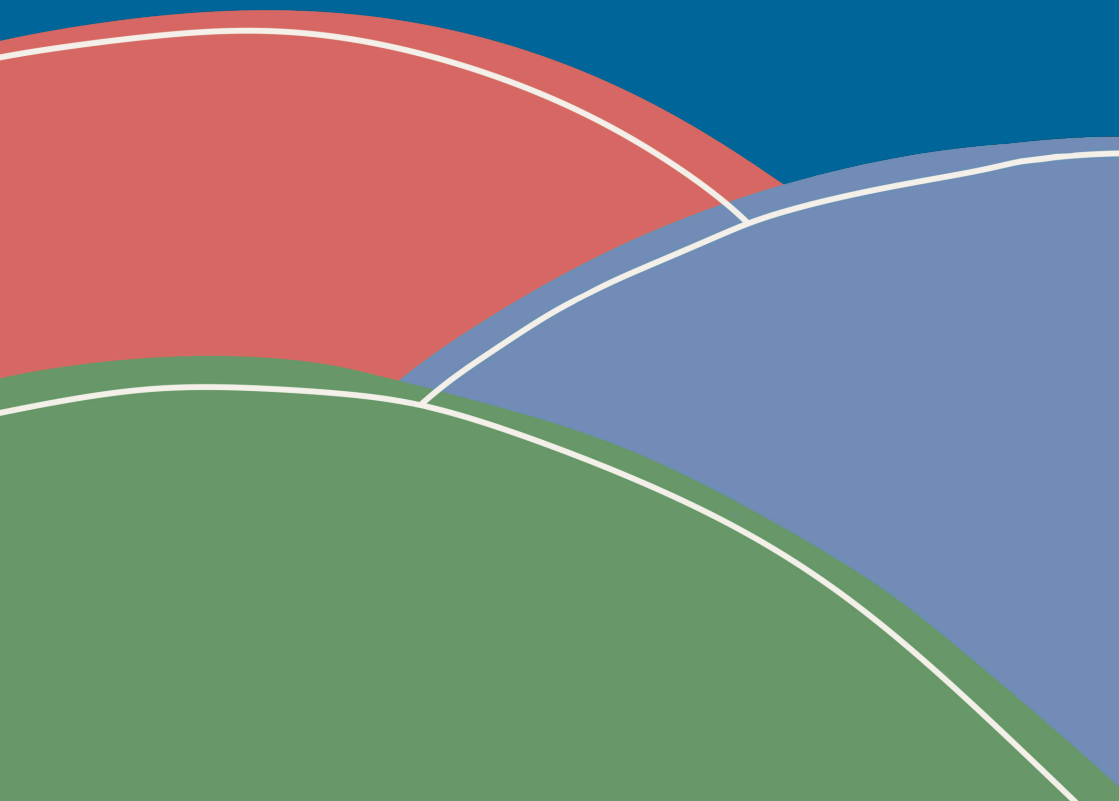




st michael's
hospice

Bereavement Support

Helping the community of Hastings
and Rother live through bereavement.



The impact of grief

The death of someone close to you may be the most devastating and overwhelming experience that will ever happen.

The grief following the loss is not an illness but a normal human journey, although very difficult and painful, involving strong reactions. Your feelings are something you experience, not symptoms that need to be treated.

During the coming weeks and months, you may need help and support from others – it can be very hard to manage bereavement alone. Many people find support from their close family and friends.

It may also be helpful to talk to someone outside your family and friends. Bereavement support provides you with the opportunity to talk about your loss in confidence.

