Services</li> <li><a href="#">The Oxfordshire bereavement guide</a></li> <li>Age UK booklet "<a href="#">How To Help</a>"</li> <li>Oxford Health <a href="#">Coping with Coronavirus Bereavement</a></li> </ul> <b>National</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National bereavement partnership <a href="#">Covid-19 Hub</a> 0800 448 0800</li> <li>National bereavement services web resources (see directory)</li> </ul>
2	Non-specialist support	<b>Some bereaved people</b> Those seeking support or at risk of developing complex needs	2.1 Social support: self-help groups, faith groups, befriending and community groups	<b>Local</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local faith leaders</li> </ul> <b>National</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Age UK <a href="#">advice line</a> 0345 450 1276</li> <li>National peer support networks operating virtually (see directory)</li> </ul>
			2.2 Trained bereavement support workers	<b>Local</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Cruse 1:1 support by phone or video</a></li> <li><a href="#">See Saw</a> for children and families</li> <li><a href="#">Katharine House Hospice</a>, <a href="#">Sobell House Hospice</a>, <a href="#">Sue Ryder</a> and <a href="#">Helen and Douglas House</a> bereavement services operating by phone for eligible people</li> </ul> <b>National</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National support lines and online support (see directory)</li> </ul>
3	Specialist interventions	<b>A minority of bereaved people</b> Those with complex needs or prolonged/complicated grief. High level of need	3.1 Specialist bereavement counsellors / practitioners	<b>Local</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Katharine House Hospice</a>, <a href="#">Sobell House Hospice</a>, <a href="#">Sue Ryder</a> and <a href="#">Helen and Douglas House</a> bereavement services operating by phone for eligible people</li> </ul> <b>National</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sue Ryder <a href="#">online bereavement counselling</a></li> </ul>
			3.2 Specialist mental health support / psychological support for those with mental health problems which pre-date or are triggered by their bereavement	<b>Local</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Referral to <a href="#">TalkingSpace Plus</a> who will escalate as appropriate</li> </ul>

Based on the National Bereavement Alliance framework for bereavement support available at <https://nationalbereavementalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/A-Guide-to-Commissioning-Bereavement-Services-in-England-WEB.pdf>

## Resource directory

### Practical advice on what to do after a death

<b>UK government guidance:</b> <a href="http://www.gov.uk/after-a-death">http://www.gov.uk/after-a-death</a>
<b>National Association of Funeral Directors:</b> <a href="https://nafdcovid19.org.uk/advice-for-the-public/">https://nafdcovid19.org.uk/advice-for-the-public/</a>
<b>Oxfordshire County Council:</b> <a href="#">The Oxfordshire bereavement guide</a> *

### Bereavement: Covid specific

	Patient Group
<b>Age UK:</b> Guidance on funerals <a href="https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/coronavirus/coronavirus-guidance/arranging-a-funeral-coronavirus-advice/">https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/coronavirus/coronavirus-guidance/arranging-a-funeral-coronavirus-advice/</a>	1
<b>At a loss:</b> Coronavirus bereavement resources <a href="https://www.ataloss.org/Pages/FAQs/Category/coronavirus-pandemic">https://www.ataloss.org/Pages/FAQs/Category/coronavirus-pandemic</a>	1
<b>CRUSE:</b> Coronavirus bereavement information and resources <a href="https://www.cruse.org.uk/get-help/coronavirus-dealing-bereavement-and-grief">https://www.cruse.org.uk/get-help/coronavirus-dealing-bereavement-and-grief</a>	1
<b>Marie Curie:</b> Funerals and Coronavirus <a href="https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/support/bereaved-family-friends/organising-funeral/funerals-and-coronavirus">https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/support/bereaved-family-friends/organising-funeral/funerals-and-coronavirus</a>	1
<b>Oxford Health:</b> <a href="#">Coping with Coronavirus Bereavement</a> *	1
<b>Winston's Wish:</b> Coronavirus bereavement support for children <a href="https://www.winstonswish.org/coronavirus/">https://www.winstonswish.org/coronavirus/</a>	1

### Bereavement: General (please be aware that there may be changes to services during the pandemic)

	Patient Group
<b>Age UK:</b> Bereavement Support Guide <a href="#">"How To Help"</a>	1
<b>Mind:</b> information on bereavement <a href="https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/guides-to-support-and-services/bereavement/about-bereavement/">https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/guides-to-support-and-services/bereavement/about-bereavement/</a>	1
<b>NHS:</b> advice on bereavement <a href="https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/coping-with-bereavement/">https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/coping-with-bereavement/</a> *	1
<b>Oxfordshire County Council:</b> <a href="#">The Oxfordshire bereavement guide</a>	1
<b>SeeSaw:</b> resources for children and families who have been bereaved <a href="https://www.seesaw.org.uk/resources-list/">https://www.seesaw.org.uk/resources-list/</a>	1
<b>Sue Ryder:</b> information and online counselling service for adults. <a href="https://www.sueryder.org/online-bereavement-counselling">https://www.sueryder.org/online-bereavement-counselling</a>	1 information 3 counselling

### Bereavement: Helplines

	Patient Group
<b>National Bereavement Partnership Covid-19 Hub:</b> 0800 448 0800 (7am – 10pm, every day) or <a href="mailto:helpline@nationalbereavementpartnership.org">helpline@nationalbereavementpartnership.org</a> .	1 & 2
<b>Cruse Bereavement National Helpline:</b> 0808 808 1677 (9.30am – 5pm Monday - Friday, & until 8pm on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday) or <a href="mailto:helpline@cruse.org.uk">helpline@cruse.org.uk</a>	1 & 2

