

# An Introduction to

**AnamCara** 

*Supporting Parents after Bereavement*

# What is Anam Cara?

**An all Ireland organisation  
providing  
online and face to face  
peer support services for  
bereaved parents**

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# The Facts

- **Approximately 2,750 families each year experience the death of a child between ages of 0 – 44 years** (CSO Statistics Ireland/Northern Ireland)
- **Sudden deaths, outside a hospital or hospice system often find themselves outside the reach of any bereavement support**
- **The intense grief can last longer than society realises**

# Bereaved Parents

- The intensity and complexity of the grief after the death of child, of any age
- Anguish & isolation experienced by parents
- Lack of access to information about support services available in the community
- Each family member will grieve in their own unique way

# Supporting Bereaved Parents



**Bereaved parents are among the most vulnerable people in our community, their support is Anam Cara's priority**

*A recent research paper by Colin Murray Parkes highlighted that after a major bereavement, such as the death of a child:*

- Up to a third of the people most directly affected will suffer detrimental effects on their physical or mental health, or both
- Without appropriate information and support such bereavement increases the risk of death from heart disease and suicide
- Can cause or contribute to a variety of psychosomatic and psychiatric disorders for of bereaved family members.

**Other research in Scotland with bereaved parents confirmed that**

- A bereaved mothers mortality rate is 4 times higher than a non bereaved mother (Mairi Harper)

