



**The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service**

*The MBE for volunteer groups*

# **Solihull Bereavement Counselling Service Annual Report**



**2020-2021**

*"The opportunity to speak to  
someone neutral and  
non-judgemental, who was able  
to help me see all the emotions  
I was feeling were normal, as  
well as link's with my past. It  
really helped me re-assess  
some of my personal  
relationships which became  
very challenging because of  
the turmoil of grief.  
I was very impressed with the  
attitude of my counsellor  
Harry."*

*Lisa*



## Chairs Report

This is my eighth year as Chair of Solihull Bereavement Counselling Service and it has been an unusual year. The Coronavirus pandemic has changed how the service has had to work over the year. I must pay a heart felt tribute to all the staff and counsellors for their work under such different and at times difficult circumstances.

We were asked by Birmingham and Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group (B&SCCG), to work with Cruse and Marie Curie and to increase our capacity and scope for counselling. We now have an contract that indicates the increased capacity. It also has an extended service to include NHS staff who have suffered trauma due to the work load and type of work during the pandemic.

The details of the service provided this year can be found in the Service Manager's Report but it should be noted that more people are taking advantage of the service and we are managing to keep waiting times to much less than other counselling organisations in the area.

I must thank the Trustees for their continuing commitment to the service and personally for their support and tolerance during this unusual year of Zoom Meetings. I must thank Jan Flint who has been a Trustee for 5 years, who has now left the Board of Trustees. She was also an active counsellor and has been a direct connection with the service keeping the other Trustees feet on the grounds. Thank you Jan for your support.

Having moved to telephone Counselling we will be keeping this as an option for those clients and counsellors to which it is suited.

Sue Rose

Chair of SBSCS

# 2020-2021



## Service Manager's Report

2020 was a year like no other for SBCS. As soon as the pandemic hit we expected an increased demand for our service. Those who were grieving were also isolated from family and friends, and deprived of the chance to say a proper goodbye, or hold a funeral in the way they would have wished. Thanks to our staff and counsellors' huge commitment and flexibility we were able to respond quickly, and keep the service functioning in what has been an extremely challenging time. To ensure the safety of our clients, counsellors, and staff we suspended our face to face work, and all sessions were given via the telephone. Meanwhile, the office staff continued to work in the office, and despite having to respond to daily changes, kept the service running as smoothly as possible.

We all encounter bereavement at some point. Grieving is a natural process, with its impact on mental and physical health well understood. Many people can find their way through this time with the support of friends or family, plus there is still a certain societal expectation that we should 'get over it' in a relatively short time. However, the pandemic has changed all that, and we have seen an increase in clients who are experiencing more complex grief combined with the enforced isolation.

During 2020/2021 we delivered 1,797 counselling and assessment sessions. Demand for our services continues to grow, and it is the hope that our input may potentially reduce the need for more complex or longer-term interventions.

This year SBCS has been working closely with Cruse, Marie Curie and Solihull CCG developing and working with a bereavement pathway for anyone wanting to access bereavement counselling easily and quickly across Birmingham and Solihull. SBCS has also been involved in the Suicide Prevention Programme through Solihull Public Health.

Supervision for our counsellors is provided monthly for 35 counsellors in groups of 4, for 3 hours. Our counsellors receive 1.5 hours per month each, which BACP states is the required number for safe practice. The team responsible for supervision are Gail Roberts, Bob Smallwood and Alison Wilkinson. I would like to thank them all sincerely for all that they give to SBCS, and during this year offering counsellors additional supervision as and when needed.

# 2020-2021

I would like to thank Helen Flannery, Lisa McNamara and Val Whitlock for their support, hard work and commitment to the service. And for helping me keep the wheels turning. I would also like to thank Sue Rose (Chair of SBCS) and the Board of Trustees for their support and trust in me; not forgetting our funders, Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group without whom this service would not be possible.

SBCS continues to develop strong relationships with partner agencies. We have good working relationships with Cruse, Marie Curie, Healthy Minds, Lyndon Clinic, Newington Centre, SIAS (Solihull Integrated Addiction Services) and many more.

