

**PRESS RELEASE** from Cruse Bereavement Care  
Monday 28 January 2008



### **New Chief Executive for Cruse Bereavement Care**

“Cruse Bereavement Care will celebrate its Golden Jubilee in 2009 so this appointment comes at an important time for us, and I could not be more delighted,” says Debbie Kerslake, who from April becomes Chief Executive and Director of Services of the only national charity for all bereaved people, on the retirement of Anne Viney.

Debbie, who has guided training and development for the past eight years, is a familiar and popular force throughout the organization, which has over 5,000 volunteers across its 138 Areas and Branches.

She says: “There’s much to do in a rapidly changing world. I intend to make sure Cruse meets the challenge of last year’s 70% increase in our work with children and young people, for example; and that we continue development of Cruse’s role in the aftermath of disasters with September 11, the tsunami and the London bombings.”

Comments Anne: “In six years with Cruse Bereavement Care I have marvelled at the ability of volunteers to meet bereavement in all its forms, and to be alongside people at the worst time of their lives. The job of the national charity is to make sure bereavement volunteers get the best possible training, support and leadership. I have welcomed the chance to try to meet this challenge, and I know that Cruse will continue to rise to it in the future.”

Anne has also been successful in giving bereavement a higher priority on government policy agendas - work that Debbie intends to keep up.

Nigel Tricker, chair of Cruse Bereavement Care adds: “Everyone at Cruse is delighted we have been able to appoint Debbie in succession to Anne. This will ensure continuity of our work and organisation.”

### **Notes to Editors**

Cruse Bereavement Care, a national organisation with almost 140 branches, provides bereavement advice and support through its network of some 5,500 volunteers, all of whom complete special Cruse training to work with clients. In the year 2006-7 Cruse handled over 87,000 inquiries and provided support for almost 23,000 bereaved people asking for help. Cruse’s mission is to promote the well-being of bereaved people and to enable anyone bereaved by death to understand their grief and cope with their loss. The organisation provides support, information and advice - one to one, through group work and through publications and the website - as well as education and training services with a programme of training courses.

Cruse services include a special website for young people, [rd4u.org.uk](http://rd4u.org.uk), where they can find help and support, and share thoughts gained from their own experiences. In 2006-7, Cruse bereavement volunteers helped 1,314 children and young people - an increase of 71% over the previous year’s statistics; almost 2,000 messages were sent to rd4u by grieving youngsters.

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