

Sepsis Clinical Care Standard

Bereavement support after sepsis

This leaflet provides information about sepsis and bereavement support. It is written for people who have lost someone because of sepsis.



What is sepsis?

Sepsis arises when the body responds to an infection by damaging its own organs and tissues. Sepsis can cause failure of organs such as the kidneys, lungs, liver and heart, leading to death. People who survive sepsis may lose limbs or have permanent disabilities. Septic shock is the most serious form of sepsis.

Sepsis is a very serious illness that can result in significant injuries or death. It can be a terrible shock if someone close to you dies of sepsis. The illness can move very quickly, and they may have been in good health before it happened. It may be difficult for you to remember what happened, or you might have questions about it. It may help to ask the nurses and doctors about anything you don't understand.

The healthcare service should give you information about what caused the person's death and the treatment provided to them before they died. You should be offered information at the time of the event, as well as the opportunity to ask questions at a later date.

You may find it hard to believe that the person has died, especially if it happened very quickly. Talk to your friends and family and ask for any help you need. It may help you to talk to a bereavement counsellor because they can offer support and understanding to adults and children who have lost a relative or friend.

The healthcare service can give you information about accessing bereavement support, and may involve a social worker to help. You can also talk to your general practitioner and ask for a referral to a bereavement counsellor.

If a formal bereavement service associated with the healthcare service is not available or you wish to use another, see the options listed opposite (please note that no specific service is being recommended, and the choice is yours).

Where to get help

National:

- [Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement](#)
- [Beyond Blue](#)
- [Griefline](#)
- [Hope Bereavement Care](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [National Association for Loss and Grief](#)
- [The Compassionate Friends Australia.](#)

States and territories:

- [Associated Counsellors & Psychologists \(Sydney\)](#)
- [Bereavement Care Network Tasmania](#)
- [Canberra Grief Centre](#)
- [Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service](#)
- [Grief Centre of Western Australia](#)
- [Grief Counselling and Support \(Queensland Government\)](#)
- [GriefLink \(South Australia Health and University of Adelaide\)](#)
- [The Compassionate Friends Victoria.](#)

For families who have lost a baby or child:

- [Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service Peer Mentor Program](#)
- [Red Nose](#)
- [Sands Australia](#)
- [SIDS & Kids NT](#)
- [SIDS and Kids South Australia](#)
- [SIDS and Kids Tasmania.](#)

Talking to other people who have experienced sepsis

You might find it helps you to contact a sepsis support group, to get in touch with other people who have experienced sepsis. Sepsis support and advocacy groups include people living with the after-effects of sepsis and people who have lost loved ones to sepsis. Sepsis support groups share their experiences and provide advice and support.

Sepsis support groups

- [Australian Sepsis Network](#) (national)
- [Australia & NZ Sepsis Support Group](#) (national)
- [Maddy Jones Foundation](#) (Queensland)
- [Mandy and Rod McCracken](#) (Victoria)
- [Movement For Mia](#) (Queensland)
- [Reaching 4 Korina](#) (New South Wales)
- [Renovating Matthew](#) (Queensland)
- [Sepsis Awareness Tasmania](#)
- [T 4 Thomas](#) (Northern Territory).

More information

About sepsis

- [Australian Sepsis Network](#)
- [Life After Sepsis: A guide for survivors, carers and bereaved families.](#)

About your healthcare rights

The [Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights](#) explains what you, or someone you care for, can expect when receiving health care. One of your rights is the right to information about the care you or your loved one has received:

- [Understanding My Healthcare Rights: A guide for consumers](#)
- [Understanding My Healthcare Rights: A summary booklet.](#)

Questions?



Find out more about the *Sepsis Clinical Care Standard* and other resources. Scan the QR code or use the link safetyandquality.gov.au/sepsis-consumer.