Our counselling hours and number of referrals clearly show a need for bereavement counselling in the Solihull Borough, and, as an organisation, we endeavour to help those who need it.

Julie Swiffin M.A. P.G.Dip MBACP (Accred)

Service Manager



The figures provided highlight our performance. The figures include counselling and assessment hours for SBCS clients. We received 274 referrals during 2020/2021. Counselling and assessment hours for the year were 1,797 hours.

Appendix 1 shows the yearly analysis of client referrals for 2020/2021 and includes details of:

Number of referrals – male/female

Source of referral

Death of

Age group

Cause of death

Interval from death to referral

2020-2021

*"It was helpful to speak to someone who didn't know me, who would take the time to listen and offer suggestions on how I could learn to cope with the grief. Phil was a good listener and allowed me the time to evaluate my thoughts before I spoke, and offered me the support I very much needed."*

John



## Counselling Service

Clients who do not progress to counselling are either referred on to other agencies, or the clients themselves decide that one to one counselling is not what they wanted at the time of the assessment. SBCS's aim is to assess clients within 4 weeks of their referral, and to allocate to counsellors within acceptable timescales, usually between 2-4 weeks. We train new volunteers each year, so we are fortunate to have counsellors available at all times. However, there are occasions during peak holiday periods when we have to delay allocations. Clients are always kept informed if there is a change to the standard allocation time.

We offer counselling appointments Monday-Friday from 9.00am till 7.00pm, making sure we meet the needs of people who work or have childcare issues.

Appendix 2 shows the place of death for each client. This has been recorded for the year 2020/2021 to highlight how many clients die at home or in hospital.

# 2020-2021

*"The counsellor helped me  
look at things from a  
different perspective.  
I never felt I was being  
judged so that helped me  
open up and discuss anything  
I needed to without fear of  
any negative feedback."*

*Mandy*



## Volunteers

The service has 35 volunteer counsellors. Each counsellor manages a caseload of clients; which can vary from 1 to 5 clients. To ensure cover for the number of referrals we receive each year, SBCS endeavour to have approximately 30 to 35 volunteer counsellors available. To be a volunteer at SBCS you would need to have gained a Diploma in counselling or be studying on a Diploma course. This high standard we require reflects in our service delivery and quality assurance, knowing our clients are getting the very best.

We are very proud of our volunteers and to show our appreciation we present a long service certificate at our Annual General Meeting to any counsellors who have completed 5 years service initially, and every subsequent 5 years thereafter. This is our opportunity to acknowledge the commitment and loyalty of our counsellors.

# 2020-2021

*"Talking about the bereavement of my Mum and Dad, getting my feelings out in the open, instead of bottling it up. I found the counselling very helpful and my counsellor Emma was amazing, she really put me at ease."*

Rhoda



## Training and Supervision

In compliance with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) Ethical Framework, SBCS continues to provide on-going training to all our counsellors.

Each counsellor is required to undertake a minimum of ten hours continuing professional development training (CPD) per year as part of their contract with SBCS. However, with the pandemic this year, CPD has been less.

SBCS has tried to reduce the costs of training by external trainers and are grateful to those who have considered a reduction in the charge to us because of our charitable status. The following topics have been covered during the year (April 2020 – March 2021):

Emotional Resilience	September 2020	( 3.5 hours via Zoom)
Focusing	December 2020	(3.5 hours via Zoom)
Safeguarding	January 2021	(3.5 hours via Zoom)

BACP Ethical Framework states that supervisors remain competent to carry out their role by attending monthly external supervision, SBCS pay for the supervision of our supervisors.

The group supervision sessions that counsellors attend are 3 hours per month. This meets BACP guidelines of 1.5 hours supervision per month per counsellor.

# 2020-2021

*"I have stopped blaming myself. The understanding I received allowed me to gain confidence to forgive myself."*

*Sheila*



## Funding

Core funding from Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is specifically for the support of clients who live in the borough of Solihull or whose GP is part of Birmingham and Solihull CCG.

