

# Bereaved NI - A new innovative website for Northern Ireland



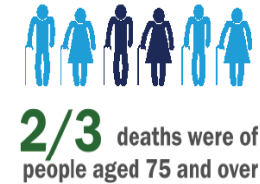
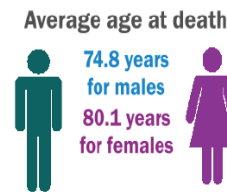
Northern Ireland Trust Bereavement Coordinators

# Bereavement in Northern Ireland

- Over 17k people die each year in NI with an average of 5 directly affected by each death - 85k newly bereaved each year
- Several Public Inquiries recommended improvements in bereavement services (HOI 2002 and IHRD 2019)
- In April 2020 CMO commissioned Covid-19 Bereavement Network
- Developed resources to support the bereaved during the pandemic
- Produced a report with 7 recommendations for improvement of services to support bereaved people

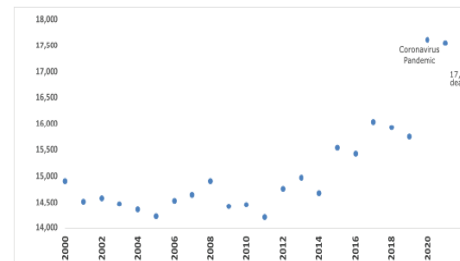
## Deaths

**17,159** deaths in 2022

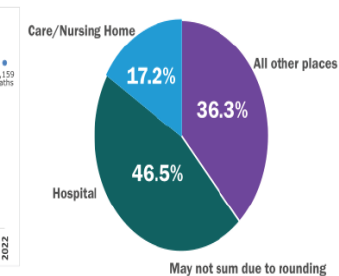


**152**  
deaths  
were of people  
aged 100 and over

Number of deaths over time



Place of Death



# Background & Implementation of NIBN

The Northern Ireland Department of Health developed and finalised the report “COVID-19 Guidance: Bereavement Advice and Support” in 2021.

A key recommendation was the Health and Social Care Bereavement Network should be expanded to become the Northern Ireland Bereavement Network (NIBN), with responsibility for developing and leading the strategic bereavement plan for the next 10 years.

One of four NIBN work streams was to develop a new website for the public and healthcare professionals to provide information and compassionate support required throughout the bereavement journey.



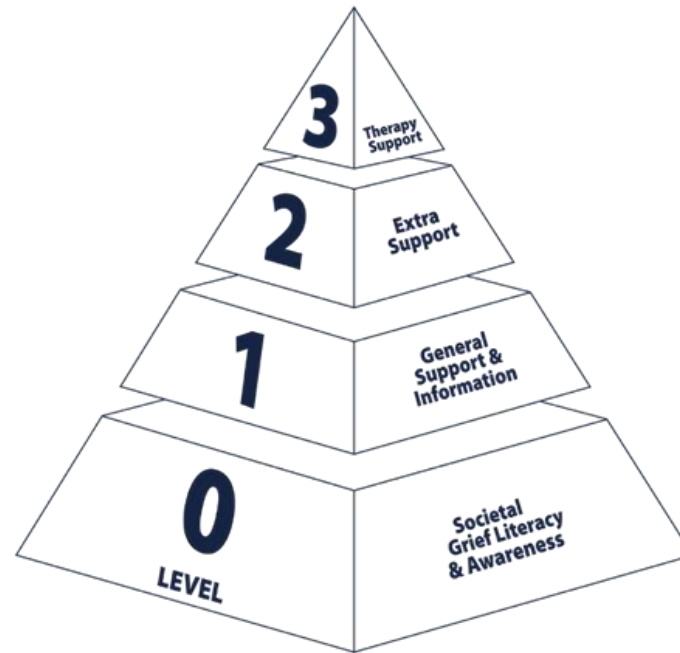
NI  
Bereavement  
Network

# NI Bereavement Network

- ▶ Established at the direction of the Minister May (2021)
  - ▶ Report to the Chief Professional Officers
  - ▶ Cross-sector representation
  - ▶ Linking with other jurisdictions
  - ▶ Tasked with implementing the 7 recommendations
- ▶ Subgroups
    - Strategy subgroup
    - Charter subgroup
    - Training and education subgroup
    - Website subgroup

# A “whole society” model for bereavement support

- ▶ Recommendation 2: That the HSC Bereavement Network is expanded to become the Northern Ireland Bereavement Network, with responsibility for developing a 10 year strategic plan
- ▶ Recommendation 5: A bereavement support website/hub should be developed to centralise and improve access to information



