



Higher Diploma in Bereavement Studies

Course Profile 2006/07

The Irish Hospice Foundation
Morrison Chambers
32 Nassau Street
Dublin 2
Tel: (01) 6793188 Fax: 6730040
E-mail: maura@hospice-foundation.ie

Background: Higher Diploma in Bereavement Studies

The Irish Hospice Foundation and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland invite applications for this part-time programme, held over twelve months. Invitations are invited from representatives of a wide range of professional disciplines whose work or volunteering roles involve the provision or organisation of bereavement support services.

The programme meets a number of needs identified in health policy papers (e.g. report of the National Advisory Committee on Palliative Care, DOH&C, 2001) which note a lack of bereavement infrastructure and training in Ireland. Internationally, and in Ireland, the conduct of and interpretation of sound bereavement-related research are important aims. This education programme equips palliative care and health and social-care professionals from varied disciplines with the theoretical knowledge and practical skill to develop appropriate responses to bereavement at individual, community and regional levels.

It is intended to develop the Higher Diploma programme to MSc level by incorporating a twelve-month research programme to the existing course. Participants on the course will be informed of all relevant developments.

Aims and Objectives of the Programme

The H Dip. In Bereavement Studies aims to foster the development of a bereavement support infrastructure in Ireland which is sensitive to Irish culture, to the range of grief reactions experienced by individuals and which acknowledges the fundamentally normal context of loss. The education programme aims to relate research and practice in this area.

Specific educational objectives

- To provide students with theoretical understanding, skills, practice and knowledge of grief and grief support structures which may be applied in health, community and work organisations and in the voluntary sector
- To develop students' core competencies in application of grief theory and in application of counselling skills in the context of loss and bereavement
- To develop students' understanding of different perspectives on loss and bereavement: including loss through the life cycle, family bereavement, cultural issues, gender issues, and ethical issues
- To examine the organisation of bereavement support and facilitate learning about the systematic development of bereavement support services
- To develop students' understanding of the importance of self-care and staff support in environments where people are consistently working with or meeting dying, death and bereavement
- To develop students' skills in searching and critically analysing bereavement research
- To promote students' reflection on personal development and personal growth through the educational experience.

Modules

This is a part-time modular course. Successful completion will result in the award of a Higher Diploma in Bereavement Studies. The programme comprises six modules. Each module consists of 250 hours of learning including lecture time, self-directed learning, course preparation, examination time, and supervision.

The programme is comprised of modules as follows:

Theories and models of grief, bereavement and mourning

The main emphasis will be on grief as a psychological and social phenomenon. Opportunity will be given to explore grief through the life cycle, paying particular attention to how theories of grief have evolved. Attention will also focus on how models have adapted and changed as empirical studies have challenged strongly held beliefs about the grief process.

Bereavement counselling

This module provides a framework for bereavement counselling and a general understanding of the pertinent issues. Course content will include; current research in the area, working with different populations and impact on self. Topics include: personal experience of loss, models translating to practice, working with complicated and uncomplicated bereavement, counselling bereaved children, legal and ethical issues, working with difference and the role of support and supervision.

Perspectives on grief

The objective of this module is to apply different lenses to examining grief – for example; sociological and cultural approaches, age and development, family and spirituality. This module explores some factors that may influence the experience of loss and the language we use to describe bereavement. It identifies dimensions across which individuals will differ, and it moves beyond a purely individual framework to explore grief.

Systems of bereavement support

This module sets out to identify the principles and practice underlying a range of community and health-service based bereavement support systems. Bereavement support structures will be described and an attempt made to uncover dimensions of quality in practice. The module includes a discussion and forum on standards in bereavement care – drawing from UK Bereavement Care Standards Project.

Self care and caring for carers

The aim of this module is to provide a theoretical and experiential basis for the development of self and staff care programmes. The module will examine individual and organisational influences on health of carers – in work or volunteering roles. An introduction to the concepts of stress, burnout and compassion fatigue will be explored alongside the emotional dynamics of working with people who are facing and dealing with significant losses. An experiential component and group processes are included.