**PRIORITY**

# Recent Research

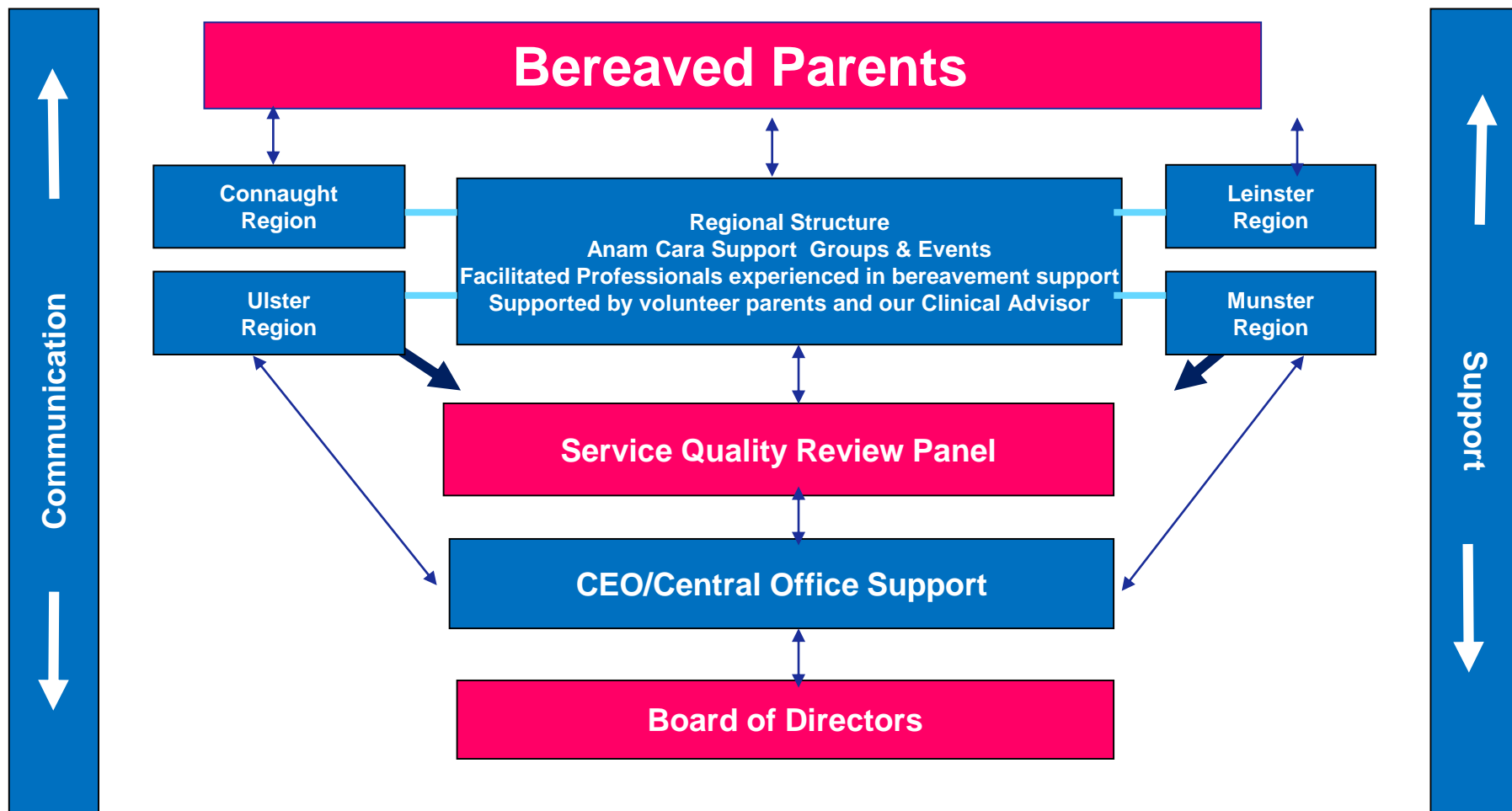
## Parental Grief

- ▶ Early bereavement – up to 3 years
- ▶ Mid bereavement – 3.5 – 4.5 years
- ▶ Late bereavement – up to 30 years

Dr Mairi Harper  
Research Leader, Family Bereavement  
Heriot-Watt University



# Anam Cara Structure



# Anam Cara's Organisations Values

- Quality
- Compassion and Empathy
- Inclusivity
- Trust
- Collaboration



# Our Vision

**“Every family throughout Ireland will have the relevant support services they need following the death of their son or daughter”**



# Our Focus

To provide information and peer support through safe and comfortable online and face to face forums



# Inclusivity

Anam Cara is an inclusive organisation our services are available to

- Any parent or family who have experienced the death of child, regardless of age or circumstances of death.
- Across all communities in Ireland



**All Anam Cara Services are provided free of charge**

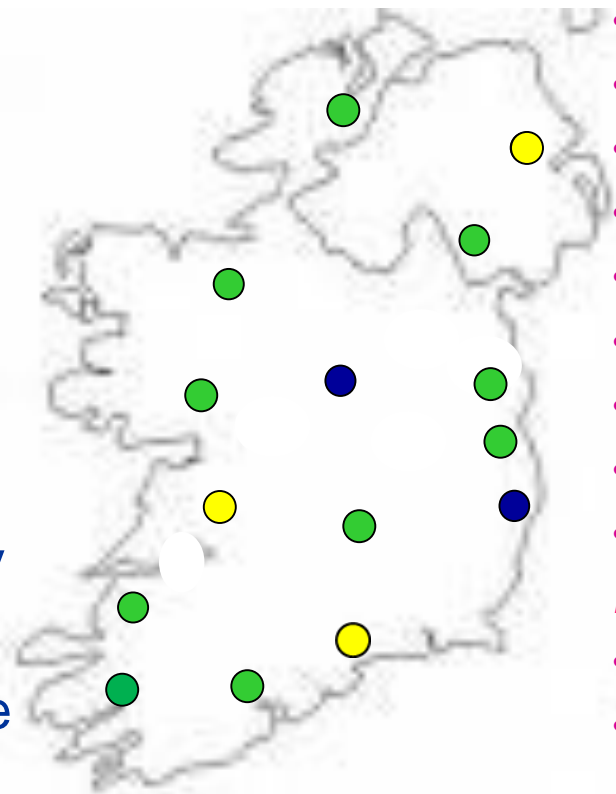
# Our Impact

- **Anam Cara has connected with almost 10,000 parents since 2008**
- **Facilitate about 120 events each year for parents and families events across 32 Counties**
- **Provides an important link to information and additional services in the community**
- **Currently 10 active support groups and 3 key partnerships**
- **All services are provided at no cost for families**

