

meeting their needs. Due to the success of the day, there is also a plan to open up future days to the children of our adult palliative care service, who have some similar needs.

P40

GRIEF AND BEREAVEMENT – SUPPORTING SIBLINGS OF A CHILDREN'S HOSPICE SERVICE

Tracie Dempster, Lynn Cooper, Glynis Petty *EllenorLions Hospices, Dartford, UK*

10.1136/bmjspcare-2011-000105.40

Children and young people's palliative care is an increasingly recognised specialty for life limiting and life threatening conditions. These children often have a difficult life filled with hospital appointments and strange professionals invading their homes. The siblings of these children may often be forgotten about or neglected, as the focus is on the sick child. The siblings have their own grief and bereavement and very often need support in getting through this.

Our children's hospice at home service offers pre and post bereavement support to the whole family, but recognised that more could be done to meet the specific needs of siblings.

There was a review of the caseload to identify possible siblings ranging in age from 5 to 19 years. Family's views were sought, and discussion was had at the multidisciplinary team meetings to identify appropriate participants. Following a successful bid to the Department of Health children's palliative care funding, two separate age-appropriate support events for siblings were organised. The older children (11 – 19) did not take up the opportunity for a place, so only one event was held for the younger age group. The day was structured and therapeutic group work formed the basis for the sessions, led by specialist children's palliative care nurses, the play therapist and support staff.

It was recognised that the older children regularly attend a youth group which offers them ongoing support. The day was very well evaluated by the children attending, and subsequently their parents. More sibling events will be organised for the future, as the day proved to be an effective way of