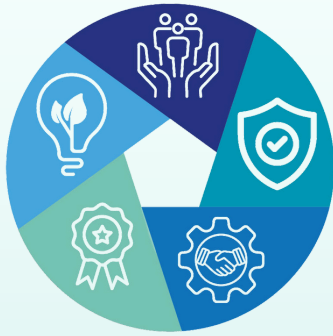


# Bereavement Support Service Standards

National  
Bereavement  
Alliance



# Bereavement Support Service Standards

The Bereavement Support Service Standards have been developed with a wide range of stakeholders, including managers and practitioners of bereavement services, those with lived experience of bereavement and those from underserved communities.

Together, the experiences and expertise of these stakeholders offered insight into how the Standards could be strengthened, ensuring that bereaved people and communities are at the heart of service design and delivery.

The Standards are based around five Principles which connect with each other. For example, improving safety, for either those who use the service or those who deliver the service can only have impacts on quality, person centred care and sustainability.

These Standards should be used by services as part of a regular review of service design and provision. You can find more information about the Standards at:

<https://nationalbereavementalliance.org.uk/ourpublications/bereavement-support-service-standards/>

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# The Principles



## Person Centred Support

These principles speak to the experiences of those who use the services and ensure that those with lived experience of bereavement are at the heart of service design and delivery.



## Safety

These principles speak to the safety of those who use the services and those who deliver the services.



## Collaboration

These principles speak to the understanding that services can not offer support in isolation, and that working together can support better outcomes for bereaved people



## Quality

These principles reflect the foundations of assessment, informed monitoring and evaluations as ways of evidencing the work services do.



## Sustainability

These principles highlight the need to have a clear approach to service sustainability, to strengthen and embed the service within a community.



# Person Centred Support

1

The service is planned in response to bereavement support needs that have been identified in the community it serves. This community might be a specific group of bereaved people for example, defined by age or relationship to the person who died/is dying, the cause of death, or bereaved people in a particular geography or from a particular culture.

2

People with lived experience of bereavement are involved in the design of the service, to help ensure that it reflects their needs and preferences.

3

The service is clear about what it offers and to whom, when it is available, with expected access and outcomes.

4

The service has a clear rationale and evidence base for the support and interventions it offers and how these are intended to help.

5

The service understands and meets the accessibility needs of the communities it serves, and seeks to dismantle the barriers that experiences such as poverty, racism, and disability can pose to accessing support. This approach may be articulated in an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion policy, which also ensures all those with protected characteristics can be supported appropriately. This includes but is not limited to providing information in languages other than English, providing access to interpreters, offering the service at a range of times, offering the service across a range of formats (for example, in person and online).

6

The service and bereaved person co-produce a plan that matches the bereaved person's experiences, expectations, wishes and preferred outcomes to the support available, using a relevant and proportional assessment tool or framework, that reflects the service's delivery structure.



# Safety

1

The service has each of the following: a clear Confidentiality Policy, a clear Data Protection Policy, a clear Safeguarding Policy, a clear Risk Assessment Policy and a clear Complaints Policy. Summaries of these policies, and relevant processes, are available on the service's website. If the service does not have a website, then users of the service are informed of these policies and copies are available on request.

2

The service's Safeguarding Policy considers the safety of all stakeholders of the service including users, volunteers, employees and managers of the service.

3

The service has a Risk Assessment Policy that aligns with the Safeguarding Policy, with clear steps for practitioners and managers to identify, mitigate and respond to potential risks.

4

The service offer includes clear expectations about response times for queries and referrals and how this response will be offered: whether by telephone, online or in person. If the service has a wait list, there is clear information about how a person can be supported during that time and the service offers updates to those on a wait list.



# Safety

5

The service has a fair and equitable Recruitment Policy for all practitioners, both paid staff and volunteers, which includes appropriate background checks.

6

Where applicable, there is a Volunteer Policy, which highlights the commitment required and the support offered. There may be specific training or qualifications requirements for volunteers, depending on the levels of service offered to populations that could be considered vulnerable.

7

All practitioners (paid staff and volunteers) have adequate training to deliver support at the level set out in their contract or volunteer agreement.

8

All practitioners and managers have access to and attend regular reflective practice sessions, including 1:1 supervision with an appropriate person as well as reflective peer support sessions.

9

The service has adequate insurance cover in place.



# Collaboration

1

The service works collaboratively with other statutory, community, commercial, voluntary or faith sector services to meet the diverse needs of bereaved people and maximise the potential for access to appropriate services.

2

The service seeks to understand and develop its support, in collaboration with relevant community partners, where particular user groups may not be accessing services.

3

Clear, user-friendly information is available about the service and what it can offer, and about other local or national bereavement services, agencies and support resources, for signposting or onward referral purposes.

4

The service is open to collaborating in research initiatives to generate further findings to support practice development.



# Quality

1

The service is aware of relevant research and incorporates this into practice and processes to ensure that the support it provides is based on evidence.

2

The service sets out its intended outcomes for bereaved people, and can demonstrate it is working towards these outcomes, including regular evaluation and service design review.

3

The service has clear role descriptions and person specifications for all elements of delivery, that contain the specific knowledge, skills and expertise needed for these roles.

4

The service has a clear Training and Development Policy and offer for practitioners and managers. This could include a variety of different educational offerings, but may include specialist training, externally accredited training and access to development opportunities.

5

The service collects accurate and useful data, in line with General Data Protection Regulations, including monitoring data, service user feedback and complaints.

6

These data are analysed regularly, and resulting insights are used to improve the quality of the service offered.





# Sustainability

1

The service has a clear service delivery plan that identifies the population they will work with, the approach or interventions used, acknowledges when the available interventions may not meet the needs of a particular beneficiary, and what steps the service can take to ensure other services (both statutory and non-statutory) are offered to beneficiaries.

2

The service has an up-to-date business plan that sets out how it will resource its service delivery, including any allocated funding, the physical space, paid staff and volunteers, electronic and other resources it needs.

3

As part of that business plan, regular risk assessments of both service delivery and operational support are undertaken, reviewed and actioned by senior managers.

The National Bereavement Alliance is hosted by the National Children's Bureau, registered charity no 258825

[www.nationalbereavementalliance.org.uk](http://www.nationalbereavementalliance.org.uk)

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