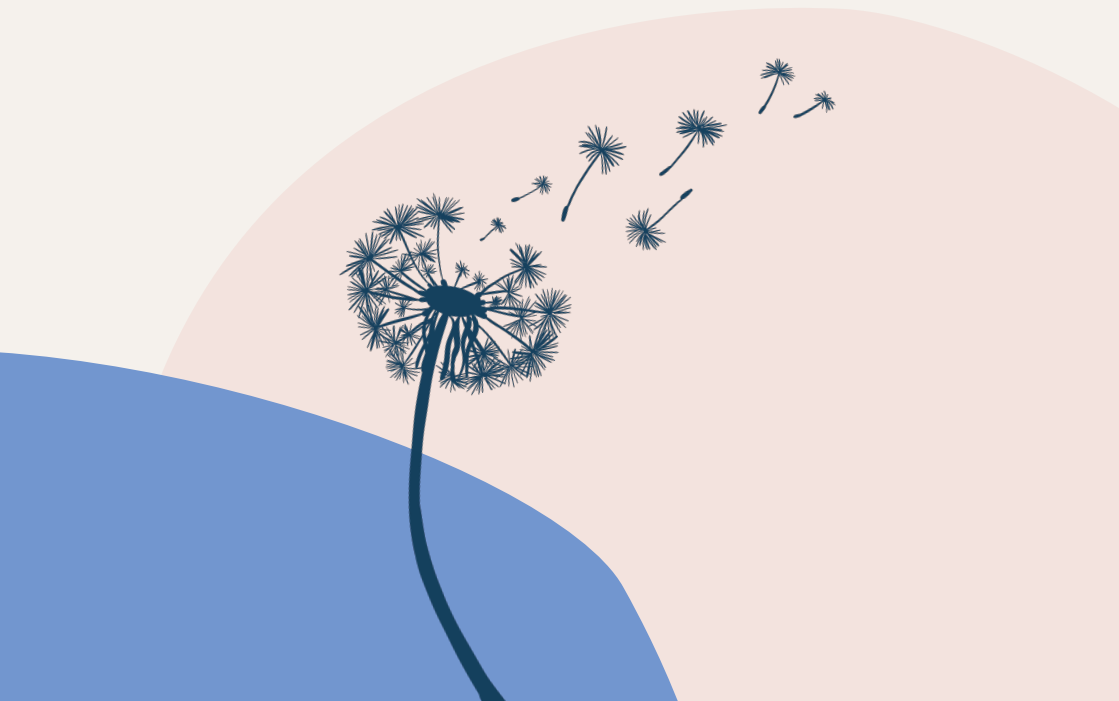
"Having someone to talk to who understands and doesn't expect you to 'move on' is really beyond helpful. I now know I can get through bad days and smile again." - Anon

People react to grief in different ways. It can be very painful and you may experience feelings you don't expect.

Many bereaved people feel strained and exhausted, finding it difficult to eat or sleep. You may experience deep sadness and find that, for a while, life has lost its meaning. These are natural reactions to bereavement.

You might feel life will be more bearable if you moved house or quickly get rid of possessions. This can be a very natural feeling; however, major changes can sometimes make things worse and decisions like these should be considered carefully. You may need to deal with many different thoughts and feelings before such changes.

The important thing is to allow yourself to feel and do what is right for you in your own time.



What support is there?

We offer bereavement support to anyone aged 18 and over, who is living in Hastings and Rother, and is struggling to cope with the bereavement of someone significant to them, regardless of how and when you experienced the loss. No previous contact with the Hospice is necessary to access our bereavement support.

R.I.S.E (Resilience with Inspirational Support and Empathy) Therapy Groups (assessment required)

Our R.I.S.E Bereavement Therapy Groups run for up to eight weeks, with up to a maximum of 12 participants, although some groups have lower numbers attending. Our R.I.S.E Groups are facilitated by trained Bereavement Counsellors. Some sessions have specific themes providing an opportunity to share experiences of loss with others. The groups run at various times, day and early evening.

Counselling support (assessment required)

A confidential Counselling Support Service offering up to 12 individual one-to-one weekly sessions. Can be held, daytime, early evening or Saturday mornings with trained Bereavement Supporters and Counsellors. Please be aware that there is a waiting list for this service.

