# Evidence Search Service Results of your search request

## [PH Bulletin] Additional Needs in Bereavement, Grief, and Complicated Grief as a result of COVID-19

**ID of request:** 22935  
**Date of request:** 28th April, 2020  
**Date of completion:** 30th April, 2020

If you would like to request any articles or any further help, please contact:  Lisa Burscheidt at [library@nelft.nhs.uk](mailto:library@nelft.nhs.uk)

Please acknowledge this work in any resulting paper or presentation as: Evidence search: [PH Bulletin] Additional Needs in Bereavement, Grief, and Complicated Grief as a result of COVID-19. Lisa Burscheidt. (30th April, 2020). ILFORD, UK: Aubrey Keep Library and Knowledge Service.

**Sources searched**  
CINAHL (2)  
EMBASE (7)  
EMCARE (0)  
MEDLINE (1)

**Date range used** (5 years, 10 years): 2015-2020   
**Limits used** (gender, article/study type, etc.): English   
**Search terms and notes** (full search strategy for database searches below):

**KnowledgeShare:** grief, bereavement

**Cochrane:**grief or bereavement in Title Abstract Keyword AND pandemic or epidemic in Title Abstract Keyword - (Word variations have been searched)

**TRIP Database:**("complex grief" or "complicated grief" or bereavement) (pandemic or epidemic)

**CEBM COVID page**: grief, bereavement

**HEE COVID searches**: grief, bereavement

**HDAS:** see below

For more information about the resources please go to: <http://www.nelft.nhs.uk/library>.

## Summary of Results

A search of high-level sources of evidence on COVID and healthcare databases found a few papers on COVID and grief specifically, and also some papers about grief and other similar pandemics (influenza and ebola).

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### [C. Search History](#SearchHistory)

## A. Synopses or Summaries

#### Singapore medical journal

**Narrative synthesis of psychological and coping responses towards emerging infectious disease outbreaks in the general population: practical considerations for the COVID-19 pandemic** (2020)

Chew Q.H., Wei K.C., Chua H.C., Sim K., Vasoo S.

[Available online at this link](https://www.knowledgeshare.nhs.uk/index.php?PageID=link_resolver&link=d041d801393359519f94fc4cf95622b1)

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INTRODUCTION: Emerging infectious disease outbreaks, such as the present coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, often have a psychological impact on the well-being of the general population, including survivors and caregivers. Our study aimed to synthesise extant literature regarding the combined psychological responses and coping methods used by the general population in past outbreaks. <br/>METHOD(S): We conducted a narrative synthesis of the published literature over the last two decades with a quality appraisal of included articles that reported both psychological responses and coping strategies within infectious disease outbreaks. <br/>RESULT(S): A total of 144 papers were identified from the search, 24 of which were included in the review. Overall, 18 studies examined the psychosocial responses of the general population towards the severe acute respiratory syndrome epidemic, four studies focused on the Ebola epidemic and two studies covered the H1N1 outbreak. Common themes in psychological responses included anxiety/fears, depression, anger, guilt, grief and loss, post-traumatic stress, and stigmatisation, but also a greater sense of empowerment and compassion towards others. Coping strategies adopted included problem-focused coping (seeking alternatives, self- and other-preservation), seeking social support, avoidance, and positive appraisal of the situation. <br/>CONCLUSION(S): Amid the range of psychosocial responses seen in past infectious disease outbreaks, practical considerations for the current COVID-19 pandemic need to focus on the individual in the context of the larger social environment, with an emphasis on raising awareness of the range of possible psychosocial responses, access to psychological help, self- care, empowering self-support groups and sustained engagement with updated, reliable information about the outbreak.

## B. Original Research

1. **Grief During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Considerations for Palliative Care Providers**  
   Wallace C.L. Journal of Pain and Symptom Management 2020;:No page numbers.

The COVID-19 pandemic is anticipated to continue spreading widely across the globe throughout 2020. To mitigate the devastating impact of COVID-19, social distancing and visitor restrictions in health care facilities have been widely implemented. Such policies and practices, along with the direct impact of the spread of COVID-19, complicate issues of grief that are relevant to medical providers. We describe the relationship of the COVID-19 pandemic to anticipatory grief, disenfranchised grief, and complicated grief for individuals, families, and their providers. Furthermore, we provide discussion regarding countering this grief through communication, advance care planning, and self-care practices. We provide resources for health care providers, in addition to calling on palliative care providers to consider their own role as a resource to other specialties during this public health emergency.<br/>Copyright &#xa9; 2020 American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine

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1. **Loss and Grief amidst COVID-19: A Path to Adaptation and Resilience.**  
   Zhai Yusen Brain, behavior, and immunity 2020;:No page numbers.

