

Saying goodbye to a loved one can be difficult and everyone's grief journey is different. Our role is to offer support and resources to meet the needs of each donor family member.

During early discussions of loved one's prognosis:

- Give family members time to process this news and grasp the reality of the prognosis.
- Give them time in the early moments in regards to making significant end-of-life decisions, funeral plans, etc.
- Simply be present and available to answer questions.
- Give family members permission to move at their own pace.
- And remember, numbness and shock are a natural part of grief and will help the family to come to terms with their loss.

Shock and disbelief may at times lead to confusion or inability to concentrate.

- Use clear and simple language. Allow for periods of silence.
- Repeat information as necessary.
- Be patient.

Meeting the needs of a donor family may include:

- When possible, offering food and drink to the family.
- Give family members permission to:
 - Spend time with the person who died.
 - Spend time alone.
 - Take an active role in patient care (i.e. touching their loved one, brushing their hair, participating in 'tangible rituals').
 - Create final memories (i.e. holding, reading to or lying with their loved one, taking handprints, clipping a lock of hair, etc.).
- Offering a supportive presence.
- Offering choices and options in their loved one's end-of-life care.

Supportive Language:

- I am here to help in anyway I can.
- Is there anyone I can call for you?
- Would you like to speak with a clergy person?
- This is really difficult.
- If I am giving you too much information at once, just tell me.
- I am truly sorry you are going through this.
- Is there anything you need?
- The staff and I are here to help you.