

# Supporting compassionate communities in dying, death and bereavement by providing space for organisations to gather, discuss and learn

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Breaking down barriers to conversations about dying, death and bereavement can happen everywhere. The local Check-in and Chat sessions have been helping professionals and members of the local community to gain more skills and confidence across a range of end of life subjects.

# Background

We conducted a post-lockdown online survey in November 2020 with community organisations in Tayside and Glasgow in Scotland, to learn what people working in community organisations felt about the end of life support available locally. The survey received 74 responses and demonstrated a need for a regular, local session offering support, signposting, information and resources about end of life care and planning, as well as more information on other local end of life services. We created these sessions and called the programme Check-in and Chat Local.

# Purpose

To equip staff, volunteers and service users of local community organisations with tools, knowledge and connections to help build compassionate communities at a grassroots level.

# Methods

Using local experts and Marie Curie's Community Engagement Officers, a calendar of online sessions is now available to the communities we surveyed, covering subjects such as Grief in the Workplace, What to Say?, Caring for the Carers, Finances, and Support for Carers.

The sessions are a relaxed, safe space where people can build local relationships, find out about services and learn skills, all helping improve conversations around dying, death and bereavement.



# Results and Conclusions

In 2021, we held nine online sessions. On average, 15 people registered for each session, with 10 attending, and 157 expressing an interest. This showed the need for local learning opportunities around dying, death and bereavement, especially for organisations that aren't focused solely on end of life care. Sessions are continuing in 2022, aiming to support at least a further 40 people this year.

*"Speakers were down to earth and encouraged questions, and the sharing of experiences. [The session] opened up a difficult topic and acknowledged feelings and emotions."*

Grief and Bereavement in the Workplace workshop attendee

*"[I] took away that as practitioners we are not there to solve the immediate issue ... but rather to provide a place of safety, a calm listening ear and... to let people take the lead."*

What to Say? bereavement workshop attendee