

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY: Bridging Divides - Positive Transitions**

**Grief Encounter**

**Adv: Gilly Green**

**Base: Barnet**

**Amount requested: £132,727**

**Benefit: Multiple boroughs**

**Amount recommended: £132,800**

**The Applicant**

Grief Encounter provides information, guidance and support to bereaved children and those who care for them. Its aim is that every child in the UK receives the best access to quality support, recognition and understanding to alleviate the emotional pain caused by the death of a parent or sibling and to ensure each child's long term well being and mental health. The charity provides therapeutic services to help children, young people and their families address their grief and mitigate future problems associated with bereavement.

**The Application**

By the age of 16, one in twenty young people will experience the death one or both of their parents and 44,000 children and young people are bereaved each year. Studies show the poor outcomes and disadvantages bereaved children face when they fail to receive therapeutic support, including later mental health issues and struggles with educational attainment. Grief Encounter recognises the chronic under supply of mental health support for children and young people in neighbourhoods where it works and even less provision to support those with the specific challenges brought about by bereavement. The organisation receives significant numbers of referrals from schools, CAMHS, GPs and hospitals as well as self-referrals. Following initial assessment, specialist trained counsellors work with an average of two children each per year. Counsellors are overseen and supported by a Clinical Services Manager who recruits and trains counsellors and oversees the project. The application is to support the salary and on costs of an existing post holder, plus internal training and DBS checks.

**The Recommendation**

Grief Encounter provides high quality, clinical and non-clinical services for children and young people. The organisation demonstrates that it is continuing to innovate to deliver responsive services – the helpline grew from consultation about how young people wanted to access support. Whilst it receives many referrals from statutory bodies, it receives very little funding from these sources and is therefore highly reliant on its fundraising. The application fits well with your priority around Positive Transitions in supporting vulnerable young people to become more resilient and able to make positive choices. A grant as outlined below is recommended:

**£132,800 over 3 years ( £43,590, £43,552, £45,658) to cover salary costs of the Clinical Services Manager, DBS checks and clinical training.**

## Funding History

Meeting Date	Decision
04/09/2013	£103,850 over three years (£33,600; £34,600; £35,650) towards two part-time Senior Clinical Practitioners (1 FTE) providing services for children and their families in North and East London.
06/09/2007	Whilst recognising the value of this work, children's bereavement services do not meet the criteria of your children and young people programme.

### Background and detail of proposal

The work aims to help children and young people build a 'new normal' after their world has irrevocably changed. Children are provided with a safe, confidential space to discuss their concerns and feelings, the tools to help them process their grief and build emotional resilience to overcome the obstacles they will face. The service is provided free of charge to ensure that affordability isn't a barrier. Grief Encounter also makes sure that multilingual counsellors and those with different cultural backgrounds are available to engage with diverse communities. It has recently set up GriefTalk – a helpline service for those young people who prefer email and telephone contact. Most service users are under 16 and much of the work takes place in schools. Grief Encounter works closely with other relevant agencies and networks, is an accredited BACP member and all clinicians are BACP or similar registered.

### Financial Information

Grief Encounter is heavily reliant on the success of a fundraising gala dinner held every two years which raises in excess of £1m. Whilst this has been a steady and welcome stream of income for several years, it is also a risk as the charity is very reliant on it. In response, the charity has expanded its fundraising team to diversify its income which explains the high fundraising costs in 2020. Reserves at the end of 2018/19 are high. This is due to the very successful gala dinner, but it should be noted that this event is only held every two years and the income raised covers any shortfall for the interim non gala years. The charity has a planned deficit for 2020 and in the period to the following dinner the reserves drop down. Due to the nature of the organisation's commitment to provide uninterrupted services to bereaved families, Trustees are currently considering extending the reserve position to 9 months. As the organisation enters its new financial year it has secured just 11% of its income but this is not a significant concern as it raises most of its annual income from events and challenges which are yet to take place.

<b>Year end as at 31 JULY</b>	<b>2018 Examined Accounts</b>	<b>2019 Forecast</b>	<b>2020 Budget</b>
<b>Income &amp; expenditure:</b>			
Income	881,995	2,181,020	880,240
- % of income confirmed as at 30 August 2019	n/a	100%	11%
Expenditure	(1,047,648)	(1,497,199)	1,322,800
Total surplus/(deficit)	(165,653)	683,821	(442,560)
Split between:			
- Restricted surplus/(deficit)	148,819	0	0
- Unrestricted surplus/(deficit)	(314,472)	683,821	(442,560)
	(165,653)	683,821	(442,560)
Cost of Raising Funds	185,755	267,753	287,000
- % of income	21.1%	12.3%	32.6%
Operating expenditure (unrestricted funds)	869,639	1,419,189	1,092,800
<b>Free unrestricted reserves:</b>			
Free unrestricted reserves held at year end	544,131	1,227,952	785,392
No of months of operating expenditure	7.5	10.4	8.6
Reserves policy target	434,819	709,595	546,400
No of months of operating expenditure	6.0	6.0	6.0
Free reserves over/(under) target	109,312	518,357	238,992