 **NHS Education for Scotland**

**Transcript of ‘NES Bereavement Education Programme 10 year anniversary event - Dr Donald Macaskill’ conference film clip recording**

**Speaker**: Dr Donald Macaskill, CEO, Scottish Care

I'm absolutely delighted to be able to share a few thoughts in celebration of the 10th anniversary of the phenomenal work which NES's bereavement team has undertaken over the last few years. I want to speak primarily about the work which enabled the establishment of the Charter for bereavement.

Some many years ago, in fact, in 2018, a group of us gathered together, supported by the NES team to express concern about the rate of progress which was being made in relation to bereavement support in Scotland. That group, which I was honoured then and since to chair, brought together a range of individuals from the bereavement support sector, from the NHS, from social care, from third sector charities, from hospices, a really wide group of individuals who wanted to try to do something different to enable Scotland to be the best place to be supported should we experience grief, loss and bereavement.

At a very early stage, we recognised that we needed the support of a body and that was provided by NES and by the team at NES. We needed that support to undertake the consultation, the engagement, the development work, which was necessary, and which resulted in the publication in June 2020 of the national Charter for Adults and Children around bereavement.

That work, together with the associated guidance, which is renewed each year, has grown from strength to strength. It has developed under it set of animations, a toolkit to enable organisations regardless of their constitution, to consider the impact of bereavement on its workforce. And it's developed specific Charter Mark projects in schools and colleges, and in many community organisations. The Charter Group grows from strength to strength, but all that work would not have been possible without the singular ability of the NES team to recognise priority, to listen carefully and attentively to a particular need, and to have the commitment to put resource, staffing and support into the development of the Charter and its animations, resources, and documents.

So in this 10th anniversary, I want to thank the team and the programme because grief and loss and bereavement happens very differently for every single individual. The ability to recognise the common threads, to be able to develop resources which speak to diverse populations, to be able to gather together a group of people, often with disparate and sometimes conflicting interests, is a set of unique abilities, which the team at NES's bereavement support encapsulates.

We continue collectively, I think, to make real steps forward in ensuring that Scotland eventually will become that place where, regardless of role, be it clinical or social care, be it community, or simply be it as a citizen of this country, we will be able to identify, support and help when we need it, access resources, which speak to us. And collectively recognise that bereavement support is a human right, which we, all of us need to work towards and to defend. Thank you for listening.

The film was produced in July 2025 and can be found at <https://www.sad.scot.nhs.uk/webinars/previous-webinars/> or <https://vimeo.com/1120095815>

For more information visit [www.sad.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.sad.scot.nhs.uk) or contact [supportarounddeath@nes.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:supportarounddeath@nes.scot.nhs.uk)

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