

Bereavement Information for Families

The staff of the Intensive Care Unit extend their sympathy to you for your loss. Somebody close to you has died, perhaps after being unwell for some time or perhaps suddenly and unexpectedly.

Grief is a natural reaction we have after the death of someone who has been close to us. The recovery and healing process can take time. This period cannot be rushed and varies for each individual.

You may find that you experience different types of feelings including:

- Anger and/or guilt.
- A sense of loss of reality that this can't be happening to you.
- Crying at unexpected times.
- Wandering aimlessly and forgetting to finish things.
- Physical reactions such as loss of appetite and tiredness. Difficulty in sleeping and having unexplained aches and pains are not uncommon.

Everyone responds differently to grief and it is important to remember that there is no 'right' or 'wrong' way to grieve.

- Be gentle with yourself and ensure you get plenty of rest.
- Give yourself time to mourn, take time alone to think and remember.
- Express your feelings when you need to talk to someone. Talk about what has happened.
- Find distractions – they may help to lessen the pain.
- Take time out to be with close family and friends.
- Do things at your own pace.
- Keep a journal to record your thoughts and feelings, especially if you are unable to sleep.
- Try not to make any major changes for a while.

Many people find it helps to talk to someone. While you may have supportive family and friends around you, there are other services available that can offer you support.

- **Your own General Practitioner (GP)**
- **Victim Support:**
Ph (04) 802 3747
- **Skylight Children's Grief:**
Ph (04) 939 6759 www.skylight.org.nz
- **Wesley Counselling Service:**
Ph (04) 384 7695. Located in central Wellington. Payment by donation.
- **Presbyterian Support:**
Ph (04) 439 4900. Professional counselling service located in central Wellington.
- **Catholic Social Services:**
Ph (04) 385 8642. Located in central Wellington. Professional counsellors and social workers.
- **Barnardos Grief Counselling:**
Ph (04) 801 1787. Located in central Wellington. Intermediate age children and Adults dealing with child grief.
- **Family Works:**
Ph (04) 528 4164. Professional counsellors and social workers. Located Wellington, Upper Hutt and Wainuiomata.
- **What's Up?**
Ph 0800 942 8787 (12pm -12am). Professional over the phone counselling for young people aged between 5 and 18 years.
- **Youthline:**
Ph (04) 382 8882. Professional over the phone counselling for young people.
- **Samaritans:**
(24 hours) Ph 0800 726 666. Someone to talk to (They are not trained counsellors).

If you require any further assistance you can contact the ICU Bereavement team on phone number (04) 806 0442 and leave a message.