Information for Service-users of the Newham Bereavement Service

What is the Newham Bereavement Service?
A team of trained volunteers who together with other staff are here to offer practical, social and emotional bereavement support

Our volunteers are not counsellors but have been trained in listening skills.

Who is the service for?
This service offers bereavement support to adults aged 18 or above living in Newham and/or registered with a GP in Newham. The service is for people who have experienced the death of a family member, relative or another important person in their life, and for people who have a serious illness and their families and friends.

What does the service offer?
We offer a variety of services to help people as everyone’s needs and feelings vary. Our volunteers are available to:

- visit you regularly and provide company and a friendly chat
- find out information for you
- assist you with practical tasks, such as writing letters
- provide emotional support at times of change or difficulty
- encourage and enable you to make a wider network of contacts

What can’t the volunteer do?
Volunteers are not allowed to become involved in personal care such as bathing, any type of medical care, domestic tasks or financial and legal matters. Other services are available to meet these needs and the volunteers can help you contact them.

Will I see the same person every time?
Yes, we try to ensure that when you are allocated a volunteer you will see throughout your 10 sessions.

How long can I have help for?
You can receive 10 regular weekly befriending visits. This will then be reviewed by the Community Development Manager. You may then be able to access more sessions or other support groups within the Borough.

Where will the sessions take place?
You and your volunteer will discuss your choice of where you would like to meet, either at your home or at a community venue within Newham.

Do I have to pay?
You do not have to pay – all services provided by the Newham Bereavement Service are free.

Do the trained volunteers discuss my sessions with anyone?
The trained volunteers must receive support in their work by law; therefore your sessions may be discussed with their supervisor (Community Development Manager). St Joseph’s Hospice
has a Confidentiality Policy and Procedure, which is strictly adhered to. Should you have any anxiety regarding confidentiality please speak to the Community Development Manager.

**When would confidentiality be broken?**
Confidentiality will only be broken if the volunteer feels you are at risk at harming yourself or anyone else or if there are safeguarding concerns about a child or vulnerable adult. You will be informed first before any other agencies are notified.

**What assessment and training do the volunteers receive?**

- Volunteers complete an application form and are then interviewed
- A course of training is provided to help them further understand loss and bereavement
- A vetting procedure including references and CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) checks are undertaken
- Ongoing training and support is given.

**Group Support sessions**
Meeting in a group gives members an opportunity to share their feelings with others who have a similar experience, as well as gain some social support. Our groups will be a mix of informal support and structured activities to help people talk about their feelings and find ways to cope.

**Cancellations**
It is important to attend appointments regularly. If you need to cancel or rearrange an appointment, please try to give at least 24 hours notice, especially for volunteers who may be travelling in to see you. Cancellations should be notified by phoning the appropriate number below. **If you cancel repeatedly we will not be able to offer you further appointments.** We also cannot hold your appointment if you are absent for more than 4 weeks.

**Missed appointments**
If you miss an appointment without contacting us, we will assume this means you do not want further support. We will contact you to confirm that this is the case. **If you miss a second appointment without contacting us we will not be able to offer you further appointments.**

Newham Bereavement Service reserves the right to refuse a befriending session for anyone under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

**To contact us telephone:**
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Mob.: 07506 927 647
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**Where to find us:**
Richard House Children’s Hospice
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