

## Ways to Provide Support to Staff after Patient Deaths

- Once the patient's death is public knowledge (e.g., obituary in the paper) and with the written permission of the patient (antemortem) or the patient's legal agent, post obituary and memorial service/funeral information in a public area where it can be seen by other patients.
- For staff who have been involved in the patient's care, provide journal in non-public area for staff to write memories of patients who expire.
- For staff who have been involved in the patient's care, provide sympathy cards for staff, patients and family members to sign and send to deceased patients' next of kin.
- Devote part of the monthly staff meeting to remembering patients who have expired that month. Include the facility social worker an outside professional bereavement resource if needed. Consider doing the Personal Death Awareness Exercises for staff (see below).
- With the permission of patients' legal agents, conduct a yearly non-denominational memorial service for patients, family members, and staff to attend.
- Offer bereavement and counseling services for staff through the company's employee assistance program.
- Send staff to continuing education meetings on death/dying topics.

**Disclaimer:** Since the recommendations in this document involve protected health information, in the implementation of the above practices in their dialysis facility, users may want to consult with their Privacy Officer or Legal Counsel to ensure that they are in compliance with HIPAA privacy law.