



Bereavement

Bereavement Guidance Notes for Health Professionals

Sooner or later most people will experience the pain of losing a loved one. Grieving is not just one feeling but a whole succession of feelings. These feelings may take a while to work through and should not be hurried. Talking about it with friends or carers may help and is an important part of coming to terms with the loss.

If someone is unable to resolve their grief, support will be available from:

- The Mustard Tree Macmillan Centre
Derriford Hospital
Plymouth
Tel: 01752 763672
- Cruse Bereavement Care
Tel: 01752 408134
- The Samaritans
Tel: 01752 221666

The 'Someone Has Died' pack is available to borrow from the Mustard Tree Macmillan Centre.

This pack is intended to act as a visual support when communicating about bereavement and loss.

Terminal Illness Guidance Notes for Professionals

Originally it was hoped that we would be able to include some information that could be helpful for those people who are not going to recover and are in the terminal phase of their illness.

However, due to the very sensitive nature of this issue it was felt that such information may cause undue distress and trauma if not used appropriately. It was decided that an individual response would be needed which would depend on the level of understanding about the concept of death each person had.

Some people with a learning disability who have a terminal illness will ask questions about the future and there are some excellent materials that may assist in helping to answer some of their questions. We have given a list of some of these and how to access them below.

If you are unsure of how and when these materials should be used we would suggest that in the first instance you contact the author for guidance. You may also wish to contact the speech and language or psychology department of your local learning disability service for advice and support.

"Positive approaches to Palliative Care" - a comprehensive distance-learning module about palliative care, aimed at learning disability carers. It is simply written, and part of the national LDAF awards framework. However, it is also useful for those who are struggling with providing palliative care in a learning disability setting.

Published and distributed by BILD for orders: Tel 01562 723010, email enquiries@bild.org.uk Cost: £12.00

"Caring for people with learning disabilities who are dying".

This is a book by Noelle Blackman (Assistant Director of Respond) and Stuart Todd (Senior Research Fellow - WCLD) about providing good end-of-life care in learning disabilities supported living services.

Available from the Welsh Centre for Learning Disabilities (WCLD), Meridian Court, North Road, Cardiff, CF14 3BG for £6.00 including P&P, cheques payable to Cardiff University please.

Telephone Rosy Allcott: 029 20691795

"Dying Matters" - produced by the Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities. Dying Matters explores the issues that staff within learning disability services face when caring for terminally ill people, and gives practical advice on how to provide good support and better policies. It explores noticing when a person with a learning disability is ill, talking about illness and dying, planning ahead when it is known that a person is terminally ill and being in hospital.

Dying Matters, written by Hilary Brown, Sophie Burns & Margaret Flynn, is available now from the Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities. Priced at £25, copies can be obtained by calling 020 7803 1100.

"Someone has died" - produced by South Devon Healthcare in collaboration with Cruse Bereavement Care South Devon. A Total Communication Resource Pack with photographs, symbols and text to support communication about bereavement, loss and death. Available from Pluss, Waddeton Close, Brixham Road, Paignton, TQ4 7RZ.

Tel: 01803 520386 (please ask for Lynn Roberts/Sharon Kay)
Cost £23.50 plus p&p.