The Bereavement Journey: Making the Right Connections

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Background

The Hospice wanted to improve the experience we provide to patients and their families, pre- and post bereavement, and to our supporters. We did this by developing a coordinated approach across our Patient and Family Support (incorporating bereavement) and Fundraising departments.

Aims

- Provide people with more continuity of support in early bereavement.
- Make it easier for people to access information about commemorating their family member or friend, through physical or digital memorials, personal challenges or events.
- Enhance our care and use of resources by improving coordination between Bereavement and Fundraising.

Method

- Reviewed existing communication materials and processes and mapped out a coordinated ‘Bereavement Journey’, during the first year of bereavement.
- Wherever appropriate, stages combine communications about bereavement support and fundraising. Cards, letters and leaflets were revised and new materials developed, with an appealing, consistent and readily recognisable design.
- A comprehensive programme of briefing and training for staff was undertaken to prepare for the launch of the new approach.

Results

- Informal feedback - continuity of support throughout their personal ‘Bereavement Journey’ and materials felt to be relevant, appealing and sensitive.
- Adopting a cross departmental approach has improved understanding and confidence between employees and volunteers in our clinical, bereavement and fundraising departments.
- Formal evaluation of the project will include a customised VOICES survey.

Conclusion

This project has enabled us to:

- Offer timely support to bereaved people throughout their personal bereavement journey.
- Improve access to information about opportunities for commemorating relatives or friends through different forms of in memoriam donation and fundraising.
- Use our resources more efficiently and effectively.

STAGE 1: Pre Bereavement Pack

STAGE 2: Post Bereavement Pack

STAGE 3: 1 month Book of Remembrance Letter

STAGE 4: 10 Week Bereavement & Fundraising Pack/Statement of Giving 1

STAGE 5: 12 Week Bereavement Volunteer call

STAGE 5A: 16 Week Statement of Giving 2 and Giving Dove Pack

STAGE 6: 5 month Bereavement Evening Invite (held at 6mths)

STAGE 6A: 10 month Legacy Mailing

STAGE 7: 12 month hand written Anniversary Card