# Rationale

- ▶ The development of a website for NI with easily accessible bereavement support information for every bereavement journey with ‘Living, Dying Grieving’ as a conceptual framework. The website content seeks to reflect Northern Ireland’s culture and population needs, specifically the higher levels of poor mental health and suicide rates.<sup>1</sup>



# New NI Bereavement Website

- ▶ The bereavement journey
- ▶ ‘ Living, Dying, Grieving ’
- ▶ All circumstances
- ▶ All ages
- ▶ Different - not ‘corporate’ !
- ▶ Culturally reflective of NI - name & logo
- ▶ Navigation
- ▶ Mixed media
- ▶ Health care professionals
- ▶ Linked - all 3 work streams
- ▶ Building through engagement
- ▶ Accessibility

***Coproduction / Co-design / Public Engagement***

# Bereaved NI Website

► [Bereaved NI \(hscni.net\)](http://hscni.net)

The screenshot shows the Bereaved NI website homepage. At the top left is the logo for Bereaved NI, the NI Bereavement Network. To the right is a search bar with the text "Enter your search here" and a "Language" dropdown menu. Below the header is a navigation bar with links: Home | Care Before Death | Practical Support | Bereavement Support | Helplines | Video Wall | For Carers | For Professionals. A yellow banner below the navigation bar reads: "Welcome to the new Bereaved NI website, if you would like to provide feedback about the website please use the [Website Feedback Form](#)". The main content area features a large image of a coastal landscape with a blue sky and green hills. Overlaid on the image is the text: "Information and support if you are experiencing grief and bereavement or helping other people who are bereaved". Below the image is a search filter section with four dropdown menus: "Person who has died", "Circumstances of Death", "Age groups needing pu...", and "Types of support". The main content is organized into a grid of 16 purple buttons, each with an icon and a label: "Accessible Resources", "Care Before Death", "Practical Support", "Bereavement Support", "Children and Young People", "Mental Health Support", "HSC Bereavement Booklet", "Helplines", "Video Wall", "For Carers", "For Professionals", and "Bereavement Charter for NI". At the bottom, there are two sections: "Lifeline – Emergency Help and Support" with the text "Lifeline is Northern Ireland's crisis response helpline" and contact information (https://www.lifelinehelpline.info, Call: 0808 808 8000), and "Care Opinion – Share and view Experiences" with the text "Care Opinion is a place where you can share your experience of health or care services, and help make them better for everyone." and contact information (https://www.careopinion.org.uk, Call: 0800 122 3135).



NI  
Bereavement  
Network



Department of  
**Health**  
An Roinn Sláinte  
Mánnystrie O Poustie  
[www.health-ni.gov.uk](http://www.health-ni.gov.uk)



# Children and young people



Enter your search here

Language ▾

[Home](#) | [Care Before Death](#) | [Practical Support](#) | [Bereavement Support](#) | [Helplines](#) | [Video Wall](#) | [For Carers](#) | [For Professionals](#)

[Home](#) > [Bereavement Support](#) > [Children and Young People](#)

## Children and Young People

We are sorry if someone important to you has died. Please see links below for information and support for children and young people who have been bereaved and for adults after the death of a child.

- [Support For Children Who Have Been Bereaved](#)
- [Support For Young People Who Have Been Bereaved](#)
- [Support for Adults After The Death of a Child](#)

### Also in this area

[Support for Children Who Have Been Bereaved](#)

[Support for Young People who have been Bereaved](#)

[Support for Adults After The Death of a Child](#)

Use the Search Filter to find specific bereavement help & support



# Bereaved by Suicide

## Bereaved By Suicide

On this page you will find support and resources to help cope with bereavement by suicide. These services are there to help you and you can also make contact if you are concerned about someone else.

### Help is at Hand

The [Help is at Hand Booklet](#) provides support after someone may have died by suicide in Northern Ireland.

