

# THE IMPACT OF WORKING WITH SUICIDE BEREAVEMENT

**Below is a number of quotes from staff describing the impact that having conversations and supporting someone following a suicide bereavement has had on them.**

“I had an experience when a patient died by suicide and none of my colleagues acknowledged it at all. As if it was just a normal part of the job, you feel like you shouldn’t be speaking about it and it shouldn’t affect you.”

“I often feel helpless because I can’t take their pain away. Because we are a short term service we often don’t see any alleviation of distress because people are in the centre of their grief and that can be really difficult”

“For a while after the call, when I closed my eyes I would have really vivid images of the scene that had been described to me and I struggled to move on from them. I was imagining the clothes the person was wearing, what they looked like, the environment they had died in, the way that they had died. Because you are exposed to the distress that the loved one is in, sometimes you can feel their distress when these images come in to your head.”

“All the time I’m thinking that if I leave the call, what if she does something to harm herself?”

“You can get home and you are lying in bed or in the bath and it hits you like a tonne of bricks, How is that person continuing?”

“Supporting the family through their grief whilst experiencing my own can be really difficult. I notice myself having thoughts of ‘If only I’d known’”.

"There's a lot of bravado and chest puffing in our place of work but the reality is that sometimes we will hear multiple traumatic accounts or visit the scene of a suicide and the next day visit another. This must be having an impact on the staff member and we need to be talking about it."