

# IAPT and Bereavement July 2020

## Current considerations:

- The pandemic has had a devastating effect on the lives of people across the country. With thousands of Covid-19 and excess deaths, many people have been lost in awful circumstances. Family and friends have been unable to say goodbye in hospital, haven't attended funerals and haven't had the usual support from their social networks. The long-term impact on bereaved people's grief, their health and their wellbeing are yet to be determined.
- There are specialist organisations that work with people who have been bereaved, such as Cruse. They provide a tiered level of care which is free at point of contact.
- During the pandemic many IAPT services have provided initial support to their communities which has been invaluable at this challenging time. However, with an expected surge in common mental health disorders, IAPT services now need to focus their efforts on treating those for whom their practitioners have been trained to deliver evidence-based interventions.
- CRUSE have been working with the National Bereavement Alliance and estimate that around 10-20% of bereaved people will benefit from individual support. We would like to thank them for their collaboration in developing this document.

## Recommendations for IAPT services

- IAPT expected to signpost to CRUSE (or local equivalent) for their Tier 1 and Tier 2 support if an IAPT initial assessment reveals that a person's primary problem is needing support in the context of a bereavement
- Where the primary problem is depression or an anxiety disorder, but this is complicated by a recent bereavement, IAPT services should offer evidenced based treatment for the specific condition (see collaboration below)
- If the primary problem is traumatic bereavement with many PTSD like features, we would normally aim to treat it within IAPT but if the local Cruse had equivalent or stronger step 3 provision local pathways should be decided and agreed

## Opportunities for wider system collaboration

- IAPT services should link with their local 3<sup>rd</sup> sector, charity, and wider system colleagues to ensure clear and robust pathways are in place with agreed protocols.
- IAPT services should explore collaboration opportunities with CRUSE and consider whether they can make use of training CRUSE can provide to inform practitioners about what their service can offer so they can appropriately signpost.
- Where IAPT services put in place a formal collaboration between themselves and the local Cruse, periodic reviews could be implemented to establish whether the signposting is working effectively.
- Some patients may benefit from a dual approach where CRUSE provide the patient with appropriate bereavement psychoeducation and support alongside their usual IAPT interventions.
- IAPT and CRUSE may join on 'public health' initiatives to promote understanding of common reactions to and coping after bereavement

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## CRUSE overview

Cruse has a tiered approach to providing bereavement support, that combines local branch-based services and support provided through central operations.

### Tier 1

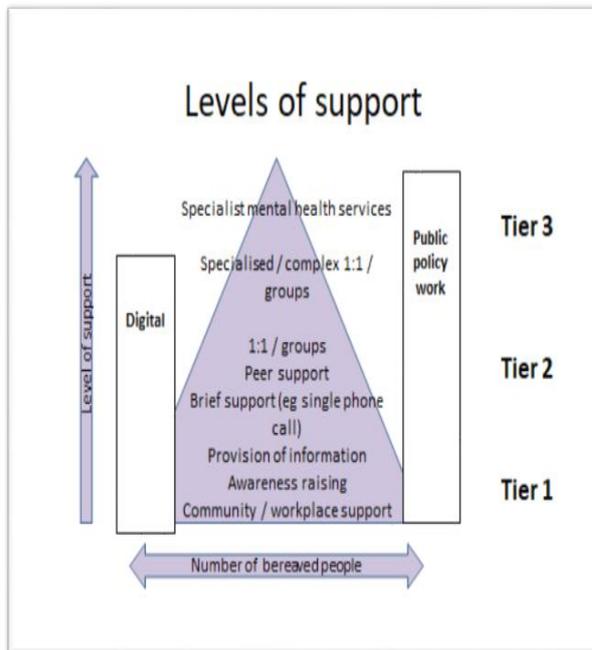
This includes support to workplaces, and the public and private sectors in supporting community messaging and wider communications initiatives. Cruse provides lots of internet content, and advises organisations on their own content, in relation to bereavement (a most recent example is the Mental Health Foundation's web pages on how to support children in their bereavement, in the context of the pandemic). There is a Cruse community on social media, where tips and interventions are offered, and peer support is provided and moderated.

### Tier 2

This involves brief support to bereaved people, incorporating Cruse's national and pandemic response helpline, instant Grief Chat on the Cruse website, email support, support via social media platforms, Understanding Your Bereavement sessions (single meeting groups, helping people to normalise grief), structured peer support activities, and brief structured 1-1 and group support face to face and over the telephone or on-line, to support people grieving.

### Tier 3

This includes structured 1-1 and group support – face to face, over the telephone or on-line – for a prolonged time (usually 6-8 sessions on a weekly basis) via Cruse's local branches. This can cover all aspects of grief. There are specific interventions for situations where complex grief disorder is more likely to take effect, such as groups facilitated alongside Samaritans, working with bereavement through suicide. This tier also incorporates all the work Cruse does as part of a combined approach with other organisations (for instance, case working as part of a multi-disciplinary team, working with local mental health providers, CAMHS and Social Services, to support a bereaved family).



National Helpline - 0808 808 1677

Opening Times:

Monday: 9.30am-5pm

Tuesday: 9.30am-8pm

Wednesday: 9.30am-8pm

Thursday: 9.30am-8pm

Friday: 9.30am-5pm

Saturday and Sunday: 10am -2pm

Email - [helpline@cruse.org.uk](mailto:helpline@cruse.org.uk)

Website - <https://www.cruse.org.uk/>

Link to page on website where local service details can be found - <https://www.cruse.org.uk/get-help/local-services>