

December 2008

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Thought bubble

“The deep pain that is felt at the death of every friendly soul arises from the feeling that there is in every individual something which is inexpressible, peculiar to him alone, and is, therefore, absolutely and irretrievably lost.”

Arthur Schopenhauer

Indemnity insurance bargain

Accredited NALAG members are now eligible for Australia's best-value professional indemnity insurance.

NALAG (Vic) has entered into an arrangement to provide its members who are counsellors with access to professional indemnity/public liability insurance through CGU via Marshall Insurance Brokers.

\$160.00 a year

The insurance will cost \$160.00 per annum. This price has been reduced from the 2007–08 price of \$170.00.

To be eligible for this insurance offer a person must be a member of NALAG (a NALAG-accredited loss and



grief counsellor) or a professional member of NALAG (a counsellor who is registered with NALAG) with an income from counselling of less than \$100,000 a year.

The main benefit of this professional indemnity insurance is that it covers the policy holder if they are sued for giving ‘harmful advice’

or if they cause some property damage or injury to a third party.

What's covered?

In brief, the policy covers the member for:

- Combined policy for professional indemnity and public liability.

- Professional indemnity limit of \$2,000,000 per member limited to \$6,000,000 in the aggregate.

- Public liability limit of \$10,000,000 per member limited to \$30,000,000 in the aggregate.

- Breach of Professional

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Grief awareness week forum — report

This year's grief awareness week forum — *Promoting Resilience: Loss and Grief Work in the Helping Professions* — was well received by the 60 attendees.

The key note presentations were given by **Ros Winkler** of Windana, who discussed *What's special about Grief Therapy*, and by **Bruce**

Rumbold of La Trobe University, who spoke on the subject of *Loss and Grief Work in the Helping Professions*.

The following organisations were represented at the forum: The Journey – Place for Living and Learning Inc, Diabetes Australia – Victoria, Disability Rights and

Advocacy Service, Asylum Seeker Assistance Service, Red Cross, MND Victoria, Metropolitan Fire Brigade, Specialist Children's Services DEECH, Plenty Valley Housing Epping, Cambridge International College, Balwyn High School, Thomas Embling Hospital and

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About NALAG

The National Association for Loss and Grief (Vic) (NALAG) is an incorporated, not-for-profit member-based charitable organisation that undertakes a range of activities to strengthen the community's capacity to respond to its loss and grief needs.

NALAG's activities include:

- community information and sector-development activities;
- the provision of seminars and forums;
- the promotion of Grief Awareness Week;
- standards and accreditation work for the loss and grief sector.

If you would like to know more about NALAG or support its work please contact us at: info@nalagvic.org.au.



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NALAG professional indemnity bargain

Duty, Trade Practices Act, Fraud and Dishonesty.

The policy covers participants in the scheme for the NALAG membership year from 31 October 2008 to 30 October 2009.

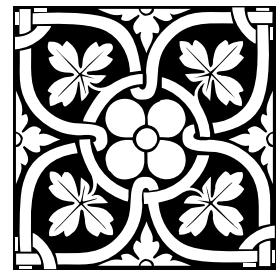
There are no pro rata payments available under the scheme. This arrangement has assisted in keeping the insurance premium low. To participate in the professional indemnity insurance scheme complete and sign the

application form, which can be downloaded from the NALAG website (www.nalagvic.org.au), and return it to NALAG if you are already a member.

New members

If you are applying for membership or upgrading from membership to professional membership, submit the insurance form with your application form. When your insurance application is approved you

will be invoiced and provided with insurance details by Marshall Insurance Brokers. ■



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Grief awareness week forum report

Melbourne City Mission.

It was good to see the range of organisations and groups supporting NALAG events continue to broaden and engage with the loss and grief sector.

The afternoon session gathered information about the grief issues confronting service users and agencies represented at the forum.

This information will contribute to the development of the *Strengthening*

Australia's Loss and Grief Support Capacity project, which is currently being undertaken by NALAG. ■

Research file – complicated grief

Following is an extract from an article by [Steven Kotler](#), which appeared on June 25, 2008 in [The Playing Field](#) and was reprinted in [Psychology Today](#).

In June, UCLA psychiatrist Mary-Frances O'Connor published a [study](#) in the journal *NeuroImage*, looking at the brain patterns associated with "complicated" grief.

