

Script for Bereavement Volunteer

Introduce oneself as bereavement care volunteer, following up with people whose loved one has died in our community's recent tragedy.

"I'm a (Social Worker) (Volunteer) (Grief Counselor) calling from (Lifetime Care/Hospice of Rochester) (another agency)."

"Many of us are making phone calls following our community's recent tragedy."

(Caller may be wondering: How did you get my name?)

"You were referred by a (Nurse) (M.D.) (Social Worker) who helped take care of your (family member) at (Strong Memorial Hospital) or in (the Congregate Care Center at Monroe Community Hospital).

"We're checking with as many family members as possible to see how they are doing and if they have need for any follow-up bereavement care. Is it okay to talk now for a few minutes? (If not, when would be convenient to call back...) (Or – would you rather I mailed information about personal support and/or our website.)"

"This must have been a hard time for you (and your family, if that is known)."

If the person welcomes the contact, touch base on any of the domains listed.

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- General questions about how the person is handling the loss.
 - Retelling the story: a review of the illness and dying process, funeral or memorial service and experience with the health care system
 - Specifics about grief responses: pursuing worrisome manifestations and reassuring about normal reactions and extended time frames
 - Practical problem-solving
 - Sources of support: assessing internal strengths, family availability, social constellation, faith matters, interests, activities (including visits to the cemetery) and developing and/or reengaging in meaningful relationships
 - Awareness of bereavement support and the availability of literature

Summarized by Theo Munson, MPH
Manager of Bereavement Services
Lifetime Care/Hospice of Rochester