"It's part of the healing process, it's beneficial, you meet people you never knew you'd meet." – Toula

Peer Support Groups (you don't need an assessment to access these groups)

Men's Bereavement Peer Support Group

This group offers a safe and supportive space for men to share their grief by connecting with other men who face similar challenges of adapting to life following a bereavement.

Young Persons's Bereavement Peer Support Group

This group offers a safe and supportive space for young adults aged 18 - 40 to connect with peers who are also facing life with loss.

Queer Grief Bereavement Peer Support Group

Grief within the Queer community can be complex, often combined with experiences of self-censorship or marginalisation. This group offers a confidential and inclusive space for Queer identifying and LGBTQIA+ individuals to share and process grief openly, without fear of judgment. The group acknowledges and validates each other's unique experiences of loss within a supportive community.

GROws (Grief Recovery with Support) Peer Support Group

Grieving can sometimes feel lonely, with a sense that those around us don't understand. GROws is a peer support group, bringing people together that might otherwise have limited support. Join other people who are bereaved for a coffee and a chat, on varying weekdays

Activity Groups (assessment required)

Write Out Loud

Write Out Loud provides a welcoming space to write, chat, and creatively express thoughts and feelings of loss.

Walk and Talk Group

In partnership with East Sussex Health Walks, we offer a weekly Walk and Talk Group for people who are bereaved to meet and share their experiences of grief, all whilst leisurely walking in the fresh air.

Rye Harbour Nature Reserve Group

This group runs in partnership with Sussex Wildlife Trust and is supported by The Lawson Trust. Offering guided walks and learning in the wonderful environment of the Rye Harbour Nature Reserve, whilst sharing experiences of grief and loss.

Visit stmichaelshospice.com/bereavement-services for up to date times, dates, and locations of all these groups.



How to get in touch

Call-back Service

If you're experiencing emotional difficulty and need to speak to a counsellor, this service is available by request, either by calling **01424 456361**, emailing **bereavement@stmichaelshospice.com** or completing an online request form on our website. You will receive a call from one of our counsellors, where they will provide emotional and practical support where appropriate.

Our Peer Support Groups don't require an assessment, call **01424 456361** to find out when these groups meet.

How do I get a referral?

You can access this service by calling **01424 456361** or emailing **stmichaelshosp.referrals@nhs.net**.

We also take referrals from medical professionals, Hospice employees, mental health services and social services either by phone, letter or by referral form on our website.

For one-to-one support, groups, and activities that require an assessment, you will be invited to meet with one of our qualified counsellors. This will be either in person or over the phone. It's an opportunity for you to talk about the impact of your loss and for us to explain the support we can provide.

After your assessment, if you want to have one-to-one or group therapeutic support, you'll be placed on our waiting list. We aim to start your support as soon as possible, but this depends on your, and our availability. Please note, waiting times can vary.

Activity Groups will be available to you immediately after completing your assessment. If you'd like to join a group, our Admin Team will support you with access details.

Bereavement Support Team employees and volunteers

Our Bereavement Support Service is supported by employee qualified counsellors, volunteer qualified counsellors, volunteer counsellors in training and volunteer bereavement supporters. Our Bereavement Team follow a comprehensive training programme focusing on the effect bereavement and loss can have on our lives. All bereavement employees and volunteers receive regular supervision to maintain a high standard of work.

Cost of the Bereavement Service

There is no charge for any of the services we offer at the Hospice. The majority of our funding comes from generous donations, legacies and fundraising from our community. If you'd like to find out how you can support our services, visit stmichaelshospice.com/donate or call **01424 456396**.

For more information about the Bereavement Support Services, call **01424 456361**, email bereavement@stmichaelshospice.com, or find out more about our services on our website stmichaelshospice.com/bereavement-services

St Michael's Hospice is an Organisational Member of BACP (British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy).



stmichaelshospice.com

Registered charity no. 288462

