Mind the Grief Gap: learning from Hospice UK’s Bereavement project
Anita Hayes, Head of Clinical Leadership, Hospice UK

The programme ran during the first COVID-19 lockdown, with 9 pilot hospices being supported to run 21 virtually delivered projects.

Key learning points:

1. A wide range of services work well virtually, but successfully transferring a service to virtual delivery does require time, planning and skills development.
2. There are gaps in bereavement provision for children, people from minoritised communities, people who have not previously been involved with a hospice, and people who have been bereaved through different causes. It is particularly difficult for people to get appropriate bereavement support if they experience a combination of these factors.
3. Recommendations from the programme include:
   a. Use a blended approach of virtual and face-to-face provision.
   b. Seek out those in need and proactively work with new communities.
   c. Use quality improvement models to test impact, learn what works and evolve services to meet the needs of local communities.

Read the full project evaluation report
Have a look at our Bereavement Project Resources toolkit

Practice example: Local Bereavement Hubs
Suzann Chantrill, Bereavement Volunteer Support/Enabler, LOROS (Hospice care for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland)

The drop-in bereavement hubs were set up in partnership with Sue Ryder Thorpe Hall and Dying Matters, to meet increasing need for bereavement support in Leicestershire and Rutland during the pandemic. The hubs are open for 2 hours each week in neighbourhood venues such as village halls. They are staffed by trained volunteers.

Anyone aged over 18 who has been bereaved for any reason can visit a hub. LOROS has opened 5 hubs in the first 6 months of service and aims to set up 12 hubs in the first 2 years.

Key learning:
1. Volunteers are key to the success of the bereavement hubs and receive 2 days of initial training plus ongoing support.
2. The budget for the hubs has been limited so LOROS has been proactive about asking venues to donate space and using free promotion such as in doctors surgeries, local news/magazines and on social media.
3. The service is confidential, which makes it challenging to collect data about service users, however the team is investigating ways to evaluate the service.

Dying Matters Awareness Week 2022
Sarah West, Director of Campaigns and Communications, Hospice UK

Dying Matters Awareness Week 2022 considers what it means to be #InAGoodPlace when we die. Sarah outlined the events happening during the week and how people can be involved.

- Join the Dying Matters community
- Encourage people to write to their MP