

Suicide liaison service



For those who are left behind....

A Suicide Bereavement Liaison Service

- Commissioned by Cornwall's Public Health in 2010 as an outcome of the County's Suicide Prevention Strategy (2009) "to provide better support to those bereaved by suicide";
- Based on Northern Ireland's Western Health & Social Care Trust's Family Liaison Service (suicide postvention);
- Cornwall & Isles of Scilly has a permanent resident population of 530,000 with approximately 80 deaths by suicide each year;
- The Suicide Liaison Service is currently funded by the County's Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS Kernow.

Suicide Liaison Worker Person Specification

- Registration/Accreditation with a professional body, e.g. RNMH, BACP, BPS, etc.;
- Experience with, and knowledge of, local mental health services;
- ASIST trained or similar;
- Skills to recognise symptoms of Post-traumatic stress disorder;
- Knowledge and understanding of the impact and effect of suicide bereavement;
- Ability to deliver psychoeducation (to “normalise” feelings).

Referral Criteria

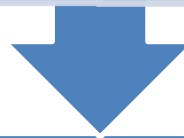
- The Suicide Liaison Service is open to all adults (post 18 years) resident in Cornwall & Isles of Scilly, bereaved by suicide (whether the death has taken place in the County, or elsewhere);
- We accept self-referrals, or referrals made on behalf of the bereaved (with their permission) by GPs, allied Health and Social Care professionals, statutory and voluntary agencies, and Police (service information is part of a Police Officer's Sudden Death Pack) and Coroner's Officers.

Referral Pathway

Telephone or online referral to Outlook South West



Telephone contact made within 72 hours



Face-to-face meeting arranged within 2 - 3 weeks

Assessment of need carried out + monitoring
for risk, symptoms of trauma, etc.

Signposting/referral to, or liaison with, other
services where appropriate

Assessment of Need

- An initial visit of approx. 90 minutes will take place at the home of the bereaved (or at their GP surgery if preferred);
- A risk assessment is carried out and, where appropriate (e.g. if the bereaved have found the body), monitoring for symptoms of PTSD with a referral for treatment (NICE guidelines) to the IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) service;
- Practical needs: help with arranging the funeral; liaison with other agencies; vouchers for the Foodbank; liaison with the GP, Police, Coroner, and help sorting out legal affairs.

A copy of Help is at Hand is given to everyone at the initial meeting:



Support with Inquests



- The majority of inquests are held within 6 months of the death;
- Where circumstances are complex, it can take up to 3 years to reach an inquest;
- We provide support with the inquest process;
- Liaison with Police and the Coroner;
- We access legal advice where necessary through Inquest;
- We attend inquests to provide emotional support.

An 8-week Grief Education Programme

- Our aim is to deliver “accessible” group support in different locations across the County, particularly to meet the needs of people who may not have access to transport, but also to enable participants to build on “social capital” within their communities.
- We deliver “closed” (i.e. a limited number of sessions) 8-week courses informed by evidence-based research, utilising WHO guidelines, where participants are pre-screened by a face-to-face meeting with a mental health professional prior to attendance.

Service Evaluation

We attend quarterly meetings with our service Commissioners, NHS Kernow, and provide:

- Anonymised referral statistics based on location, age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation;
- Anonymised quantitative & qualitative data on outcomes from the 8-week Grief Education Programme (GHQ-12);
- Anonymised outcome data, using an approved evaluation questionnaire, post-inquest and/or upon discharge;

Service Evaluation Form

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
I was able to arrange my meeting without difficulty and at a venue convenient to me.					
I was made to feel comfortable during my meeting with the SL service					
The SL worker had a good understanding of my loss and my situation.					
The SL worker listened to what I had to say and took my concerns seriously.					
I received relevant information to help me understand the role of the SL Service and how they might support me at this difficult time.					
I feel I received a professional service at all times.					
I felt that I was helped by the SL service to cope with the inquest process					