

Title	Utilising Volunteers: Best practice bereavement screening and assessment
Number	75
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Abstract	<p>In response to the Bereavement support standards for specialist palliative care services (2012), Barwon Health Palliative Care reviewed the provision of post death screening and assessment for bereaved carers. As a consequence, the service convened a multi-disciplinary working group to review the standards and identify gaps in current service provision. A number of gaps were identified in regard to the routine assessment of bereaved carers and as such an alternative bereavement post death screening and assessment process was developed and implemented for trial in July 2014. At the core of the revised process is utilising volunteers who have received appropriate bereavement training and education. Volunteers now undertake a post death screening phone call at 4 – 6 weeks post death and if appropriate a one off bereavement visit to the primary carer’s home. Regular engagement and de-briefing is undertaken with members of the specialist Palliative Care team, including the Palliative Care Volunteer Coordinator and Psychologist. A formal, facilitated peer support meeting is available on a monthly basis if required to ensure volunteers are well supported and able to sustain their engagement with this process. Further contact is made with bereaved primary carers via letter at 3 months post death and at any stage, if risk is identified, a bereaved carer can be referred for specialist bereavement interventions. Reflection and Remembrance services are held biannually.</p>