

Grampian Bereavement Resource and Interest Group
Note of Meeting
Held on 24th February 2010
Seminar Room 1
Roxburghe House

Present: Peter Wimpenny (chair), Paul Sclare, Francis Edwards, Alison Hutchison, Audrey Stephen, Shona Grant, Margaret Ritchie, Fred Coutts, Eileen Wheeler.

Apologies: Colin Macduff, Gordon Linklater, Allan Leslie, Rosie Bird

Minutes and matters arising

Referring to the minute from the previous meeting, 25th Nov 2009, it was noted that the SAMH document, After a Suicide, had been launched. Some discussion about formats of bereavement information took place and Paul Sclare said that a city centre practice he works with prefer electronic formats because most patients had internet access.

Audrey Stephen thanked those in the group who had provided feedback on her bereavement care for older people guidelines.

Bereavement Framework for Scotland

Paul reported that the last meeting of the framework group had taken place earlier this month. He said that development of the draft document was now progressing well after initial lengthy discussions. The document is for the attention of health boards in Scotland though it was unclear whether implementation would be mandatory or if it was for use as an advisory guide. A launch event will take place in June.

Discussion took place about whether it would be considered useful for boards to have a group like this to maintain an ongoing focus. Whether boards should have a bereavement coordinator was also discussed. NHS Lothian was seen as an example of best practice, though some drawbacks were identified that could hamper this role in other board areas: geography; culture; 9-5 service; tendency for ward staff to claim ownership of a death. Peter will ask Caroline Pretty, bereavement coordinator at NHS Lothian, to come and speak to the group about her role.

It was decided that GBRIG members would respond to the consultation on an individual basis as well as providing a group response.

Managing a death out of hours

Peter informed the group that there is currently a consultation taking place on death and certification. The issue of sudden expected death is given little attention in the document and Peter thought it was an important topic that should be included. It was thought that there was confusion between verification and certification. Fred said that there was pressure to train verifiers but that persuading them to be certifiers would require culture change. Further discussion took place about deceased

persons being taken to police mortuaries out of hours. It was agreed that the group should respond to the consultation and recommend that something is added to reflect our concerns. Peter will send round the relevant bits of the document and ask for people's responses.

Bereavement information audit

Alison Hutchinson updated the group on progress. The audit is at a final draft stage. The main findings were that there is patchy use of the information booklet, and that healthcare staff can't get it on demand. Staff thought it was useful to have for giving out. ITU and cardiology use it frequently because of higher death rates. Some staff in other areas believe that they do OK with bereaved relatives and don't need other information. There is general consensus that the booklet needs to be reviewed and when is complete it will be launched with an educational package. The aim is to make giving the pack standard procedure, however, the impact of the information is unknown. The information should also fit with the national framework.

Paul thought that training could be CD or web based with actor scenarios and the focus would be on giving the information. He also thought it should be part of ongoing induction and undergraduate training.

2nd National Conference of Bereavement in a Healthcare Setting: Living with Loss

Information about the conference was provided. GBRIG members were encouraged to circulate information to colleagues who may be interested. The call for papers is open and abstracts would be welcomed.

Website

The group thought that the website should be reviewed and that it should be a key item on the agenda for the next meeting.

AOB

Francis drew attention to Short Life Working Group 7 for Living and Dying Well.

Francis also announced that there will be a Living and Dying Well event about children on 30th March in Inverness. There will be video link to the Suttie Centre at Foresterhill. The event is free and there will be five presentations in the morning and a workshop session in the afternoon. Information will be circulated.

Eileen said that training has taken place on Seasons for Growth for adults, and further training events will take place. Aberdeenshire Council has bought into the programme, but the city council has not.

Date and Time of Next Meeting

26th May, 2010, 3pm, Roxburghe House
Allan Leslie will chair

Subsequent meetings: 25th August
24th November