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The Coroner’s Role and preparing for an inquest.

Abstract

* Bereavement affects the whole family, and those with an emotional relationship to the deceased.
* This can continue for years or even decades, so we need to get things right.
* Bereavement can be experienced as a violent incident.
* The purpose of an inquest is not always apparent to the carers/relatives at first.
* No two people experience bereavement in the same way, but it likely to involve a wide range of feelings and emotions.
* There are some common factors in this situation.
* The need for sensitive and comprehensible two-way communication is of the utmost importance.
* This implies that professionals must understand the effects of high emotional tension on communication.
* The bereaved may have a sense of isolation. An inquest, being conducted in public and with the press present, may be a strange and threatening experience.
* The location, formality of the setting, and in some cases the adversarial nature of the proceedings may further this feeling of unease and alienation.
* People may feel under threat and powerless.
* The best outcome is where everyone is put at ease, feels confident with the other participants, and feels the outcomes reflect their view of reality.