


Grief & Suffering in Families following Drug-Related Deaths: A Scoping Review

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Objective: The objective of the scoping review was to assess the extent of the literature; that is, in terms of the grief experiences and available resources as well as support and models of care for bereaved families who are coping with the death of a loved one due to substance misuse.



Inclusion Criteria: Articles were included if they discussed family bereavement related to substance or alcohol misuse in the health research literature including but not limited to support resources for family bereavement and coping with a substance misuse related death. Articles on family bereavement relating to conditions unrelated to substance or alcohol misuse were excluded.

Emergent Themes: 1) The significance of family suffering after a loss due to substance misuse. 2) Family coping with the loss. 3) Unmet needs of families with prolonged grief. 4) A lack of empathy & compassion for grieving families. 5) Available resources for grieving families. 6) Perspectives of healthcare providers & formal/informal caregivers about resources to help with grief.



Conclusion: There is an urgent need for supportive intervention models to reduce the stigma and public rejection related to drug misuse and for training/education frameworks to better serve a unique population in this special form of grief.