### Help for Suicidal Thoughts

Sometimes people who have been bereaved by suicide may have suicidal thoughts themselves. It's important to talk to someone. Help and support is available right now if you need it. You do not have to struggle with difficult feelings alone. Please see links below for support:

Samaritans: <https://www.samaritans.org/> Call: 116 123 Available 24 hours

Lifeline | Lifeline Helpline: <https://www.lifelinehelpline.info/> Call: 0808 808 8000 Available 24 hours

Help for suicidal thoughts - NHS: <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/feelings-symptoms-behaviours/behaviours/help-for-suicidal-thoughts/>

### Concerned About Someone Else

Concerned about suicide? HSC Public Health Agency: <https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/publications/concerned-about-suicide-0>

Comkit - To Protect Life: <https://comkit.info/>

Free online training from Zero Suicide Alliance: <https://www.zerosuicidealliance.com/training>

### Also in this area

[Pregnancy and Baby Loss](#)

[Children and Young People](#) +

[Adult Bereavement](#)

[Sudden / Traumatic Death](#) +

[Accessible Resources](#) +

[Bereaved By Suicide](#)

[LGBTQIA+](#)

[Faith, Spiritual, Cultural](#) +

[Pet Bereavement](#)

[Library](#) +

Use the Search Filter to find specific bereavement help & support

# Design

The design of this website encompassed a 'whole society' model for bereavement support, reflecting the evidence-based public health model of needs-based bereavement care.<sup>2</sup>



The design and ongoing development is cross sectoral, co-produced and was refined through public and government engagement via a World Café event and Citizen Space feedback platform.



The website is fully compliant with international accessibility standards.<sup>3</sup>

# Results

	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept
Active Users	4484	1310	1262	849	757	617	726
New Users	4183	1065	1068	701	642	492	651

Google Analytics and an onsite feedback facility provide the editorial group with data on current usage of 'Bereaved NI' which informs ongoing development of the website.

Bereaved NI - Online Access Activity Report



# Feedback

- ▶ “ We know that the death of a loved one is a particularly difficult life experience. The development of the new website will provide a central point for those who are bereaved and need some additional support. For the first time, the new website will bring together all of the resources that are available in one place for the benefit of the general public, carers, and professionals ” [Chief Medical Officer, Professor Sir Michael McBride](#)
- ▶ “ The layout is easy to navigate and has lots of information for children and young people. It ensures that young people can access what they need on the website ” [Cruse Young Advisory Group \(YAG\) 21 year old female](#)
- ▶ “ This is a fabulous website, well designed and easy to navigate ” [Citizen space \(Adult\)](#)
- ▶ “ I have been using Bereaved NI website since it has been launched, it is an excellent resource which I have demonstrated to patients during their consultations and have received positive responses from patients using this site ” [GP, Northern Ireland](#)

# Conclusion

- ▶ Bereaved NI website was successfully launched on the 11 March 2024.<sup>4</sup>
- ▶ BBC News report: Bereavement Support through grieving process can be a 'lifeline'.<sup>5</sup>
- ▶ Subgroup to design and launch have progressed to editorial board to govern, monitor and evaluate

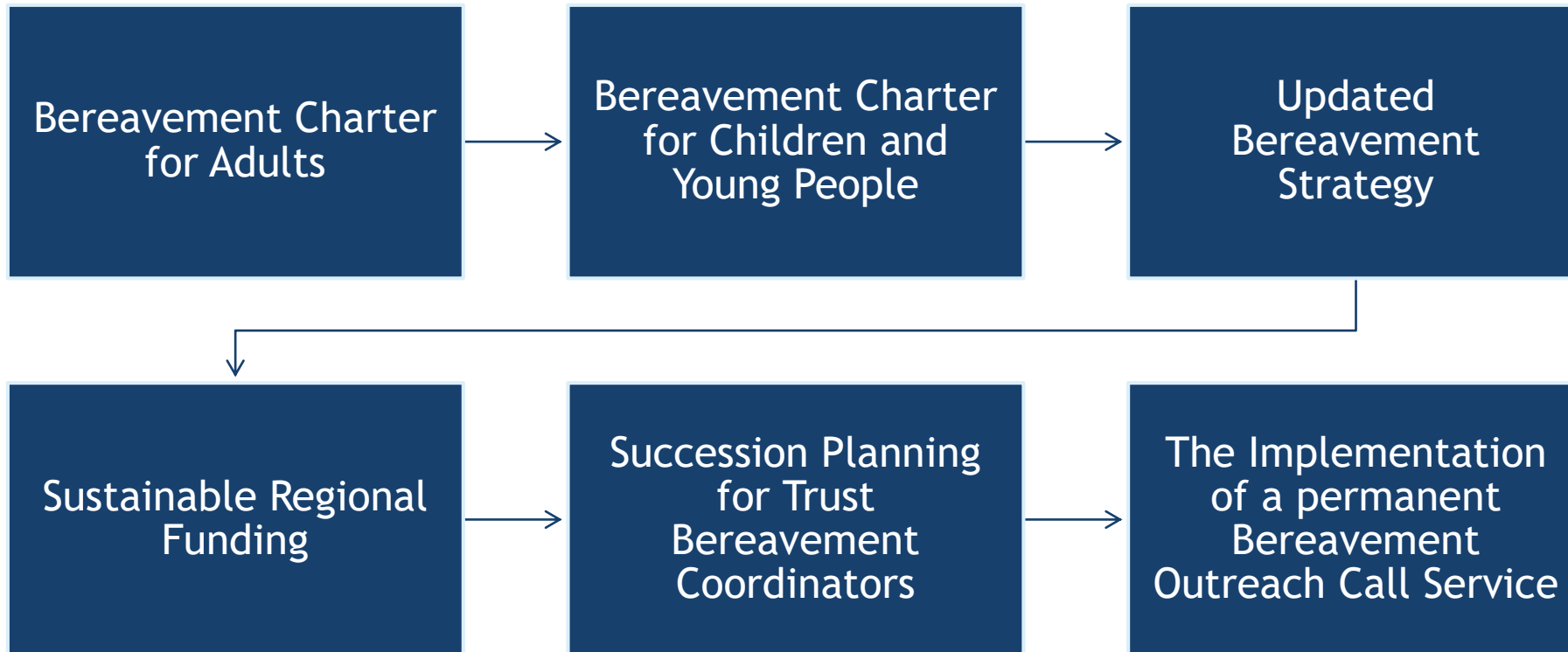
[Bereavement Website for Northern Ireland - Bereaved NI \(hscni.net\)](https://www.hscni.net)



