

Activity report for 2020/21

Meetings and events

We held a Full Alliance meeting in May, at Hospice House. Members from 34 organisations were consulted on aspects of the Parental Leave and Pay Act by officials from BEIS and heard from DWP about the Tell Us Once scheme. Sarah Bates from the Support after Suicide Partnership presented on the NHS Long Term Plan commitments on suicide bereavement support, Duncan Lugton of Sue Ryder shared findings from their *A Better Grief* report and Sophie Dodgeon of Rainbow Trust Children's Charity spoke on their support for bereaved siblings. Members also discussed work on loneliness, providing services digitally and fed back on a draft survey on the appropriate timing of bereavement support.

In June, our Special Interest Group the Bereavement Evaluation Forum held a joint day conference in Leeds with the Association of Bereavement Services Coordinators. Over 80 delegates heard from a range of speakers including Professor Quim Limonero, Bianca Neumann-May from St Nicholas Hospices, Sue Sutton from Carers Leeds and Kate Sibson, Commissioner for Leeds City Council.

In December, at the National Children's Bureau, 40 members met to discuss key policy issues including the General Election result, changes to the Social Fund Funeral Expenses Payment, DWP review of gathering information about a death, the Loneliness Strategy, the Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay Act and the Children's Funeral Fund, Widowed Parent's Allowance and the new Education and Inspection Framework and health and relationships curricula for schools. There was an update on the meetings attended on behalf of the Alliance, including the Support after Suicide Partnership, the Ambitions Partnership for End of Life and Palliative Care.

Results from the recent members' survey on the priorities, strategy and funding needs of the Alliance were discussed. Of our six policy priorities first set out in the report [Life After Death](#), members felt that the current key priority was **clarity about who is responsible locally for commissioning and providing bereavement support, with better coordination, secure funding and information about services**. Members discussed how this could be furthered, particularly focusing on making the case for bereavement support (including prevention), mapping local landscapes and responsibilities and building on other cross-government strategies. Members discussed gaps in evidence that should be prioritised, including key statistics and the voices of black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, and discussed options for future funding of the Alliance.

Publications



Care after Caring

<https://nationalbereavementalliance.org.uk/ourpublications/care-after-caring/>

Our new report with Hospice UK, commissioned by NHS England's Commitment to Carers programme, shares good practice and ideas on supporting carers before and after the death of the person they were caring for. The report draws on research, policy and consultations with former carers and those supporting them, to lay out a series of six aspirations for local areas and services to get the right support in place at the right time. The report also includes 12 examples of local good practice.

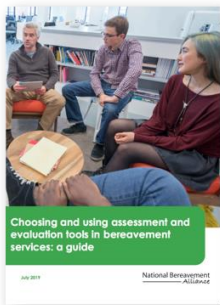


Guidelines for delivering bereavement support groups

<https://nationalbereavementalliance.org.uk/ourpublications/guidelines-for-delivering-bereavement-support-groups/>

These new guidelines from members of the National Bereavement Alliance and the Support after Suicide Partnership are for individuals and organisations wishing to start a bereavement support group for adults. The main body of the guidelines is generic, addressing the practical issues of setting up a support group, whether peer facilitated or delivered by professionals. Separate sections covering specific types of bereavement support groups are also included.

Choosing and using assessment tools in bereavement services: a guide



<https://nationalbereavementalliance.org.uk/ourpublications/choosing-and-using-assessment-and-evaluation-tools-in-bereavement-services/>

The use of assessment and evaluation tools, including outcome measures, is critical to developing bereavement services and checking what difference bereavement care is making.

This Guide provides information to help service managers and practitioners choose appropriate assessment and evaluation tools, along with recommendations on best practice for their use.

Policy work

We worked with the Ministry of Justice around the detail and communications on the Child Funeral Charity. We contributed to a DWP review of the information that is collected when someone reports a death, aiming to streamline the process and make it more manageable to bereaved people. We prepared a manifesto for better bereavement support for the run-up to the General Election, based on the policy asks of our Life after Death report.

Awareness

We supported awareness weeks organised by our members including Dying Matters Week, Children's Hospice Week, Baby Loss Awareness Week, Hospice Care Week, Children's Grief Awareness Week and National Grief Awareness Week.

Membership

New Core Members joined the Alliance, including the Child Funeral Charity, Grief Encounter, the Scottish Partnership for Palliative Care and Gloucestershire Bereavement Forum.

Staffing and steering group

Over the course of the year, the Alliance was staffed part time by Alison Penny of the Childhood Bereavement Network at the National Children's Bureau, supported by the Steering Group comprising Marilyn Relf (Chair), Claire Henry, Tania Brocklehurst (Herts and Beds Bereavement Alliance), Steven Wibberley (Cruse Bereavement Care), Wendy Lewis-Cordwell (Bereavement Services Association), Adrienne Betteley (Macmillan Cancer Care), Sharon Cornford (Association of Bereavement Services Coordinators in Hospices and Palliative Care) and Debbie Large (Coroners Officers and Staff Association).

The National Bereavement Alliance secretariat is provided by the Childhood Bereavement Network, part of the National Children's Bureau (www.ncb.org.uk).
www.nationalbereavementalliance.org.uk