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed an extreme threat to global health and become a leading cause of death worldwide. Loss, as a more encompassing theme, interweaves many aspects of people's life in this challenging time. Failure to address the pressing needs of those experiencing loss and grief may result in poor mental and physical health. Recognizing the uniqueness of each individual and their loss and grief will provide opportunities to develop tailored strategies that facilitate functional adaptation to loss and promote mental health and wellbeing in this crisis.

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1. **Prolonged grief disorder following the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic**  
   Eisma M.C. Psychiatry Research 2020;288:No page numbers.

[Available online at this link](https://www.knowledgeshare.nhs.uk/index.php?PageID=link_resolver&link=a7040c48f7e1d29581aa59390f2a2db1)

1. **The Role and Response of Palliative Care and Hospice Services in Epidemics and Pandemics: A Rapid Review to Inform Practice During the COVID-19 Pandemic**  
   Etkind S.N. Journal of Pain and Symptom Management 2020;:No page numbers.

Cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) are escalating rapidly across the globe, with the mortality risk being especially high among those with existing illness and multimorbidity. This study aimed to synthesize evidence for the role and response of palliative care and hospice teams to viral epidemics/pandemics and inform the COVID-19 pandemic response. We conducted a rapid systematic review according to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses guidelines in five databases. Of 3094 articles identified, 10 were included in this narrative synthesis. Included studies were from West Africa, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, the U.S., and Italy. All had an observational design. Findings were synthesized using a previously proposed framework according to systems (policies, training and protocols, communication and coordination, and data), staff (deployment, skill mix, and resilience), space (community provision and use of technology), and stuff (medicines and equipment as well as personal protective equipment). We conclude that hospice and palliative services have an essential role in the response to COVID-19 by responding rapidly and flexibly; ensuring protocols for symptom management are available, and training nonspecialists in their use; being involved in triage; considering shifting resources into the community; considering redeploying volunteers to provide psychosocial and bereavement care; facilitating camaraderie among staff and adopting measures to deal with stress; using technology to communicate with patients and carers; and adopting standardized data collection systems to inform operational changes and improve care.<br/>Copyright &#xa9; 2020

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1. **THIS IS GRIEF.**  
   Tudor Julie Massage & Bodywork 2020;:34-35.

The article analyzes issues associated with recovering from the losses of COVID-19 particularly for massage therapists. It is evident that uncertainty associated with work, income, schedules and social lives due to the pandemic has created sense of grief. It is stated that massage therapists as professional caregivers have profound selfawareness and strength to move through tough days and help in restoring and rebuilding quickly with integrity.

1. **Surviving ebola in sierra leone: A community's experience during and after the epidemic-a qualitative study**  
   Murray R. Annals of Global Health 2017;83(1):158-159.

Background: The 2014-2016 Ebola epidemic-a complex public health crisis with various sociological, ecological, and environmental drivers-devastated populations throughout West Africa. Due to its high mortality rate and infectious nature, most Ebola research to date has focused on healthcare response and interventions; however, little is known about the experiences of Ebola survivors and communities. This qualitative study aimed to better understand the lived experience of community members, including children, during and after the Ebola epidemic in Sierra Leone. <br/>Method(s): During June 2016, we conducted three focus group interviews and one in-depth interview with a local nurse in Calaba Town, a rural community outside of Freetown. The vice principal from a local school was present and assisted with Krio (local language) translations when necessary. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded verbatim using a modified constructivist grounded theory methodology. <br/>Finding(s): During the Ebola epidemic, feelings of fear, confusion, suffering, loss, and isolation were part of daily life. Children were isolated indoors away from friends, unable to attend school. Instead their days consisted of domestic chores and listening to government-sponsored educational radio programs. Meanwhile, caretakers and parents struggled to provide basic necessities, including food, due to job loss and inability to earn an income. During lockdown periods, families could not even leave homes to fetch water. Health workers were caught between desire to provide service to the public and fear of acquiring Ebola. Sierra Leone was declared Ebola-free in March 2016; however, the struggle for food and the grief stemming from the loss of loved ones continues. Increased food prices post-Ebola and caring for extended family members and orphaned children have amplified these challenges. <br/>Interpretation(s): Following the transgenerational trauma of the recent Civil War, families in Sierra Leone were forced to navigate between fear, confusion, and loss during the Ebola epidemic. Despite nationwide school closures, children continued studies via educational radio programs. Interviews reveal one community's resilience and desire to overcome the epidemic; however, grief and distress continue. Findings from this study highlight the need to tell stories of communities in order to evaluate the long-term psychological, social, and economic consequences of infectious outbreaks.

