

Summary of NSPA members' bereavement support discussion 16th April 2020

Challenges identified	Suggestions from NSPA, SASP and others on the call
<p>Supporting those bereaved by suicide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Moving from face to face support to online support: how does that change how we meet the needs of service users, safeguarding, effectiveness of service, and how sustainable will that be for weeks and months to come? ● How to support people who struggle with suicidal thoughts and are facing anniversaries of bereavement, or other triggers, while isolated at home? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Royal College of Psychiatrists has guidance for clinicians providing remote consultations during covid-19, including communications, confidentiality and consent (here). ● NHS England have guidance for delivering IAPT services remotely during covid-19 (here).
<p>Supporting staff and volunteers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How to support staff and volunteers dealing with more, and more difficult content on calls, when they are working at home and more isolated too? ● How do we support peer support volunteers who themselves are living with their own bereavement and challenges? ● If recruiting new volunteers to provide support, how can we safely and effectively train them? ● How to support staff when our organisation experiences a bereavement from covid-19? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encouraging staff and volunteers to create a separate space for this work, away from their social space ● Encouraging regular breaks, including outside ● Video calls are tiring, so if providing support via video, limit other video calls. Try to keep calls to 30 minutes where you can ● Increasing supervision and support calls to check-in ● Creating 'social' time and space for staff and volunteers ● For NHS and other front-line staff, the BMJ article 'Managing mental health challenges faced by healthcare workers during covid-19 pandemic' may be useful (here) ● Training new volunteers needs to be given the time and care it always takes, but many organisations are now doing this online
<p>Supporting those bereaved by covid-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Anticipating an increase in bereavement due to covid-19, and potentially people experiencing multiple bereavements, what additional support will be needed, and how to meet that need. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The National Bereavement Alliance have some information for services supporting people bereaved by COVID-19 (here),

<p>What guidance can we give IAPT, CBT, Cruse etc as they support more bereaved people, and more people bereaved by suicide?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What needs doing in the medium to long-term, as the impact of covid-19 bereavement will be complex grief as people can't grieve with family and friends, and that is likely to have a long-term impact? ● How to provide appropriate support for bereaved children and young people? And what might the impact be when they go back to school, especially if other students or teachers have died? ● Any advice on how bereavement support should be adapted for people with learning disabilities or autism? ● How to support the wider community who are bereaved – colleagues, wider family and friends – how do we reach those wider groups when we can't go into schools, workplaces etc? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cruse Bereavement Care have comprehensive information on grief and coronavirus, including both emotional and practical support (here). ● Dr Alan Wolfelt has put together some helpful suggestions on Coronavirus and the Six Needs of Mourning for the Canadian organisation Families First. It covers topics such as the reality of the pandemic, self-care, and accepting support from others (here). ● Winston's Wish have published some helpful information about grief in social isolation, with children (here). ● Quaker Social Action have information specifically around funerals and remembering loved ones in the absence of attending a funeral (here). ● Winston's Wish have guidance on supporting children during coronavirus, including 'Telling a child someone has died from coronavirus', 'Talking to children about coronavirus', and 'How to say goodbye when a funeral isn't possible' (here). ● The Child Bereavement Network has a list of resources around supporting bereaved children, including children with special education needs (here) and a film on supporting bereaved autistic children (here).
<p>Changes in demand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Some services are seeing a decrease in demand, though it is hard to judge over such a short period of time ● There seem to be increases in suicidal thoughts and suspected suicides in some places, and therefore increased demand for services 	