Only one widow in our study had actually been in contact with Cruse and she had not joined them although she said she might do so in the future.

Clearly Cruse is unsuccessful in making itself known to many of the people it aims to help. There were branches in or near five of our eight study areas so the problem is not just inadequate geographical cover. The organisation apparently tends to rely on publicity through television documentaries and feature articles in magazines and newspapers to attract its members. But, as with the general practitioners, if it is to reach the widowed who are lonely, isolated and possibly apathetic a more active approach is needed. Local organisations could identify some of the widowed through death notices in local newspapers although this might give a bias towards the middle class and better off. Alternatively they might approach the registrar of deaths in their areas. This leads to another rather different suggestion:that the marital status of men as well as women should be recorded on the non-confidential part of the death certificate. This would eliminate a sexual inequality as well as enabling widows to be identified at the time of their bereavement.

The potential role for Cruse was illustrated by the widowed who reported being shunned by friends who felt uncomfortable in their presence, or who were unwilling to let them express their grief. Some comments were:-

'You still feel on your own (even though I live with the family). There can be a roomful of people, nobody seems to want to bother with you. They're frightened of saying his name.'

'People round here don't want to talk about it. They are hard. They say "Don't cry", but I can't stop crying.'

'When you're a widow and you start talking about it they're not interested. That's why I've not cried, I've just been a frozen thing. People turn away if you tell them your troubles.'

'If a social worker or somebody could come and have a chat with you. It's like cutting off your own arm in a way. If somebody could tell you "You'll get over it".'

In its search for ways of matching needs and sources of help Cruse may find it fruitful to contact other organisations with different but possibly complementary groups of clients such as single parent families. Cruse and Gingerbread could have much to offer each other.

In their new lives the widowed need to find a purpose and meaningful activities - but what is acceptable and stimulating for one may be depressing and unhelpful for another. The widowed, like others, differ widely in their needs and desires for company, for solitude and for all types of activity.

REVIEWS

Most of us in Britain are not fully familiar with bereavement work being down in the USA, and the publications arising from this. Here, Professor Michael A. Simpson MB.,BS.,MRCPsych. DPM, a member of the Cruse Council, lists some recent works.

BEREAVEMENT CARE MANUAL M. Laffanzi and D. Coffelt, Boulder County Hospice, Boulder, Co. 1979. A 70-page manual describing the Boulder Hospice bereavement care programme reviewing functions, goals, selection and training procedures,methods, continuing education and staff support, including documents used in the programme, job descriptions, record-keeping forms.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUPS Alice S. Demi, Grief Education Institute, Denver, Co. 1981, 82 pp, $12.50. A manual for support group leaders by someone with long experience in this field.

LIVING WITH LOSS Ronald W. Ramsay and Rene Newbergen. Wm. Morrow, New York 1981. Not a major breakthrough, but a useful popular account of 'Guided Confrontation Therapy' which the Dutch psychologist uses in managing pathological grief reactions.

WHEN YOUR CHILD DIES Finding the Meaning in Mourning Nancy Corney Stevenson and Cary Higley Straffon Philomel Press, C/o St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 2747 Fairmount Boulevard, Cleveland Heights, OH 44106, 40 pp, $3.00. A booklet by two bereaved mothers reviewing grief, its effects on family and friends, with some references.

THE WIDOWER Jane Burgess Kohn and Willard K. Kohn, Beacon Press, Boston, 1978, 192 pp, $8.95, $4.95 paperback. The only book, so far, about the needs of the widower

WIDOWHOOD Henry P. Brehm and Helena Z. Lopata, Praeger, New York,1981, 200 pp $17.95. A study of the economic and social circumstances of widows and orphans and how recent social policies do not meet their needs. Makes recommendations on policy needs.

MOTHERHOOD AND MOURNING Perinatal Death. Larry G. Peppers and Ronald J. Knapp, Praeger, New York, 1980, 184 pp $18.95

PET LOSS A Thoughtful Guide for Adults and Children, Herbert A. Nieburg and Arlene Fischer. Harper, New York, 1982, 155 pp, $10.95. As for many people the relationship to a pet is their major significant relationship attention to the grief following such a loss is appropriate.

WHEN PREGNANCY FAILS Families coping with Miscarriage, Stillbirth and Infant Death, Susan Borg and J. Lasker,Beacon Press, Boston, 1981, 250 pp, $12. 95. $6.95 paperback. One of the best of recent books on this subject.