We would like to thank our funders Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group for having confidence in SBCS and working in partnership with us. Thanks also goes to Charitable Trusts, who donate funds and support us. Without you, our work would not be possible.

# 2020-2021

*"It was helpful having someone to listen and evaluate what I was saying. I felt my mind was jumbled and the counsellor helped me process my thoughts."*

*Sue*



# Finance Report



## SOLIHULL BEREAVEMENT COUNSELLING SERVICE

### Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021

<u>Income</u>		<u>Expenditure</u>	
<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2,021</u>
36677 Core Funding	81380	47,503	Salaries 52,044
17637 Major Donations	2500	1,956	Pensions 1,956
10667 Client Donations	1895	2,905	Travel & other 862
200 Other Donations	257	2,585	Office Expenses 2,973
2160 Training Fees	1700	2,255	Staff Supervision 2,580
42 Bank Interest	16	1,639	Training 700
		430	Fees/Subscriptions 470
		422	Insurances 421
1005 Gift aid donations	940	-	AGM Costs -
1772 Gift Aid tax	1021	32	Advertising -
		45	Equipment 434
		60	Bank Charges 70
			Web Costs 852
<u>£ 70,160</u>	<u>£ 89,709</u>	<u>59,832</u>	<u>£ 63,362</u>
-		<u>Surplus £ 10,328</u>	<u>Surplus £ 26,348</u>
<u>£ 70,160</u>	<u>£89,709.00</u>	<u>£ 70,160</u>	<u>£ 89,709.00</u>

### Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2021

Deposit a/c c/f	£ 61,508	Equity b/f	36,101.00
Current a/c	£ 941		
Cash in hand	£ -	Surplus	£ 26,347.50
	<u>£ 62,449</u>		<u>£ 62,449</u>

Malcolm Pratt  
Treasurer  
19 April 2021

I have examined the books and accounts of Solihull Bereavement Counselling Service and certify that the above is in accordance therewith.

Financial  
Examiner.



## Staff

We have 6 Trustees and this is an appropriate time to thank the Chair Sue Rose and the Board of Trustees for their support and commitment to the service.

Over the year the service employed 1 full time Service Manager and three part time office staff, also 3 clinical supervisors.

Service Manager	37 hrs per week
Counselling Co-ordinator	7 hrs per week
Administrator	7 hrs per week
Administration Assistant	10 hrs per week
Supervisors x 3	7.5 hrs. – 10.5 hrs per month depending on how many supervision groups they supervise.

2020-2021

*"Elizabeth my counsellor was fantastic and helped me enormously to deal with other grief related matters. Grief cannot be separated from other human emotions. Thank you for a fabulous counselling service".*

*Robin*



## Achievements 2020-2021

### Achievements for 2020/2021 were:

- \* Delivering our service throughout the pandemic. Making changes along the way, adhering to Government guidelines and BACP legislation.
- \* Making sure the counsellors had guidance, support and training through supervision, for the transition from face to face to telephone work.
- \* Continuing our in-house CPD to all counsellors, this was done via Zoom
- \* Maintaining our supervision groups, this was done via Zoom.
- \* Being able to offer clients telephone counselling, ensuring our service meets the needs of individuals, keeping clients and counsellors safe. This telephone service will continue as part of services offered to all clients as well as on-line counselling. Our face to face sessions will also continue.
- \* Our new website was launched in 2021.

