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# Renfrewshire Bereavement Network

## Background

ACCORD hospice has successfully facilitated a Patient & Family Support (PFS) service for many years offering counselling and support to patients and families both pre and post bereavement. The Covid-19 pandemic brought a different focus to bereavement with a more community focus on grief. Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership approached the hospice to explore the feasibility of establishing community based bereavement support for the wider public.



## The Vision

The vision was to establish a drop in bereavement hub within a town centre setting for people who were grieving. We wanted to bring the hospice ethos into the community and contribute to wider conversations around death and dying. The aim was to make the service accessible, reactive and inclusive for all who needed support with their grief. The challenges, including funding were not underestimated however the willingness of everyone involved moved things forward.

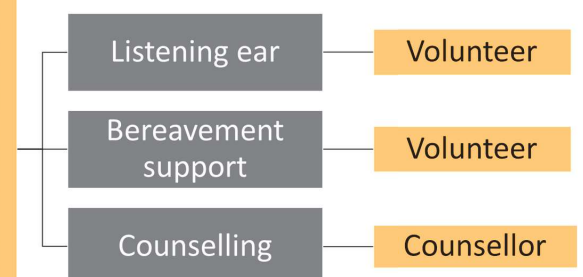


## What did we do?

With the help of a local business, premises were secured within the town centre and upgraded to offer a warm and welcoming space for people to drop in. Existing patient and family support resources and processes were adapted to meet the needs of this new service and volunteers were recruited and trained to help and support the counselling team. A free telephone number was established with the aim of increasing accessibility.

On referral, an initial assessment is carried out by one of the volunteers and triaged by a counsellor who makes the decision as to what level of support is deemed the best fit for the person. If required this decision can be reassessed at any time. Monthly external supervision sessions are in place for the whole team.

### Initial assessment



## Where are we now?

The community bereavement hub has now been established for three years and has secured funding from Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership to continue its development. The team has grown and now has one fulltime and three part time counsellors in post supported by a bank of trained volunteers and dedicated administration support.

In addition to the one to one support in place, there are now several groups established such as the walking with grief and young persons groups. The service endeavours to operate on a no waiting list basis to try and offer the right level of bereavement support to people at the right time for them.

152 new referrals were seen over a six month period in 2023. This is a 75% increase in the same time period from 2022.



User feedback is overwhelmingly positive and encourages the team to continue to develop this innovative way of supporting people with their grief.