Bereavement Risk Assessment Tool

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Assessment Date	Assessed by	ID#	Patient / Deceased Name	Bereaved Name

Risk Indicators and Protective Factors

Comments

I. Kinship

- ☐ a) spouse/partner of patient or deceased
- ☐ b) parent/parental figure of patient or deceased

II Caregiver

- ☐ a) family member or friend who has taken primary responsibility for care

III. Mental Health

- ☐ a) significant mental illness (eg major depression, schizophrenia, anxiety disorder)
- ☐ b) significant mental disability (eg developmental, dementia, stroke, head injury)

IV. Coping

- ☐ a) substance abuse / addiction (specify)
- ☐ b) considered suicide (no plan, no previous attempt)
- ☐ c) has suicide plan and a means to carry it out OR has made previous attempt
- ☐ d) self-expressed concerns regarding own coping, now or in future
- ☐ e) heightened emotional states (anger, guilt, anxiety) as typical response to stressors
- ☐ f) yearning/pining for the deceased OR persistent disturbing thoughts/images > 3 months*
- ☐ g) declines available resources or support
- ☐ h) inability to experience grief feelings or acknowledge reality of the death > 3 months*

V. Spirituality / Religion

- ☐ significant challenge to fundamental beliefs / loss of meaning or faith / spiritual distress

VI. Concurrent Stressors

- ☐ a) two or more competing demands (eg single parenting, work, other caregiving)
- ☐ b) insufficient financial, practical or physical resources (eg ↓ income, no childcare, illness)
- ☐ c) recent non-death losses (eg divorce, unemployment, moving, retirement)
- ☐ d) significant other with life-threatening illness / injury (other than patient/deceased)

VII. Previous Bereavements

- ☐ a) unresolved previous bereavement(s)
- ☐ b) death of other significant person within 1 year (from time of patient's death)
- ☐ c) cumulative grief from > 2 OTHER deaths over past 3 years
- ☐ d) death or loss of parent/parental figure during own childhood (less than age 19)

VIII. Supports & Relationships

- ☐ a) lack of social support/social isolation (perceived or real - eg housebound)
- ☐ b) cultural or language barriers to support
- ☐ c) longstanding or current discordant relationship(s) within the family
- ☐ d) relationship with patient/deceased (eg abuse, dependency)

IX. Children & Youth

- ☐ a) death of parent, parental figure or sibling*
- ☐ b) demonstration of extreme, ongoing behaviours/symptoms (eg sep anxiety+, nightmares)
- ☐ c) parent expresses concern regarding his/her ability to support child's grief
- ☐ d) parent/parental figure significantly compromised by his/her own grief

X. Circumstances Involving the Patient, the Care or the Death

- ☐ a) patient/deceased less than age 35
- ☐ b) lack of preparedness for the death (as perceived or demonstrated by bereaved)*
- ☐ c) distress witnessing the death OR death perceived as preventable*
- ☐ d) violent, traumatic OR unexplained death (eg accident, suicide, unknown cause)*
- ☐ e) significant anger with OTHER health care providers (eg "my GP missed the diagnosis")
- ☐ f) significant anger with OUR hospice palliative care program (eg "you killed my wife")

XI. Protective Factors Supporting Positive Bereavement Outcome

- ☐ a) internalized belief in own ability to cope effectively
- ☐ b) perceives AND is willing to access strong social support network
- ☐ c) predisposed to high level of optimism/positive state of mind
- ☐ d) spiritual/religious beliefs that assist in coping with the death