# Anam Cara Services



- Monthly informal open Groups
- Professional Facilitator supported by Anam Cara Volunteer parents
- In excess of 10,000 parents have attended to date
- Ideally strategically located within a 100km distance
- Focus on Quality v's Quantity
- **Bereavement Information evenings** and Remembrance events organised throughout the year.
- Support for Parents with no Surviving Children



## Existing Groups ●

- Dublin South
- Dublin North
- Donegal
- Tipperary
- Cork City & West Cork
- Mayo
- Galway
- Tralee
- Armagh

## Partnerships ●

- Limerick (Milford)
- Northern Ireland (NICH)
- Solas Waterford
- **Target Areas ●**
- Midlands
- Wicklow/Wexford

# Bereavement Information Evenings



- Offered Anam Cara Information Packs
- Links to Website Online Video Resources
- Access to Bereavement professionals
- Information and Links to other services in their Community
- Introduction to the Anam Cara group and peer support



**AnamCara**  
Supporting Parents after Bereavement

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT ANAM CARA AND HOW WE SUPPORT BEREAVED PARENTS THROUGHOUT IRELAND

**VISIT ANAMCARA.IE**  
OR CALL 01 4045378 / 085 2888 888  
FROM NI: 028 9521 3120

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**OUR VIDEOS**

- The Death of a Child
- Sudden and Traumatic Death
- A Dad's Grief
- About Anam Cara

# Peer support....

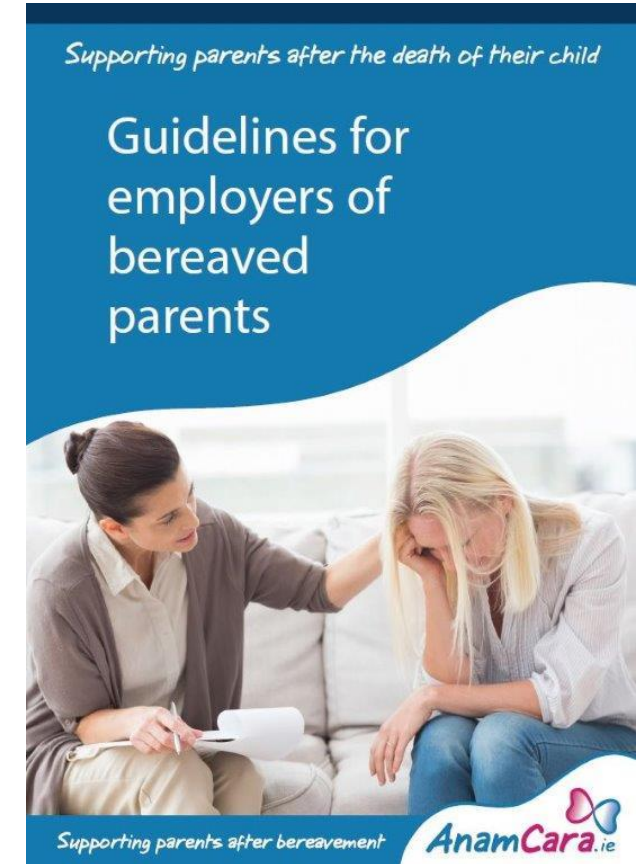
## Is a special kind of support

Ref. Kari Dyregrov & Atle Dyregrov

- Reduces Social Isolation
- Provides a safe place where we can be ourselves
- Recognition, Understand & normalise the intense grief
- Time out for parents— let the mask drop
- Sharing promotes models of surviving
- Provides a structure for information& signposting
- Hope in meeting parents further on
- Continues after family/friends support has waned

# Anam Cara Employers Resource

Developed by bereaved Parents  
to help employers and work  
colleagues on how best to  
support them when they return to  
work





# Thank You





## Information Telephone Numbers:

ROI 085 2888 888

NI 028 9521 3120

## Address

HCL House, Second Avenue, Cookstown Industrial Estate,  
Tallaght, Dublin 24, D24 XDR5

Contact Number(Central Office): (01) 404 5378

Email: [info@anamcara.ie](mailto:info@anamcara.ie)

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