

Quality Improvement in our community hospitals.

Over the last 12 months Westminster Memorial Hospital's (WMH) end of life services has been given a much needed make-over .We have spent time fundraising within the wider team at WMH in order to give our end-of-life suite a well-deserved update, making it accessible and comfortable for both the patient and their families to use during their stay with us.

Recognising that death and dying is inevitable and end of life care is always a priority at WMH we felt that we were good at supporting the patient and their families at the bed side, however our ongoing support to families following the death of a loved one was limited . Therefore, our project has focused heavily on improving bereavement services.

Bereavement can be a distressing and isolating experience, yet it is barely talked about and discussed in everyday life. We wanted to give families the opportunity to stay in contact with our services post the death of a loved one as we acknowledge that it can be hard to talk to other family members and friends around this subject.

Our Project .

Part 1 : Information folder

We have developed an information folder for families that are using our end-of-life suite. The information contains a welcome letter ,information around local services , a what to do when someone is dying booklet and information regarding bereavement services . We have access to a library of information so the packs can be tailored to each family and their needs .

Part 2 : Bereavement Garden

Whilst there is no easy way to deal with grief, creating a memorial garden as a tribute to a loved one can be a practical, healing and a special way to honour their life. Our bereavement garden is focused around our memorial tree. This is a magnificent metal tree that stands over 2 meters tall .Surrounded by benches , views and plenty of plants the garden really is a space to sit , reflect and remember giving space for emotional

healing .Developing this space reflects the level of care that we want to provide to the wider families, friends, and the community.

Part 3 : Bereavement Service

Held locally and supported by the Chaplin service and local choir we have given families the opportunity to come together to talk, reflect and celebrate the life of their loved ones who have died while in our care.

This service has proven to be an opportunity for reflection , lots of tears and plenty of laughter and above all the space to come together with others that are grieving the loss of a loved one in safe and caring environment .

Part 4 : Grief Encounters Cafe

This service is the last in our project to be developed . Recognising that families do not always know what to do and how to manage grief we are inviting them into our café to meet, chat and support one another whilst still in a safe and supportive environment. This café can signpost people to other services and organisations that they may require in order to support them through their grief.