

# Grief and Bereavement Support

## Case Study Six: **Grief and Bereavement Support**

### The NES bereavement workstream has two main current areas of focus:

- The creation of a spiral, layered national training framework on bereavement care for medical staff, due to launch in 2017, supported by the GMC, medical and foundation schools. This will outline bereavement related competencies which doctors will require at each stage of their training/work from undergraduate to practitioner levels and will consider both core and specialty specific abilities. Following the launch and implementation of this framework, additional framework(s) will be produced for other health and social services professional groups.

- The creation of a toolkit of educational materials – these teaching resources will support the implementation of the framework(s) and will be largely multidisciplinary in nature. To include e.g. animated videos (views > 7K), case based studies/ scenarios, a mobile app, online modules, a bespoke website, sample exam questions and podcasts.

The sensitive and diverse nature of this work includes many equality and diversity issues that require to be considered. The following table details how the short animated videos within the toolkit are adopting a person-centred approach to directly address many of these issues.

### The following table sets out some of the key equality issues identified. The animations take a person-centred approach to raising awareness of the issues and supporting inclusive practice.

Equality Issue	NES Bereavement Toolkit Animations
<p><b>Diversity of approach to death, dying and bereavement:</b> It is necessary to equip health and social services professionals to manage the range of peri-death communications which they will be required to undertake with those who are bereaved (who will be from diverse non homogenous groups).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Discussing Dying</li> <li>■ Video in production – de-escalation of treatment in a critical care setting</li> </ul>
<p><b>Spiritual, faith and cultural considerations:</b> Some awareness about the possible traditions performed around the time of death e.g. rituals regarding the care of the deceased’s body, authorisation of post mortem examination, and requested timeframes for burial/cremation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Discussing Authorised (Hospital) Post Mortem Examination after a Stillbirth or Neonatal Death</li> <li>■ Discussing Adult Authorised (Hospital) Post Mortem Examination</li> </ul>
<p><b>Sexual orientation:</b> Evidence exists that LGBT people may be at risk of feeling unsupported when grieving after the bereavement of someone close to them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Discussing Dying</li> <li>■ Discussing Authorised (Hospital) Post Mortem Examination after a Stillbirth or Neonatal Death</li> </ul>

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Equality Issue	NES Bereavement Toolkit Animations
<p><b>Age:</b> It is important that training for professionals who come into contact with those who are bereaved includes coverage on how they can talk to children who are bereaved. Professionals should also be able to support parents and guardians in knowing how best to engage and interact with a child who is in their care and who has experienced the death of someone close to them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Talking to Children who are Bereaved</li> </ul>
<p><b>Disability</b> The skills required by health and social services professionals to talk to those who are bereaved who also have a disability (e.g. a learning difficulty) will be different to those needed when they are interacting with those who do not have additional requirements around bereavement support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Video in production – what to say/not to say when discussing dying</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ethnicity</b> It has been acknowledged that currently minority ethnic groups in Scotland can face barriers to accessing peri-death services. It may also therefore be a reality that accessing effective support/communication from health and social services professionals in bereavement is an issue.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Breaking the News of an Intrauterine Death</li> </ul>
<p><b>Spiritual, faith and cultural considerations:</b> <b>Other non-protected factors</b> which may affect the needs of those who are bereaved include the circumstances in which the death occurs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Understanding the Processes Following a Sudden or Unexplained Death</li> <li>■ Dealing with Unsuccessful Neonatal Resuscitation</li> </ul>

Continued >

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### In addition to the framework and toolkit described above the NES bereavement team are:

- Representing NES on national groups and facilitating workshops / presenting at national /international conferences (several awards won for poster presentations)
- Contributing to the review of the Scottish Government's Bereavement Care Standards
- Contributing to the bereavement education evidence base (surveys of trainees/trainers, systematic literature reviews and work with the NHS Information Services Division)
- Maintaining and updating the NES Support Around Death website ([www.sad.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.sad.scot.nhs.uk)). Over 33,000 hits since its launch
- Facilitating learning events for NHS Board bereavement strategic leads and bereavement coordinators
- Facilitating two bereavement communities of practice
- Contributing to national consultations (post mortem standards, practice guide for morbidity and mortality meetings)
- Authoring and publishing an e-newsletter (approximately 900 recipients) and social media activity via twitter
- Liaising closely with associated workstreams in NES (e.g. palliative care, spiritual care and general practice)
- Working with the Death Certification Review Service to lead on the development of new death certification educational resources
- Facilitating national meetings and a community of practice for NHS Board Fatal Accident Inquiry leads

### Measures for success being implemented include:

- Baseline of preparedness for practice being established through trainee/trainer surveys
- Google analytics providing information regarding uptake of resources
- Early work to identify bereavement related complaints to set a baseline for potential reduction due to improved peri-death communication
- Improvement in the quality of completion of medical certificates cause of death
- Facilitating preparedness for staff either directly or indirectly involved in fatal accident inquiries through access to targeted NES education and support materials

You can read more about our work on equality on our website at:  
**[www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/about-us/equality-and-diversity](http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/about-us/equality-and-diversity)**



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