

# Bereavement care for parents of childhood cancer patients

Anna Katharina Vokinger, University of Lucerne

<b>Speaker</b>	Anna Katharina Vokinger holds a Master of Arts in Social Anthropology from the University of Bern. In January 2022, she began working part-time as a research assistant in the Project “Bereavement care for parents of childhood cancer patients” at the Department of Health Sciences and Medicine at the University of Lucerne. In October 2022, she started her PhD on the same project. Her research focuses on the needs and desires of bereaved parents in the paediatric palliative care setting of oncology. The project’s primary goal is to improve the bereavement support available to parents whose child has died from cancer.
<b>Date and time</b>	Monday, May 1, 2023, 14:15 – 15:15
<b>Location</b>	Lecture hall 2, University of Lucerne, Frohburgstrasse 3, 6002 Lucerne
<b>Background</b>	Childhood cancer is considered the second most common cause of death in developed countries in children over one year of age. Despite improvements in treatment in past decades, about 20% of children diagnosed with cancer die.
<b>Introduction and project overview</b>	The death of a child has been described as one of the most challenging events a family can face affecting each family member differently and uniquely. Bereavement care, as one of the core domains of paediatric palliative care, is committed to improving the quality of life and mitigating the suffering of the bereaved family holistically. However, little is known about the needs of bereaved parents and how they fare in the long term. Therefore, it is essential to learn more about the protective and risk factors of bereaved parents that might influence the long-term psychosocial outcomes in bereaved families. The project’s primary goal is to improve the bereavement support available to parents whose child has died from cancer.
<b>Aim</b>	Describe the long-term psychological and socio-demographic outcomes and support needs of bereaved parents.
<b>Method</b>	A mixed methods approach is used: a) in-depth interviews and b) a cross-sectional survey among parents living in Switzerland who lost their child to cancer (age of diagnosis between 0-18 years of age).
<b>Significance</b>	This study’s findings will provide valuable insights into 1) families’ long-term psychological and socio-demographic outcomes, 2) the needed support of bereaved parents, 3) long-term grief, and 4) families’ wishes for health workers’ interaction with their family during the time of illness and after death.
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