<b>Oxfordshire Mental Health Helpline:</b> 01865 904997 for Adults or 01865 904998 for children and young people (both open 24 hours every day).	2 & 3
<b>Samaritans:</b> 116 123 Confidential listening service (open 24 hours every day) or email <a href="mailto:jo@samaritans.org">jo@samaritans.org</a> for a response within 24 hours.	2
<b>Winston's Wish Helpline:</b> 08088 020 021 (9am – 5pm, Monday - Friday) for children, young people and anyone caring for a child or young person who has been bereaved.	1 & 2

## Specialist Bereavement Services

### For people bereaved due to life limiting illness:

	Patient Group
<b>Marie Curie Telephone Bereavement Support :</b> Regular bereavement support sessions over the telephone with a trained volunteer. Access to up to six 45 minute telephone sessions. Call 0800 090 2309 (8am – 6pm Monday to Friday and 11am – 5pm Saturday to Sunday). <a href="https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/support/telephone-bereavement-support">https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/support/telephone-bereavement-support</a>	2
<b>Sobell Bereavement Service:</b> Support for relatives and friends of Sobell patients and anyone who has been cared for by a hospice. Call 01865 225 878 or visit <a href="https://sobellhouse.org/how-we-can-help/bereavement-support/">https://sobellhouse.org/how-we-can-help/bereavement-support/</a>	2
<b>Katharine House Bereavement Service:</b> Support for relatives and friends of Katharine House patients. Call 01295 811 866 or visit <a href="https://www.khh.org.uk/bereavement-services">https://www.khh.org.uk/bereavement-services</a>	2
<b>Sue Ryder, South Oxfordshire:</b> Support for relatives and friends of Sue Ryder patients. Call 01491 641 384 or visit <a href="https://www.sueryder.org/how-we-can-help/sue-ryder-palliative-care-hub-south-oxfordshire/services">https://www.sueryder.org/how-we-can-help/sue-ryder-palliative-care-hub-south-oxfordshire/services</a>	2 & 3

### For people bereaved by suicide:

	Patient Group
<b>Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide:</b> Gives callers a chance to talk confidentially with someone who has experienced bereavement by suicide. Helpline: 0300 111 5065 or <a href="http://www.uksoobs.org">www.uksoobs.org</a> (9am – 9pm Monday to Friday).	1 & 2
<b>Support after suicide:</b> Help is at hand guide online at <a href="http://supportaftersuicide.org.uk/support-guides/help-is-at-hand/">http://supportaftersuicide.org.uk/support-guides/help-is-at-hand/</a>	1

### For people affected by the death of a baby or child:

	Patient Group
<b>The Compassionate Friends:</b> The Compassionate Friends are bereaved parents who offer support and friendship to parents whose child has died at any age and from any cause. Support is also available for bereaved adult siblings and grandparents. Helpline: 0345 123 2304 (open daily 10am-4pm, 7pm-10pm). <a href="https://www.tcf.org.uk/">https://www.tcf.org.uk/</a>	1
<b>Helen and Douglas House:</b> Support for families who have been bereaved of a terminally ill child. 01865 794749 or <a href="https://www.helenanddouglas.org.uk/our-care/family-support/">https://www.helenanddouglas.org.uk/our-care/family-support/</a>	2 & 3

<b>The Lullaby Trust:</b> Trained bereaved parents - a befriending service by phone or email. Helpline: 0808 802 6868 (free bereavement line) <a href="https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/">https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk/</a>	1
<b>Miscarriage Association:</b> Offers information and support to people who have been affected by miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy or molar pregnancy. Helpline: 01924 200 799 (Monday-Friday, 9am-4pm). <a href="http://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk">www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk</a>	1
<b>SANDS:</b> For people bereaved by stillbirth or neonatal death. Helpline available on 0808 164 3332 (9.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday and 9.30am to 9.30pm Tuesday and Thursday) or <a href="mailto:helpline@sands.org.uk">helpline@sands.org.uk</a>	1

## Training & Support for professionals

### Training

**CRUSE:** bookable online Loss and Bereavement Awareness training. See <https://www.cruse.org.uk/training/loss-and-bereavement-awareness-webinars>

**E-learning for healthcare:** open access to Coronavirus modules including:

[Practical Support After a Bereavement](#)

[Sudden Death and Bereavement](#)

[Children and Bereavement](#)

[Communicating with Empathy](#)

[Making the most out of listening](#)

E-learning for healthcare also provides an End of Life Care programmes including bereavement modules (requires log in)

### Support for staff who have been bereaved

#### Bereavement support line for NHS staff

NHS England and Hospice UK are running a confidential bereavement support line free to access from 8am – 8pm, seven days a week.

A team of fully qualified and trained bereavement specialists are available to support you with bereavement and wellbeing issues relating to loss experienced through your work.

You will be offered up to 3 sessions with the same counsellor and onward support to our staff mental health services if you need - [call: 0300 303 4434](tel:03003034434). This is part of the broader Our NHS People support, detailed at <https://people.nhs.uk/help/>

#### Our Frontline

This is not bereavement specific, but provides [mental health support for blue light staff](#), health staff, social care and keyworkers. This is delivered in partnership by Shout, Samaritans, Mind and Hospice UK.

*This guide was developed in partnership with colleagues from Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford University Hospitals Foundation Trust and Oxford Health Foundation Trust*

Updated 14 May 2020  
[OCCG.Plannedcare@nhs.net](mailto:OCCG.Plannedcare@nhs.net)