

Lincolnshire Bereavement Helpline

0300 303 1897

Monday	9am - 8pm
Tuesday	9am - 5pm
Wednesday	9am - 8pm
Thursday	9am - 5pm
Friday	9am - 5pm

St Barnabas Bereavement Counsellors have opened a special helpline for those isolating and dealing with the death of a loved one.

St Barnabas Hospice has announced the launch of a special helpline in response to the coronavirus pandemic. As thousands of people in Lincolnshire are isolated, dealing with the death of a loved one alone can affect the way we normally grieve. St Barnabas will offer a listening ear and basic advice to anyone who feels unable to cope or who needs to seek support. Deaths may have been from causes other than coronavirus, may be recent, or may have triggered feelings of grief and loss from a past bereavement.

The new bereavement helpline will be open Monday to Friday, from 9am to 5pm, as well as Monday and Wednesday evenings until 8pm. Counsellors will provide emotional support and a listening ear as well as hints and tips on how to stay calm, manage anxiety, and how to pay respects to a loved one when a funeral cannot take place in the usual way. We understand that people will be feeling more emotional and alone than normal and our aim is to use our expertise to support people when they need it the most but also understanding that they may be grieving in a different way because of the current situation.

Calls will be taken by over 25 volunteers, most are trained counsellors or bereavement volunteers who would usually be working in the community holding group sessions. As these have stopped, we were keen to use their expertise to continue being able to support our community. The helpline will offer an initial response, and if someone needs additional, more regular care, we will be able to refer them to the relevant service.

This helpline is accessible to the people of Lincolnshire due to capacity, and support can be accessed by dialling **0300 303 1897**.

For further information please contact:

tracy.tuffs@stbarnabashospice.co.uk or visit StBarnabasHospice.co.uk/BereavementHelpline

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Launching Wednesday 29th April

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St Barnabas Hospice recognises the significant impact of bereavement during the current coronavirus pandemic on individuals, communities and organisations, and the immediate and long term risk of adverse bereavement reaction to families who may not be able to be with loved ones at the time of death, register deaths or plan funerals in the usual ways, or be together to grieve their loss.

The Bereavement Support Helpline has been created in response to the immediate and anticipated future demand on bereavement services whether deaths are as a result of coronavirus or from other causes. Callers do **NOT** need to have previously used hospice services.

It aims to:

- Provide telephone support for those who are grieving the death of a loved one, family, friend or work colleague who was aged 18+. St Barnabas do not currently offer a service to those who are grieving a child, however we will signpost to other services wherever possible.
- Make available trained volunteers to be a listening ear for people who have been bereaved
- Share strategies for reducing anxiety related to bereavement especially through coronavirus, loneliness, isolation and increased vulnerability.
- Normalise and offer support for some of the psychological emotional and physical reactions to grief and loss (e.g. shock, anger, disbelief, guilt).
- Offer other strategies and ideas to help deal with grief in the current situation, for example how to say goodbye when unable to attend a funeral.
- Help people with separation from other family members during bereavement.
- Signpost to other websites and agencies.
- Provide ongoing support via the St Barnabas Bereavement team where appropriate (e.g. signposting into counselling and support services).