

Bereavement support

Compassionate expertise for you and your family

What is bereavement counselling and how may it assist you?

Bereavement counselling is a confidential discussion with a specially trained professional who can support you to explore the impact of your loss and identify strategies for coping as well as possible.

Who can use the service?

- Family and friends of someone who died at a HammondCare Hospital or was known to a HammondCare community service
- Family and friends of someone who died at any publicly funded South Western Sydney Local Health District Hospital (see map) **and** was known to a palliative care service
- Family and friends living in the South Western Sydney Local Health District whose family member died outside of this area **and** was known to a palliative care service
- Counselling is available for individuals, couples and families.

Bereavement counselling may assist you to:

- Understand your grief and its impact
- Have an opportunity to talk about your family member
- Discuss concerns with a sensitive and skilled professional
- Identify, understand and express your thoughts and feelings
- Access information about the grieving process and what you may expect
- Access your own resources and ways of coping
- Find ways to cope as well as possible

You can expect your counsellor:

- Will listen to you and learn about your experience of grief
- Will support you to manage your grief in your own way
- Will provide information and strategies that might be helpful
- Won't tell you how you should or shouldn't think or feel
- Won't need to be protected from your pain and tears

Bereavement counselling may be useful if:

- You are concerned your grief is getting worse over time
- Your grief is having a negative impact on your relationships with others
- You would like ideas or information on how to support your children, partner, parent or other family members
- You feel like there is no one else you can talk to about your grief or about your family member
- You feel stuck in one feeling (e.g. anger or guilt) for a long period
- You have persistent, distressing memories about the events surrounding your family member's death
- You have questions or challenges you wish to talk through with someone impartial
- You would like to explore the possibility of new partnerships and intimacy

How much does it cost?

There is **no cost** for our bereavement counselling service.

How many counselling sessions should I have?

Some people attend for a single session; some attend regular fortnightly or monthly appointments; and others check in as and when they need to. There are no rules about the frequency of counselling sessions. You and your counsellor will discuss what arrangements may be most helpful.

Groups

Sometimes people may find it useful to connect with others who are experiencing similar challenges following the death of a family member.

Our Bereavement Counsellors facilitate groups to provide opportunities to explore the challenges of grief and the things that help people to cope. We have run groups in the past for people raising children following the death of a spouse, for men grieving the death of a partner and to provide support around getting through Christmas.

To register your interest in participating in a group please contact one of our bereavement counsellors on 1300 225 013 or email braesidebereavement@hammond.com.au

HammondCare Information Resources

HammondCare's Bereavement Service has developed a number of brochures to provide information about the experience of grief.

These are available online at www.hammond.com.au/research/dementia-resources/resources-for-grief-or-palliative-care

South Western Sydney Local Health District Map

If you are a family member or friend of someone who died at a HammondCare Hospital or was known to a palliative care service at any publicly funded South Western Sydney Local Health District Hospital, you can access HammondCare's Bereavement Support Service.



How can I access the service?

The service can be accessed face to face, online via webcam and over the phone.

Bereavement counsellors are located at HammondCare Braeside Hospital. If you are unable to access that location, appointments at other South Western Sydney Local Health District health services may be arranged.

To make an enquiry or to arrange an appointment, please feel welcome to contact us Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4.30pm.

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