A screenshot of a BBC News article. The top navigation bar includes the BBC logo, a sign-in button, and links for Home, News, Sport, Weather, iPlayer, and a signal strength icon. Below this is a red banner with the word "NEWS" in white. Underneath the banner are several category links: Home, InDepth, Israel-Gaza war, US election, Cost of Living, War in Ukraine, Climate, UK, World, and Business. The article title is "Bereavement: Support through grieving process can be a 'lifeline'", dated 17 March. A red share icon is visible. The main image shows an elderly man, Peter McCarthy, sitting at a desk with a laptop. Behind him is a poster that says "You're not alone. Get support, donate or find out more at cruse.org.uk 0808 808 1677 @CruseSupport". Below the image is a caption: "Peter McCarthy, 82, lost his wife Eilish just before their 52nd wedding anniversary in 2014". The article is by Jake Wood, BBC News NI. The text of the article states: "Support during bereavement can be 'a lifeline', a man who lost his wife and son has told BBC News NI. He was speaking after health Minister Robin Swann launched a website to help people in Northern Ireland through grief. The Bereaved NI site provides information and support for those experiencing bereavement. Mr Swann said it would 'signpost users to appropriate support at each stage of the bereavement journey'."



# Northern Ireland: Next steps





# This is Grief

"About three weeks after the funeral I was taking my dogs for a walk. On the way home I found myself walking up the garden path to his house (as was the evening ritual). It suddenly hit me like a sledgehammer that he was gone, and I would never see him again. I sat on his doorstep and cried as I have never cried before. Now 22 years have passed and not one day goes by where I don't think of him." Marie Curie (2022)

“ Loss which is immense. Which comes at you from behind you and below you and rises and swallows you. You know, I got completely overwhelmed at the supermarket the other day. Rev R .Cole ( 2021)



# References

- ▶ <sup>1</sup> *Births, deaths, and marriages (2023)* Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. Available at: <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/statistics/births-deaths-and-marriages>
- ▶ <sup>2</sup> *National Framework for the delivery of bereavement care [HTML] (2021)* GOV.WALES. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/national-framework-delivery-bereavement-care-html>
- ▶ <sup>3</sup> (WAI), W.W.A.I. (2023) *WCAG 2 Overview, Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI)*. Edited by A. Kirkpatrick et al. Available at: <https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/>
- ▶ <sup>4</sup> *Northern Ireland bereavement support website launched (2024)* Health. Available at: <https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/news/northern-ireland-bereavement-support-website-launched>
- ▶ <sup>5</sup> Wood, J. (2024) *Bereavement: Support through grieving process can be a ‘lifeline’*, BBC News. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-68581962>
- ▶ All accessed on 10/04/2024.

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