



UNIQUE CONNECTIONS

Bereavement Support Package

Introduction

It can be very difficult to support a person with learning disabilities through a bereavement, particularly if the person has little or no spoken communication.

Research has established that unaddressed loss and bereavement is a common root cause for changes in presentation, including a person beginning to self-injure, or their self-injury worsening.



Unique Connections have collaborated with two of the UK's leading experts in Learning Disabilities and Bereavement to develop this package of support.

We are confident it will bring you and your team clarity and practical solutions, so they can have renewed confidence in the support they are offering the individual.



The bereavement support package has built-in flexibility to adapt to the particular needs of the individual and their presenting concerns.

The help we offer is through a process. We want to be confident that the person is making progress over time, so we prefer to journey with you for a few months, rather than coming in once or twice and then disappearing.

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Stage One: Evaluation, information gathering & agreeing the support package

Timescale	With whom	Work Conducted
Week one	SLT (or lead)	Initial consultation
Week two	SLT Direct support team	Evaluation Questionnaires sent to SLT and direct support team to gauge areas of focus / need. Conducted at beginning and end of the package for monitoring impact (<i>online</i>).
Week two-four	MDT - ideally a lead SLT + direct support team, and therapists if relevant.	Information gathering -Meeting with a group to discuss the concerns, i.e. MDT, SLT and some of the team supporting the person (<i>online or in person</i>). -Meeting the individual and (if appropriate) spending time observing (<i>in person</i>).
Week four-six	SLT / lead staff	Review with senior team to plan the next stage and discuss: -What is already going well -Our understanding of the factors influencing the individual's overall presentation -Any immediate advice we can give to enhance the safety of the individual -A recommended package of support and agree a timetable.

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The support package will include

Time Scale	With whom	Process
Week four-eight	All staff - (or as many as the organisation wants to make available)	<p>Core training Evidence-based core training on bereavement and learning disabilities for a large group of staff. This can be in-person or is available as an on-demand resource.</p> <p>It may be appropriate to deliver a second core piece of training to the whole team, e.g. Introduction to Trauma or Having Difficult Conversations with Non-speaking Individuals or Self-injury.</p>
Week four-eight	Direct support team , incl a lead staff and therapists	<p>Workshop With a small team (6-12 staff) to consider the various factors related to the person's presentation and help the team to decide on a comprehensive programme of support. (In-person).</p>
Week eight - twenty four (Minimum of six fortnightly sessions)	Team who attended the workshop	<p>Reflective practice Monthly 60-minute reflective practice for six months (online) with the direct support team.</p> <p>This is not quick or easy and can put strain on a team. These sessions allow us to review progress, make adaptations and coach the team.</p>
Week eight - twenty four Two-three online sessions	SLT	<p>SLT Review Checking in with SLT is important for the success of the support plan. This allows us to check progress and review any additional support. These are up to one hour and can also be used to discuss other issues arising if necessary, including an end of contract discussion.</p>

Responsive work

It is quite common that some additional support is required along the way, such as a second workshop, some additional training, or some more observations. These will be discussed at the check-ins and arranged as necessary.