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[Available online at this link](https://www.knowledgeshare.nhs.uk/index.php?PageID=link_resolver&link=d40ffcaf620f690712a71accf8a319d3)

1. **"It's as bad as anything can be": Patients, identity, and the influenza pandemic**  
   Bristow N.K. Public health reports (Washington, D.C. : 1974) 2010;:134-144.

Americans were stunned when pandemic influenza hit the United States in 1918. Recent advances in bacteriology and public health allowed Americans to imagine a future free of infectious disease, even as their familiarity with influenza tempered their fears of it. They soon realized this influenza was something unprecedented, as it shocked them with its pace, virulence, mortality patterns, and symptoms. Patients endured and frequently succumbed to a miserable illness, their suffering often made worse by the chaotic circumstances the epidemic produced in families and communities and shaped in significant and sometimes discriminatory ways by their gender, class, and race. While the nation's public culture soon forgot the epidemic, it lived on in lives changed irrevocably by its consequences. As they face present and future influenza pandemics, Americans can learn from this earlier experience, guarding against identity-based discrimination and acknowledging and remembering the grief and loss fellow citizens suffered.

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[Available online at this link](https://www.knowledgeshare.nhs.uk/index.php?PageID=link_resolver&link=0c3a82c767159396a174400cd6ca2b81)

[Available online at this link](https://www.knowledgeshare.nhs.uk/index.php?PageID=link_resolver&link=d83b4ba8e2cc663b4c343607d93140be)

1. **Traditional African mourning practices are abridged in response to the AIDS epidemic: Implications for mental health**  
   Kilonzo G.P. Transcultural Psychiatry 1999;36(3):259-283.

This paper examines the psychological significance of traditional African mourning practices in the context of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. In Tanzania, untimely multiple losses through AIDS increasingly force communities to forgo traditionally prescribed mourning practices and rituals. An increase in psychiatric and psychological problems associated with incomplete mourning and unresolved grief has been observed in clinical settings. This may be due to the psychosocial inadequacy of these abridged mourning processes. It is unlikely that western forms of grief counseling can replace traditional mourning rituals, at least in terms of psychological efficacy. An approach is suggested that permits a wider elaboration of cultural psychic processes through the creation of new rituals.

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1. **Grief and AIDS: surviving catastrophic multiple loss... co-published simultaneously in Bereavement: Client Adaptation and Hospice Services (ed: Donna Lind Infeld, and Nadine Reimer Penner)**  
   Bigelow G. Hospice Journal 1996;11(4):83-96.

This article explores the issues of grief brought about by the AIDS epidemic. As people affected by the epidemic experience multiple deaths in both their personal and professional lives, the parallel epidemic of grief is reaching crisis proportions. Traditional grief responses are compared with multiple loss grief and appropriate clinical interventions are explored. The phenomena of trauma, survivor guilt, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and other historic examples of multiple loss (holocausts) are examined. The existential questions of how to hold hope as we live in an 'abyss of trauma, death and grief' concludes this article.

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Links are provided to the full text of each document. Relevant extracts have been copied and pasted into these results. Rather than browse through lengthy documents, you can search for specific words as follows:

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Click on the Search button (illustrated with binoculars). This will open up a search window. Type in the term you need to find and links to all of the references to that term within the document will be displayed in the window. You can jump to each reference by clicking it.

**Word documents**  
Select Edit from the menu, the Find and type in your term in the search box which is presented. The search function will locate the first use of the term in the document. By pressing 'next' you will jump to further references.

## C. Search History

|  | **Source** | **Criteria** | **Results** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. | AMED, BNI, CINAHL, EMBASE, EMCARE, HMIC, Medline, PsycINFO, PubMed | (("complicated grief" OR "complex grief") AND (pandemic\* OR epidemic\*)).ti,ab | 8 |
| 2. | AMED, BNI, CINAHL, EMBASE, EMCARE, HMIC, Medline, PsycINFO, PubMed | (((bereavement OR grief) AND (pandemic OR epidemic)) AND (counsel\* OR therap\* OR intervention\*)).ti,ab | 99 |

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