

BEREAVEMENT SERVICES AT UPMC

Compassionate, Sensitive Support is Available

When a person dies, he or she leaves behind family members, friends, caregivers, and others who are experiencing a wide variety of emotions. In some cases, death is expected, and loved ones have had the opportunity to begin processing their feelings and to say goodbye. Sometimes, death is sudden, and families are caught by surprise. No matter what the circumstances, the patient's loved ones may need emotional support to manage their grief.

UPMC provides bereavement services to family members, friends, and caregivers in many ways. We offer our own, in-house help; we also refer people to the Good Grief Center for Bereavement Support, a nonprofit organization in western Pennsylvania that specializes in addressing the emotional, psychological, and spiritual needs of people whose loved ones have died.

In the Hospital

When a patient is dying in the hospital, our specialized bereavement counselors strive to be on hand to help family members cope if need be. We respect the family's privacy and wishes, offering help in ways that can ease the immediate sense of loss. Acute bereavement support involves sympathy, psychological guidance, and prayer if requested. A social worker also may refer family members or caregivers (including hospital staff) for additional support.

When children are experiencing grief, our staff members help by teaching adults how to explain death at a developmentally appropriate level. We can provide helpful vocabulary and brief outlines of what to say—and what not to say—in accordance with the family's beliefs and values.

Our free, hospital-based support groups, led by professional grief counselors in several UPMC facilities, are available to loved ones and caregivers who feel that talking with others may help them to manage their grief. Support groups usually convene twice a year, for several meetings per course. Many UPMC facilities also conduct annual services of remembrance for people who have died in the hospital. Families and friends often find these services comforting.

Good Grief Center for Bereavement Support

The Good Grief Center provides both free and fee-based bereavement support services to families, friends, and caregivers. Individual counseling, group support, and help by telephone ensure that each person who has suffered a loss can find the right kind of help. Services are available at the organization's offices in Squirrel Hill, but Good Grief also maintains an extensive list of support groups in many other neighborhoods. A comprehensive library of grief support materials is also available.



Good Grief Center for Bereavement Support

2717 Murray Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15217-2419
412-224-4700
1-888-474-3388

Help from Volunteers

UPMC is working to establish a system-wide grief support volunteering program, through which specially selected and trained volunteers will offer follow-up support to family members, friends, and caregivers. Volunteers will be available to comfort the bereaved in person and over the phone.

Contact Us

If you or somebody you know could benefit from the work of the UPMC Palliative and Supportive Institute, send us an email at PSICare@UPMC.edu, call our toll-free line at **1-855-565-7146**, or visit our website at UPMC.com/PSI.

UPMC Palliative and Supportive Institute

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