

Appendix M: Postvention Interventions

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The following interventions have been suggested as potentially beneficial to providing supportive care in postvention:

- Information about the manner, timing and circumstances of the death.
- An opportunity to view the body.
- Emotional support at a viewing of the body.
- Information about official procedures and investigations, including an explanation of postmortem and inquest procedures. Written information pertaining to these issues.
- A copy of, or the original suicide note or message shared as appropriate.
- Help and assistance with informing family and others of the death and the circumstances of the death.
- Assistance with interpretation of the postmortem report.
- A package of written information covering: grief and coping strategies for grief; suicide; available resources; a reading list; contact information for local bereavement, and bereaved by suicide, support groups; and, related matters.
- Written information about how to support children bereaved by suicide.
- Advice about responding to media inquiries and requests for information about the death.
- Referral to a general practitioner for information, support, assessment and, perhaps, medication.
- Information about inquests, including the purpose, context and protocols associated with the process, and social and emotional support during the inquest.
- Opportunities to talk about their experience of a suicide death with others who have been bereaved in this way, in the context of a bereaved by suicide support group, if available
- Access to professional individual or group counselling, therapy or psychotherapy as needed, without cost being a barrier.
- Support from religious leaders and clergy.
- Access, in a non-stigmatizing way, to factual information about suicide and mental illnesses with which suicide may be associated.
- Information about how to respond in social environments to questions about the suicide death in their family.
- Information about how to cope with grief and about how others bereaved by suicide have coped during the years following a family suicide.
- Access to information about the impact of suicide on family functioning, how other families have coped after suicide, and strategies for enhancing family communication and functioning after suicide.
- Advice about how, and what to tell children about the suicide death of a close family member, and how to protect them from risk of suicidal behaviour.
- Links with bereavement services.
- Follow-up contact, several times during the first year to reiterate offers of support and assistance, and to provide information.