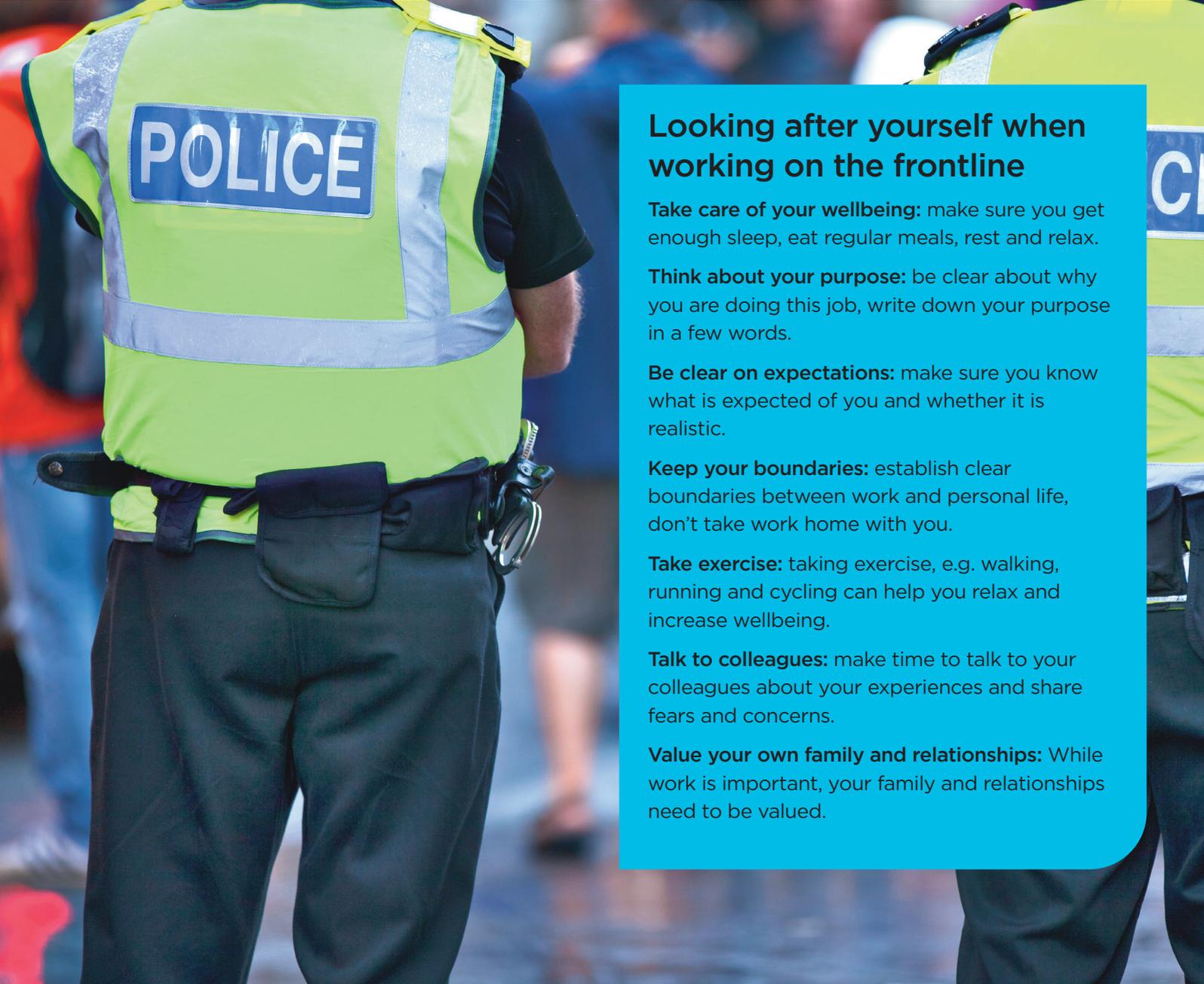


The coronavirus threat is ongoing. We are aware of the potential harm the virus can cause especially to those most at risk. In most people's lives there are frail or vulnerable relations. Those working on the front line are constantly reminded of their own vulnerability when they support someone suffering with the virus, and are fearful not just for themselves, but also of taking the virus home to their loved ones.

For those working on the front line they are experiencing more exposure to deaths and this can intensify their own feelings of vulnerability, particularly when they can identify and empathise with the bereaved.



Looking after yourself when working on the frontline

Take care of your wellbeing: make sure you get enough sleep, eat regular meals, rest and relax.

Think about your purpose: be clear about why you are doing this job, write down your purpose in a few words.

Be clear on expectations: make sure you know what is expected of you and whether it is realistic.

Keep your boundaries: establish clear boundaries between work and personal life, don't take work home with you.

Take exercise: taking exercise, e.g. walking, running and cycling can help you relax and increase wellbeing.

Talk to colleagues: make time to talk to your colleagues about your experiences and share fears and concerns.

Value your own family and relationships: While work is important, your family and relationships need to be valued.