This study used fMRI technology to look at the brain's pain centers and reward centers in people suffering uncomplicated (the kind you get over) and complicated grief. They did this by recruiting test subjects who had suffered the loss of a loved one and showing these subjects a picture of the person who had died while simultaneously snapping photos of their brains (a different photo of a stranger was used as a baseline).



What O'Connor found was that both sets of people had activity in their pain centers, but only those suffering complicated grief had action in their nucleus accumbens, a portion of our noggins commonly associated with both reward and social attachment.

"The idea," says O'Connor, "is that when our loved ones are alive, we get a rewarding cue from seeing them or things that remind us of them. After the loved one dies, those who adapt to the loss stop getting this neural reward. But those who don't adapt continue to crave it, because each time they do see a cue, they still get that neural reward."

This, she feels, means that people who are still getting this reward cue have difficulty letting go because their brain hasn't yet managed to rewire itself after the loss. ■

Cranbourne Bereavement Support Group

Bereaved residents of the Cranbourne area now have place to meet each month and share their experiences of loss and restoration.

The Bereavement Support Group meets monthly at the Cranbourne site of Cardinia Casey Community Health Service. This group provides information and encourages discussion, understanding and supportive care amongst people who have been bereaved (from the death of a significant other i.e. spouse,

sibling, parent, child, friend) within the past two years. Members learn how to cope with their grief and find ways of remembering and moving on.

It is an open, on-going group which participants can attend as often and for as long as they need. New members meet with the facilitator individually prior to attending.

Group sizes

Generally the group comprises 6–10 members and most attend for a period of 6–18 months. Some who have moved on may choose to re-attend occasionally when they feel the need. What often evolves from the group is informal social support that may include phone contact and lunches between meetings.

The group is currently



Although grief following bereavement is a unique experience for each person, participants often express similar feelings, behaviours and reactions to grief. Some commonly expressed feedback from group members

about the groups' benefit is "I feel like I'm not going crazy anymore" or "It was OK to sit and have a good cry because others did" and "I know I am not alone and it hasn't just happened to me."

facilitated by Community Health Service Counsellors Andrew Gabriel and Helen Harrison. Sharing and discussion is encouraged amongst participants.

A particular topic or theme may be introduced such as others' responses to the bereaved, how grief affects a person's daily life, helping children deal with grief or spiritual beliefs. Guest speakers occasionally attend the group and the November session is about "Coping with Xmas and the New Year". Social lunches are scheduled for the middle and end of year.

Make contact

For further details regarding the group please contact Andrew Gabriel on 9212 5700 or Helen Harrison on 5990 6789.

Clients can self-refer by contacting the Cardinia Casey Community Health Service Intake on 8768 5147. Helen and Andrew will then contact the client to arrange a screening interview. ■

NALAG & The United Nations

NALAG Victoria has become a signatory of the United Nations palliative care declaration. If you or your organisation wish to become a signatory, please visit: www.hospicecare.com.

The World Health Organisation lists many roles for palliative care including:

- provides relief from pain and other distressing symptoms;
- affirms life and regards dying as a normal process;
- intends neither to hasten or postpone death;
- integrates the psychological and spiritual aspects of patient care;
- offers a support system to help patients live as actively as possible until death;
- offers a support system to help the family cope during the patient's illness and in their own bereavement;
- uses a team approach to address the needs of patients and their families, including bereavement counselling, if indicated;
- enhances quality of life, and may also positively influence the course of illness. ■

WANTED

Counselling rooms (Mornington). Liz Chapman is looking for counselling rooms in the Mornington area. If you can help, please call Liz on 0422 546 216.

FOR RENT

Beautifully renovated rooms (East Melbourne) are available with a large independent group of counselling practitioners. High-quality fit-outs, wireless internet, all with natural light. From \$100/

day or \$380/week. Located at 62 Wellington Parade, East Melbourne (corner Simpson Street). Contact: Robert on 0433 321 123 or email a query to info@eastbourne.com.au or visit the web site at www.eastbourne.com.au

PLACE YOUR AD

Do you have something to sell, share, announce or that you want to buy? Reach out to the NALAG community market in 50 words or less by emailing your classified to: info@nalagvic.org.au.

NALAG (Vic) Committee of Management and Staff wish everyone a very happy Christmas and a joyful and prosperous New Year.