

Confidentiality Policy

Whether we are working in a mentoring or a counselling role, we are in a privileged position that encourages clients to share information with us.

We believe that all clients must feel assured that the information given to staff or volunteers in the One to One Project will be kept confidential, following the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy Ethical Framework.

Below are the points specifically drawn up as the policy for the One to One Project.

Supervision/Management

- Where there is formal counselling in progress, the counsellor must be able to take their work with clients to a recognised supervisor/Supervision Group/Support Group of their choice with the Project's knowledge and consent and the client's knowledge. Information that could be used to identify a client cannot be shared or used.
- The volunteer must be able to discuss their clients with the Project Manager in supervision.
- No information on the work with clients may be used outside of supervision/support groups or in discussions with the Project Manager or Deputy Project Manager without the client's permission, the client having had the situation explained to them, and the volunteer having express permission from the Project Manager. This includes (but is not limited to) case studies, group work or recordings.
- A client may have access to their file. We expect to be able to share with a client any information we hold in relation to them.

Referral Agencies

- The Project Manager will inform the referrer, in writing, when the client has had an initial meeting to discuss their requirements and again when a volunteer is allocated. The referrer will be notified when contact ceases.
- No other information will be given to the referrer unless permission has been given by the client

Other Enquiries

No information will be given about a client to anyone, including spouses, parents, other relatives, social workers, case conferences, doctors, police etc. without the express permission of the client. The only exceptions to this are highlighted below and covered in the document "Policy on the Request for Disclosure of Personal Data by Third Parties, including Report Writing".

When consent is given to disclose information, a record will be kept at the One to One Project office, preferably signed by the client.

Any letters written on behalf of a client must be discussed and shown to the client before they are sent out.

Disclosure without permission

- We have a duty to share information if we consider the client likely to cause imminent harm to themselves or to others. **The danger must be imminent where breaching confidentiality is necessary and potentially lifesaving.**
- If a client discloses information that they regularly abuse a child or vulnerable person, the volunteer/assessor will discuss this with the Project Manager and we would work with the client to make a referral, or to allow us to make a referral to Social Services.
- If, in the opinion of the volunteer, the client is unable to make decisions for reasons of mental instability, lack of lucidity, or unconsciousness, the referrer or other appropriate agencies may be contacted.
- If a volunteer is threatened with violence, intimidated or injured by a client, or has property stolen or damaged by a client or contact, the incident may be reported to the police by the Project Manager and criminal proceedings may be initiated.

Anyone involved in the working of the One to One Project must work within the above Policy.