Research - methods and appraisal

The main approaches to research and methodology will be introduced – quantitative and qualitative. Research design and research methods will be studied in order to help participants to critically evaluate published research material. Participants will learn how to use technology to retrieve published literature. Research specific to bereavement will be explored and the contemporary sources identified.

Assessment, Marks and Standards

A range of assessment methods will be applied as outlined in the table below. These include written coursework in the form of book review, case study, literature review, care plan and examination. One assignment will involve a group presentation.

Modules	Year	Type of Module	Assessment	Marks
<i>Theories and models of grief, bereavement and mourning</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>Core</i>	<i>Assignment, book review</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Counselling skills for bereavement and loss</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>Core</i>	<i>Assignment, case study</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Perspectives on grief</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>Core</i>	<i>Written examination</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Systems of bereavement support</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>Core</i>	<i>Assignment, Group presentation and exam question</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Research methods and appraisal</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>Core</i>	<i>Assignment, review</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Self-care and caring for carers</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>Core</i>	<i>Assignment, Care plan</i>	<i>100</i>

Pass Mark

A candidate must obtain 50% in each module

Programme Details

Accreditation

The course is convened by the Irish Hospice Foundation and the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. It is accredited by the National University of Ireland.

Admission Requirements

The candidate must fulfill the NUI entry requirements or be eligible for matriculation. The candidate is required to hold a primary degree or equivalent in any subject (each candidate's application will be considered on an individual basis) **or** a professional qualification in relevant fields with significant work experience and responsibilities.

Time Commitment

The Higher Diploma runs from September 2006. Classes, tutorials and seminars are held every **Wednesday from 4pm to 8.30pm**. There are six Saturday sessions over the twelve-month period in Year One. No classes are scheduled in July or August. Participants are expected to attend all sessions and to devote time to the self-directed learning and assignments associated with the programme. While contact hours or lectures average 30 hours per module, this course is designed relative to the NQAI and ECT systems. A guideline of 250 input hours per module to include course work preparation, self-directed learning and reading is suggested although individual students may vary in the time commitment required.

Staffing

The programme will be directed by the professional staff of the Irish Hospice Foundation with core modules and inputs from the academic, hospice, and community sectors in Ireland and the United Kingdom.

Application and selection procedure

Applicants should complete and return the application form. Applications will be processed through the Irish Hospice Foundation and final selection may be based on interview. **Closing date for receipt of completed application forms is Friday, June 16, 2006.**

Participants

Participants on the course will reflect a range of disciplines from clinical and non-clinical backgrounds – e.g. nurses, social workers, teachers, and community, voluntary and statutory personnel.

Fees

A fee of **€3,000** applies. This may be paid in two instalments. A non-refundable booking fee of €200 must accompany your acceptance of the place offered on the course. Cheques should be made payable to The Irish Hospice Foundation. Eligible for tax relief procedures.

Location

All classes, tutorials and seminars will be held at the training rooms of the Irish Hospice Foundation, 4th Floor, Morrison Chambers, 32 Nassau Street, Dublin 2. The Irish Hospice Foundation also houses the Thérèse Brady library, a specialist Library for a niche collection of bereavement books, journals and resources.

To receive your application form contact:

Ms Maura Dunne
Administrator/Higher Diploma
Irish Hospice Foundation
Morrison Chambers
32 Nassau Street,
Dublin 2

Tel: (01) 6793188 Fax: (01) 6730040
E-mail: maura@hospice-foundation.ie

Completed applications forms should be returned to Maura Dunne by Friday, June 16, 2006

Enquiries

Enquiries on course content to Orla Keegan, Irish Hospice Foundation, 32 Nassau Street, Dublin 2 01 6793188 orla@hospice-foundation.ie