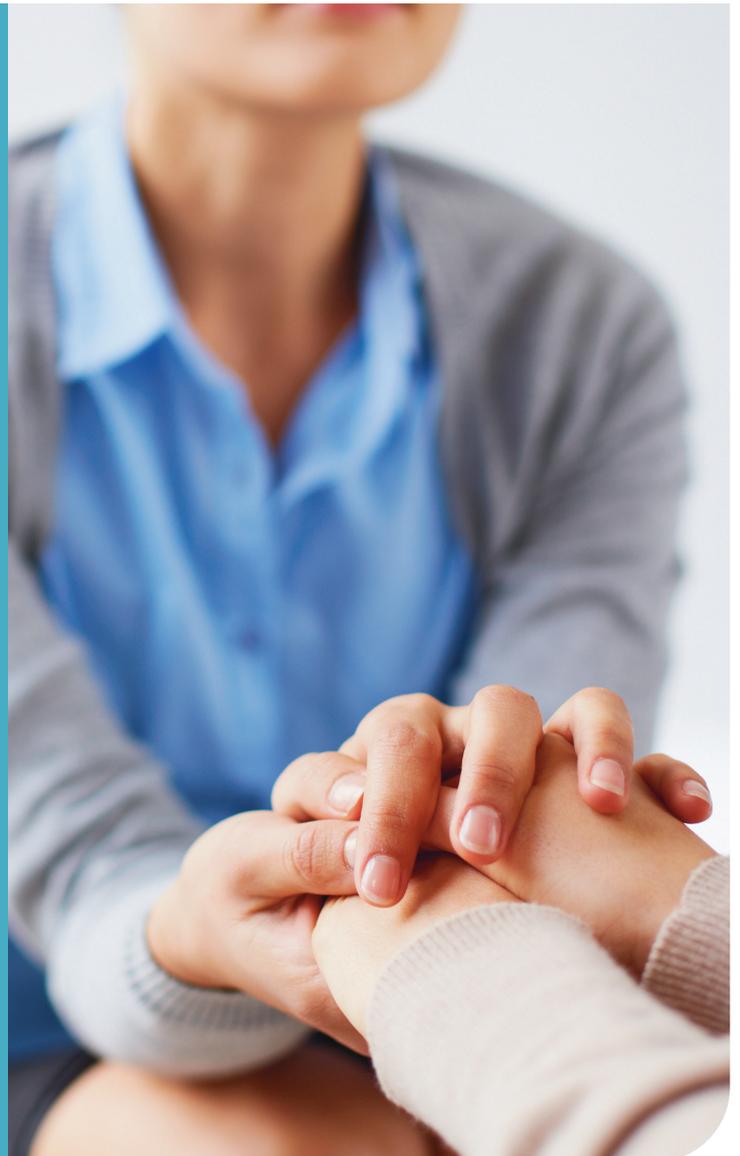
These are unprecedented times. We are facing a tragic loss of life. Those affected by the virus may be taken to hospital alone. If someone dies in hospital, family members may not get the opportunity to say goodbye, this can be very difficult for the family members. Furthermore the bereaved may be left to grieve alone, without their usual social networks to rely on.

Where people are dying at home, police officers and registered medical professionals will need to attend the house and arrange for the body to be taken to a mortuary. The extra precautions that need to be taken because of the virus can cause further upset. For police officers this can intensify their own feelings of vulnerability.

What to say when someone is grieving

Many more people are going to be bereaved because of Covid-19. It is normal to feel worried about saying the wrong thing to the bereaved, but it is more important that you say something rather than finding the perfect words. You may find the tips below useful:

- It is important to acknowledge their loss and offer your condolences, saying how sorry you are that their friend or family member has died.
- The bereaved may want to talk about the person and tell you stories, they may cry through these stories. You may find this really hard to hear but just being there and listening can be a great comfort. You can't fix their pain but you can listen.
- Don't be afraid to ask more about the person who has died. Allowing the bereaved person to talk and share their feelings with you can make a real difference.
- Ask if there is anything practical that you can do to help at that time.
- You could also signpost the bereaved to services such as [Cruse](#) for them to access support.





Helping children to cope with death

Children and young people need to be given the opportunity to grieve as any adult would. But it is also important to remember that children and young people grieve in different ways. A child's understanding of death and the nature of their bereavement will be different at different stages of development. Children will experience both physical and emotional reactions to death. Emotional reactions may include shock, denial, anger, depression, guilt. Physical reactions may include disturbed sleep, loss of appetite, challenging behaviour, and developmental delays.

Useful links:

[NHS Children and Bereavement](#)

[Children Bereavement UK](#) Resources for children and young people

[Cruse Bereavement Care Coronavirus](#)

Helping children to cope with death

How to help a child or young child

Some key points to remember concerning children, young people and grief.

