

There are people available to help, who will accept how you are feeling and recognise the difficulties that you are facing.

The organisations listed are bereavement specialists, and many will have volunteers who have been bereaved by suicide.

‘It’s five years now since my wife died, and I still miss her every day as she has left such a huge void. I try to concentrate on my daughter and the happiness we share. I have gradually learned to accept that the feelings of pain will never go, and I now have ways to cope with this.’

Chris, whose wife died

A free printed copy of the full version of Help is at Hand can be requested by quoting 2901502/ Help is at Hand:

www.orderline.dh.gov.uk

Tel: 0300 123 1002

Fax: 01623 724 524

Minicom: 0300 123 1003

Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide (SOBS)

www.uk-sobs.org.uk

SOBS offers support for those bereaved or affected by suicide through a helpline and a network of local support groups.

Helpline: 0300 111 5065

Every day 9.00 – 21.00

Email: sobs.support@hotmail.com

Cruse Bereavement Care

www.cruse.org.uk

Cruse supports people after the death of someone close. Their trained volunteers offer face-to-face, telephone, email and website support.

Helpline: 0844 477 9400

Monday to Friday 9.30 – 17.00

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday

09.30 – 20.00

Email: helpline@cruse.org.uk

The Compassionate Friends

www.tcf.org.uk

The Compassionate Friends support people when a child of any age dies through any cause. They have local support groups and online message boards with special sections for those bereaved by suicide.

Helpline: 0345 123 2304

Every day 10.00 – 16.00 and 19.00 – 22.00

Winston’s Wish

www.winstonswish.org.uk

Winston’s Wish offers support and guidance to bereaved children, young people and families. Their booklet ‘Beyond the Rough Rock’ gives advice on supporting children and young people bereaved by suicide.

Helpline: 08452 030405

Monday to Friday 09.00 – 17.00

Wednesday 19.00 – 21.30 (extra hours)

Email: chris@winstonswish.org.uk

If you are in emotional distress:

Samaritans

www.samaritans.org

Samaritans provide emotional support to anyone who is struggling to cope and needs someone to listen.

Helpline: 116 123 Every day, 24 hours

SMS: 07725 909090

Email: jo@samaritans.org

‘It helped to meet and speak to a couple who had also lost their child. It allowed me to understand that I was not going mad; they had survived and were stronger emotionally. They gave us hope.’

Shirley, whose son died

www.supportaftersuicide.org.uk

A website with further details of organisations and resources that provide practical and emotional support. You can also download a copy of the full version of Help is at Hand, which includes stories from people who have been bereaved by suicide.



You have been given this card because someone close to you has died in circumstances that may be due to suicide.

It has been written by people who have lost someone to suicide. We know that the days and weeks to come will be very difficult, but you do not have to face them alone. There is support, help and information available.

When you first learn that someone has died, you are likely to experience a wide and confusing range of emotions. You may be feeling shocked and desperately sad, you may be full of questions, you may feel angry or numb.

Each person will be affected in their own way, and have different ways of expressing themselves, so don't feel that you have to behave in a certain way. There are no set rules or stages, and no right or wrong way to be feeling.

'In the first few weeks you're battling with immense shock and profound grief. At the same time there are formal processes you have to go through. But each step of the way there were people like the coroner's officer trying to help us with practical or emotional support. It also made a real difference that we asked family and friends to do things to help us out.'

Amy, whose mother died

What may happen next

When a person dies in circumstances that may be due to suicide, there is likely to be an investigation into the death. It may feel like a lot to take in, but there are professionals who will explain what needs to happen, and who will try to carry out their work sensitively and appropriately.

Police: The police need to make sure that no one else was involved in the death, so they will ask questions about what had been happening in the days and weeks before. They may ask you to help them to confirm the person's identity. They may also take some personal belongings but these will be returned to you.

Coroner and coroner's officer: In England and Wales, sudden and unexplained deaths are reported to the coroner, an independent judicial officer (usually a doctor or a lawyer).

When the coroner decides to investigate a death, the coroner's officer will contact the next of kin to talk through what needs to take place. Talk to the coroner's officer about when you can make funeral arrangements, and when you will be able to let services like banks and insurance companies know what has happened.

Post-mortem examination: The coroner may decide that a post-mortem examination is necessary to determine how about how a person has died. A specialist doctor called a pathologist carries out this examination. The coroner does not need to obtain your consent, but they will try to take account of your religious and cultural needs.

Choosing to see the person: Nobody can make the decision for you about whether to see the person who has died; you may want to remember the person as they were, or you may want to see them to say goodbye. This is a very personal decision, and one you can talk through with family, friends, or with professionals who have experience of helping people at a time like this.

How to tell people what has happened

One of the first and hardest challenges you could face is letting family, friends, colleagues or neighbours know what has happened.

The suggestions below may help you decide what words you would like to use.

[person's name] has died...

...I'll tell you more when I feel able to.

...It is too soon for us to talk about how they died.

...I don't want to say any more at the moment.

...It looks like they might have taken their own life.

...We cannot imagine what happened. The police think they may have taken their own life, but we don't know yet.

... We think it was intentional. We knew they had thought about it before, and we hoped that they'd find a way through their problems.

www.gov.uk

This easy to use website has advice and information on coroner investigations, funerals and informing services.





Help is at Hand

Support after someone may
have died by suicide

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copies of this z card please quote:
2901503/Help is at hand
www.orderline.dh.gov.uk
Tel: 0300 123 1002
Fax: 01623 724 524
Minicom: 0300 123 1003

Supported by:



Public Health
England



National
Suicide Prevention
Alliance