



# The Bereavement Pathways Project



## Cruse Bereavement Care and the Bereavement Services Association The Bereavement Pathways Project

### Background to the Bereavement Pathways Project

Cruse and the BSA decided to join forces to develop the Bereavement Pathways Project (BPP) after discussions led both organisations to conclude that the relationship between NHS and voluntary bereavement services could be improved and that services should communicate and work together where possible to provide the best support for bereaved people – whether the death occurred in hospital or in the community. The Bereavement Pathways Project will explore and examine ways in which NHS and Voluntary/Community based bereavement services can work together to create pathways for bereaved families to move from hospital to community based services and establish ways of working, core standards for service delivery and joint education and training opportunities, built around the needs and wishes of bereaved people.

### The Bereavement Services Association

The BSA was established in May 2005 as a network for all those who provide bereavement support services, primarily within the NHS. After undertaking consultation on service provision and the relevance of previous guidance issued to Trusts on bereavement, the Department of Health funded the writing of a bereavement care training pack and an advice document entitled 'When a Patient Dies'. Following discussions between a number of NHS

bereavement service managers, who formed the initial steering group of the BSA and the Department of Health, funding was also made available to help establish the Association. The main aims of the BSA are:

- To provide a national network for all those who work in providing bereavement support services
- To provide a national forum for discussion and training for those providing bereavement support services, particularly in the NHS
- To contribute to the improvement of the quality of bereavement services nationally
- To raise the profile and seek recognition from stakeholders of the role of those who provide bereavement support services
- To raise awareness of the role and availability of bereavement support services.

The BSA is a membership organisation led by a voluntary Executive Committee and information is the website

[www.bsauk.org.uk](http://www.bsauk.org.uk)

### Our aims for the Bereavement Pathways Project are:

- The establishment of a key partnership between NHS and VCS bereavement services, by linking hospital based services which provide support soon after a death, and Cruse services, which provide support at any time after a death through to longer term support.
- Clear pathways to facilitate equity of access and choice for bereaved people seeking bereavement support from the Acute Hospital Sector or from within the Community.
- The review and revision of DH guidance 'When a Patient Dies', including work to measure the impact of the guidance on bereavement services.
- The development of up to date information on the number, scope and operation of NHS, VCS and Primary Care bereavement services
- The development of best practice for statutory and voluntary agencies working in partnership, particularly emphasising assessment and referral protocols and building on the 'UK Standards for Bereavement Care' (2001), 'Bereavement Care In Practice' (2004) and 'When a Patient Dies' (2005)