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Northern Health Palliative Care

Grief and Bereavement During COVID-19: Patient Handout

During this unprecedented time, many people are experiencing loss in many different ways. If you've lost a loved one during this pandemic, you may be experiencing different and distressing emotions and symptoms associated with grief. Your loved one may have died suddenly or not the way you envisioned. You may feel like your loved one died alone and unsupported. You may not have been able to say goodbye or make amends.

At this time, you may find yourself unable to gather with family and friends to provide comfort to one another. A funeral, wake, or other rituals which are important to you after the passing of a loved one, may not be possible right now. These traditional ways of saying goodbye are often so important to those who are left behind.

Grief is a journey that takes time and patience. While a gathering in person may not be possible, try to connect with family and friends in ways that are possible at this time (i.e. through video chat, e-mail, letters and telephone calls). Schedule check-ins on a regular basis. Share memories of your loved one with each other, and write down things you hear or remember about them that bring you joy.

If you're feeling overwhelmed and are struggling to cope, there are people willing to help.

Below are some resources you can access to help you with your grief journey:

BC Bereavement Helpline

www.bcbh.ca

1-877-779-2223

Canadian Virtual Hospice

www.virtualhospice.ca

www.mygrief.ca

Hospice Societies in BC

<https://bchpca.org/directory-of-members/>

Northern Health

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