
PLAIN ENGLISH SUMMARY 2

(authored by Dr Pauline Nelson)

This is a plain English summary of an article associated with PABBS evidence-based and evaluated suicide bereavement training.

Experiences of support from primary care and perceived needs of parents bereaved by suicide: a qualitative study

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1. What did we know already?

Before the study, the research team already knew that people bereaved by suicide were at risk of dying by suicide in the future. We also knew that preventing suicide is an important priority for the NHS. However, we did not know what the support needs of parents bereaved by suicide might be.

2. What did we want to find out?

We wanted to know about the views and support needs of parents who had experienced the death by suicide of a son or daughter.

3. What did we do?

We invited parents who had been bereaved by suicide between 2002 and 2012 to talk to us about their experiences following the death of a son or daughter. We wanted to know particularly about their experiences of getting support from their GP after their child's suicide. We had in-depth conversations with 23 parents in England between 2012 and 2014. We combined all the information from these conversations and sorted it to find the main views and experiences of the parents that talked to us.

4. What did we find?

Parents emphasised the importance to them of not feeling alone in their grief and the need to be signposted to additional support. They needed information, to know about other sources of help and have the opportunity for group support. Parents considered their GP to be an important source of support but also felt that GPs could be uncertain how to help them.

Some parents reported receiving good care from their GP practice, although it could be difficult to gain access to this support in the first place.

5. What does this mean?

Parents felt that general practice staff and particularly GPs should know about the difficulties that they might face following the death by suicide of a son or daughter. They felt that GPs should also have an understanding of their needs and know where to direct them for further support. These findings have helped us to create a training programme (known as 'PABBS' training) for GPs and other health and care professionals, to increase their knowledge and skills and help them feel more confident in responding to those who are bereaved by suicide.

* See full report of the study

Suicide Bereavement UK's website:

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