- No bereaved child or young person will respond to the death of someone close in the same way.
- **Keep the structure of the bereaved child or young person's day/night as routine as possible.**
- Allow the bereaved child or young person to say how they feel and do not be offended if they are angry with you or do not want to talk.
- **Give the bereaved child or young person the time to explore their grief and support them as they mourn.**
- Do not feel that you have failed if you need to seek professional help for the bereaved child or young person. You are doing the right thing.
- **Put in place appropriate boundaries if a grieving child or young person is hurting themselves or others and explain why such boundaries are necessary.**
- Do not dismiss a bereaved child or young person's real or perceived illness.
- **Talk things through with them in an open and honest way, remembering to listen to the child or young person.**

What to do when someone dies

Working out what to do first when someone dies can seem overwhelming. Besides letting family and friends know, there are several organisations you need to notify when a person has passed away. As well as arranging the funeral and dealing with the financial affairs of someone who has died.

Useful links:

Gov.uk

What do I need to do if someone close to me dies?
What to do after a death

Money Savings Expert - What to do when someone dies

Which - What to do when someone dies

Money Advice Service - What to do when someone dies

Citizens Advice - What to do after a death

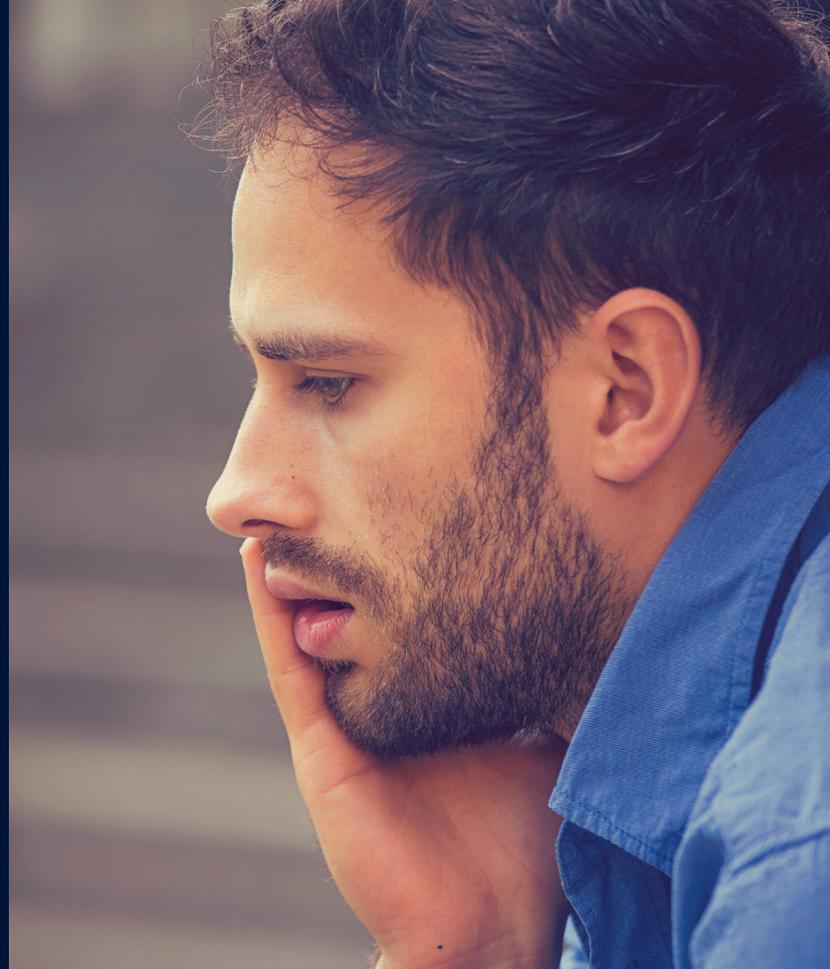


Following a sudden and traumatic death, a more intense grief reaction may occur which may be more prolonged. This is further compounded by the fact that normal rites and rituals surrounding death have been severely curtailed.

Family members may not be allowed to view the body in the chapel of rest and funeral numbers will be limited to the smallest possible group to minimise the risk of virus transmission.

Everyone responds to death differently there is no right or wrong way to respond. If you have experienced the loss of a loved one you may need to access professional support. Similarly if you are supporting someone who has been bereaved you may need support for yourself, especially at this present time when there is so much in the news about death and dying and many of us are feeling anxious.

You can access support from the services below:



Police Mutual Care Line

Our **Care Line** Service provided by Health Assured can offer advice and information at the end of a phone, helping with a range of concerns including coping with a bereavement.

To talk to someone please call **0800 028 1708** or take a look at the e-portal:

Health & Wellbeing e-portal
www.healthassuredeap.co.uk

Username: policemutual
Password: careline

Cruse Bereavement Care

Call the free helpline on **0808 808 1677** or email: helpline@cruse.org.uk

For more useful information:

Cruse Bereavement Care

Coronavirus: Dealing with Bereavement and Grief

British Psychological Society

Coping with Death and Grief during the Coronavirus Pandemic

OscarKilo

Dealing with Covid-19 deaths and bereavements

For more information about the products and services available from Police Mutual:

Call us 01543 441630
Visit policemutual.co.uk

We're open from
9am - 5pm Mon - Fri

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