



Health & Safety and Lone Working Policy

Introduction

Treasure Chest aims to promote, encourage and support breastfeeding in the York area. Wherever possible, peer supporters should encourage a mother to access support via the breastfeeding drop-in sessions.

Purpose

Treasure Chest recognises that, in some circumstances, mothers may not be able to access the breastfeeding drop-in sessions. In such situations it is acceptable for a peer supporter to carry out a home visit adhering to the Treasure Chest code of conduct in the normal way.

Note that that home visits are not an expected or compulsory part of the role - making a visit to a private residence is at the discretion and comfort of individual peer supporters.

Procedures

If a home visit is to be carried out then both Treasure Chest and the peer supporter have to ensure that the health and safety of the peer supporter is the primary concern.

It should be the responsibility of the peer supporter to adhere to the following guidelines:

- 1) always let a designated person (doesn't need to be a peer supporter) know where you are going including the client's name and address, at what time you are going and what time you expect to finish. You must let the client know that you are giving out their address to someone to ensure your personal safety and that this information will be deleted after your visit.
- 2) if the finish time cannot be estimated in advance, then agree a time by which you will 'check in' with your designated person, by telephone or text message.
- 3) always call the designated person to let them know the visit is over and you are no longer in the premises.
- 4) provide the designated person with the telephone number of one of Treasure Chest's nominated members (currently Caroline Bolton and Helen Wyrill) - to be used in the event that the lone worker does not return/check in when expected.
- 5) always carry a mobile phone with you and have it accessible to you quickly at all times.
- 6) take responsibility for your own safety. For example, if you feel uncomfortable as you approach the property then do not go any further, or if you feel uncomfortable during the visit make up an excuse and leave straight away.
- 7) be aware of safety issues while you are on a visit. For example, sit closest to the exit; ensure you can access your mobile phone easily; park facing out of the street so you can leave quickly if necessary.
- 8) if a peer supporter finds themselves in a potentially violent situation, is able to access their phone but not call the Police directly they should call the designated person and use an agreed code so the designated person can contact the Police immediately for them.

Treasure Chest will keep a recording system held by the Secretary. Where a peer supporter has experienced an incident of some kind, or has felt uncomfortable during a home visit, information can be recorded and held to prevent another peer supporter attending the same property.

Lone Working

All peer supporters should be aware of health and safety issues with respect to lone working, not just during home visits but in other situations as well. There will be occasions during the drop-in sessions and hospital visiting, for example, where a peer supporter may be working in isolation from other peer supporters or health staff. In such circumstances peer supporters need a general awareness of risks and take sensible precautions if necessary. Peer supporters should not touch or hold babies or children and not allow themselves to be left alone in a room with them.

Police

In the very unlikely event that a peer supporter experiences some form of assault then the Police should be contacted immediately.

Debriefing

If an incident occurs then time to discuss the incident needs to be offered to the peer supporter both in order to offer support, as well as learn lessons from the incident so that a recurrence may be prevented.

Fire safety

All peer supporters must make themselves aware of the emergency procedures and fire exits in place at the venue they are attending.

Responsibilities

The Treasure Chest Secretary will liaise with trainers and the wider Committee to ensure that this policy is circulated to all peer supporters on completion of their training.

It is the responsibility of individual peer supporters to familiarise themselves with this policy and to read and understand its content.

Date of last review: June 2019

Reviewed by: Helen Wyrill

Date of next review: June 2022