



Family support services

Providing advice, guidance, counselling, practical and emotional support to patients, relatives and children



Family support services

Family support services work holistically across all the core hospice services to provide advice, guidance, emotional support and counselling to our patients, with specialist palliative care needs, and their relatives, friends and carers. The family support team is a multi-professional team consisting of social workers, therapists, psychologists and volunteer bereavement counsellors.

Working with patients, families, children and young people

Our children and family therapist can help you talk together as a family about what you are facing, gain support from each other and provide you with information and tools to help you to make important decisions.

We can:

- ♥ Work creatively through artwork, journalling, expression, communication and play either as a family group, individually or with your child.
- ♥ Support you to talk with the children and teenagers in your family about what is happening and explore their feelings and thoughts.
- ♥ Give guidance on strategies and coping techniques.
- ♥ Assist in creating lasting memories, such as journals, letters, cards and memory boxes.

Children and young people are supported both individually and as a family, from diagnosis through to bereavement. Our family therapist supports parents in delivering difficult news and preparing the children and adults both practically and emotionally for the death.

We support children of any age, and will act as an advocate for the child, when working with external agencies such as schools and colleges.

We provide regular bereavement groups for children, young people and adolescents. This helps them to meet other young people in a similar situation.



Social work support

Advice, guidance, practical and emotional support is provided by our social workers who can help in various ways:

- ♥ By providing information about other organisations nationwide or in your local community who may be of help and provide support to you for your needs.
- ♥ Liaising with other agencies e.g. employers, local authorities, schools and charitable organisations.
- ♥ Providing information and assistance with benefits and grants.
- ♥ Planning to return to your home following an inpatient stay.
- ♥ Providing information on nursing homes and practical support for care at home.
- ♥ Emotional support for you and your family to enable you to talk about the issues that are worrying you.
- ♥ Regular carer drop in sessions for support, advice and guidance.
- ♥ Specialist groups for patients and carers are delivered through our therapy unit.

Our social workers can see you in your home, care home or in the hospice.



Counselling and psychological support

Counselling and psychological support is available for patients and their friends and families. Our counsellors and psychotherapist work with a variety of psychological issues, anxieties or concerns.

The therapist's role can enable an individual to gain a sense of space and security where they can begin to explore innermost feelings, how they relate to the world around them, how they can make sense of their personal life journey and how to live with change.

For those facing death there is a great need to feel human warmth and an honest straightforward connection with another person. Commonly some things are hard to share, possibly through fear of upsetting those around us or uncertain of our own reactions. We are aware that it may be the first time you feel safe enough to explore these issues, anxieties or concerns.



Bereavement counselling and support

Bereavement counselling and support is provided by family support team members, as well as a team of trained and supervised volunteer bereavement counsellors. The service is available to relatives, friends and carers of people who have died under the care of the hospice.

The weeks, months and sometimes the years following bereavement can be a bewildering and overwhelming time. People often find it difficult to talk with family and friends; they can feel isolated and find it difficult to make sense of what they are going through.

Talking and sharing experiences with one of our team can help bereaved people to explore and manage these sometimes overwhelming feelings. It is also important to have the non-judgemental space to acknowledge the death.

Individual support

Individual support provides an opportunity to talk confidentially on a one to one basis, to explore feelings, develop coping strategies and support in adapting to changing circumstances. This can take place at the hospice counselling suite or in your home.



Group support

We understand that grief is individual and how you would like to access support is also individual to you. For some, one to one counselling is not right for them and they would prefer to meet others and gain support in this way. Group support is available via a bi-monthly drop-in bereavement support group. We are currently developing a group for newly bereaved individuals. If you would like to access the evening group support, please contact the team for more information.

“WALK ON”

Join the Saint Francis Hospice walking group for service users, friends and family of service users and those bereaved of a loved one under the care of Saint Francis Hospice. Dogs are welcome! Our “Walk On” group will walk for one hour through the picturesque surrounding area and countryside. It is an opportunity to talk to others who have experienced or are experiencing hospice care. Please wear appropriate footwear and bring a bottle of water.

“Walk On” offers a chance to walk and talk with like minded people, or just enjoy the company of others. The benefits include companionship, connecting to the environment and the sense of well being which comes with exercise.

Takes place on the first Wednesday of every month 9.45am on The Green at Havering-atte-Bower. Our walk will start at 10am.



HOPE

HOPE is a unique support group which, over a six-week period, offers a combination of education and interaction in a safe and friendly environment, where you will explore the grief process and work through its many emotions to help cope with the adjustments to life in the future. It's a closed group with six to eight attendees. If you would like to put your name down for this please contact the team.

Please do not hesitate to contact us for more information about the support and help we can offer.



Family Support team

About Saint Francis Hospice

Saint Francis Hospice provides care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to local people affected by life-limiting illnesses. As a registered charity, we rely on the financial support of our community to keep providing world class care free of charge to individuals and their families. Every year, we provide treatment, care and support to more than 4,000 local people affected by a life-limiting illness.

Confidentiality

At Saint Francis Hospice we are committed to upholding your rights to confidentiality and protecting your privacy. We will treat your information with respect. Keep it secure and comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 including GDPR. Our privacy notice is available on request or by visiting our website www.sfh.org.uk

The Hall
Havering-atte-Bower
Romford
Essex RM4 1QH

Tel: 01708 753319
Email: mail@sfh.org.uk
Visit: www.sfh.org.uk

Reviewed annually
Revised January 2022