# 2020-2021

*"Learning how to manage my feelings and realise that what I was feeling was ok. Talking about my loss to someone who isn't involved really helped. I would like to thank Bob for all his help, its helped me through a very dark time".*

*Jeana*

## Appendix 1

April 2020 - March 2021

Referrals

274 Male

62

Female

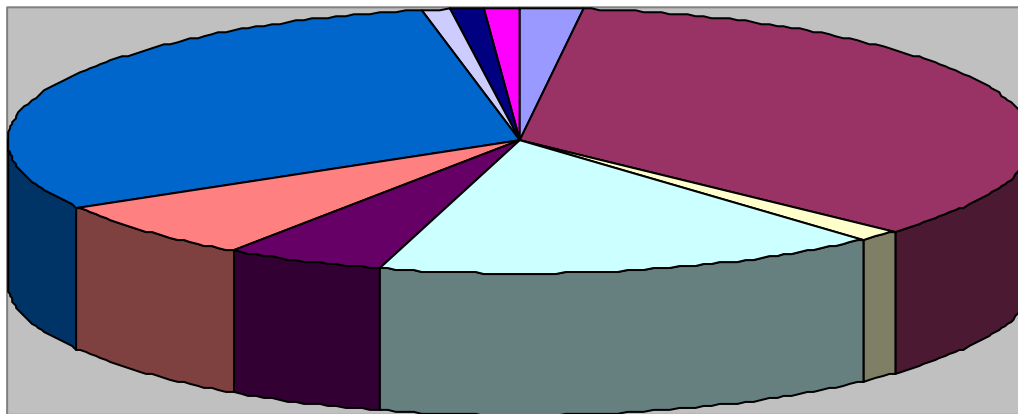
212

### Referrals Analysis

Column 1		Column 2		Column 3		Column 4		Column 5	
Age Group years	Totals	Source of referral	Totals	Death of	Totals	Cause of Death	Totals	Interval from Death to Referral	Totals
11-17	1	Self	32	Husband	56	Cancer	66	Under 1 month	7
18-25	17	GP	77	Mother	77	Heart related	33	1 -3 months	119
26-34	24	Family	2	Father	48	Other illness	54	4 -7 months	56
35-44	43	Health workers	18	Child	19	Stroke/Aneurysm	8	8 -12 months	28
45-54	64	Hospital/Hospice	4	Sibling	10	Suicide	10	13 - 18 months	13
55-64	59	Social Services	0	Wife	12	Accidents	6	19 - 24 months	8
65-74	34	Voluntary Agency	128	Grandparent	19	Road Traffic Accident	2	2 - 5 Years	29
75-84	25	SBCS Website	10	Partner	16	Covid 19	45	6-10 Years	7
85 & over	7	Friend	2	In- Laws	3	Murder/Assault	3	11-20 Years	7
		Employer	1	Other relatives	7	Still Born/Neonatal	3	Over 20 Years	0
		Chirch	0	Friend	7	Old Age	2		
		Educational/Welfare	0	Sibling, Neonatal	0	Liver Failure due to Alcohol	5		
						Pneumonia	15		
						Brain Tumor	8		
						Dementia	14		
<b>Total</b>	274	<b>Total</b>	274	<b>Total</b>	274	<b>Total</b>	274	<b>Total</b>	274

## Appendix 2

### PLACE OF DEATH 2020-2021



- Solihull Hospital 5
- Heartlands Hosp 96
- Good Hope Hosp 4
- Diff Hosp 44
- Marie Curie 14
- Nursing/Resd 20
- Own Home 83
- Other 2
- Accident Scene 3
- Other Hospice 3



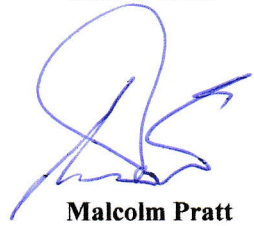
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		422	Insurances	421
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1772 Gift Aid tax	1021	32	Advertising	-
		45	Equipment	434
		60	Bank Charges	70
			Web Costs	852
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**Malcolm Pratt**  
 Treasurer  
 06 June 2021

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Financial  
 Examiner.

*N. B. A.*

*NEIL BARTON 6/6/2021*



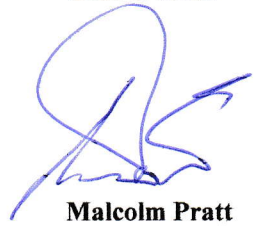
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