St Joseph's Hospice
Serving East London and the City

St Joseph's Hospice Bereavement Service

Support and counselling for bereaved people

If the person who has died was under the care of St Joseph's Hospice, whether in the Hospice or at home, we are here to support you.

"If it hadn't been for this service I don't know how I would have got through this difficult time."

Bereavement and grief

The death of a family member can be very painful and distressing. People react to different losses in different ways.

There are a number of ways you might react. You might:

- feel shocked and numbed by your loss
- find it difficult to accept your loss
- feel lonely, depressed, anxious, angry and guilty
- find it difficult to eat and sleep
- find you are forgetful and confused
- feel you may be 'going mad'
- find everyday problems difficult to cope with
- feel you have lost your reason for living
- feel unable to talk to family or friends

Be gentle with yourself. All of these are natural reactions to bereavement and not necessarily signs that you cannot cope. During this time you may need the support of others. Speaking to someone about how you feel and the changes you are facing may help you feel less alone with your grief.

How we can support you: telephone support for recent bereavements, bereavement counselling, bereavement support groups and social groups.

NHS North East London

St Joseph's Hospice
Serving East London and the City

"I feel very lucky to have been supported by such an amazing and caring service through the most difficult time in my life."

Support for recent bereavements

If it is less than 3 months since your bereavement occurred, we can provide you with support by telephone.

Support calls usually last up to 30 minutes and can be weekly or less frequently.

We can also signpost you to other support that might be helpful.

Bereavement counselling

If 3 months have passed since your bereavement and you feel you are not coping with your loss, we can offer you bereavement counselling.

You may find it difficult to talk about your loss with family or friends. Counselling gives you the opportunity to talk about any difficulties you are experiencing with your bereavement and grief.

Bereavement counselling is provided by our highly trained and experienced team of staff and volunteer counsellors.

You usually meet in counselling rooms at St Joseph's Hospice at the same day and time each week for up to 12 weekly sessions. If you cannot come to St Joseph's, we can provide counselling by telephone or video call (e.g. Zoom). We do not provide home visits.

"It was helpful to know that the way I was feeling about my bereavement was normal and to be expected."

Bereavement support groups and social groups

Attending a bereavement group gives you the opportunity to:

- Meet other bereaved people who have experienced similar losses
- Listen to others' experiences so that you feel less alone and can find out how they cope
- Share your experiences and feelings with people who understand and won't judge you

Bereavement groups meet monthly at St Joseph's Hospice. Support groups are facilitated by experienced bereavement counsellors.

Social groups are a more informal opportunity to chat with other bereaved people over a cup of tea or coffee.

Family support

Family support offers bereaved families and couples an opportunity to talk with each other about their bereavement and explore with a counsellor how they can understand and support each other through their grief.

Children and young people

St Joseph's Hospice also provides support for bereaved children and young people. Please contact us for more details.

All support is free of charge and confidential. We treat every individual as unique, valuing them without distinction or judgement, respecting their culture and beliefs.

To arrange support from the Bereavement Service, call our First Contact Team on 0300 30 30 400 or email stjosephs.firstcontact@nhs.net