

ORKNEY ALCOHOL COUNSELLING & ADVISORY SERVICE

GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

GENERAL

1. IT IS IMPORTANT TO OPEN ON TIME
2. MORNING VOLUNTEERS: Please check telephone answering machine.
3. AFTERNOON VOLUNTEERS: before going home please ensure:

Answer-phone switched on
Room is tidied
Windows are shut
Lights are switched off
Doors are locked

TO TRANSFER A PHONE CALL

1. Ask the caller to hold, then press 'TRANSFER' button
2. Press the extension you want, pass the message, and replace the receiver
3. To reconnect with call, press the lit phone line button

IMPORTANT

If during the Managers' absence, a caller phones to speak to the Manager - or drops in to see him - unless he has already discussed the situation with you, please put the call or the person through to another member of staff. They may be able to help or instructions may have been left with them.

If anyone phones about anything to do with alcohol - whether information, advice or counselling - please put the call through to the Manager if he is here, if not then to another member of staff. Otherwise, request the caller phone back or leave a phone number or address where they can be contacted. **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO GIVE ANY ADVICE.** If the caller begins to explain their case in detail, as soon as is tactfully possible, explain that you are not a Counsellor but can arrange to make an appointment for the caller to see one.

If anyone shows an interest in becoming a volunteer here, please inform the Manager in the first instance.

IF IN DOUBT - ASK. It is easier to prevent problems than to rectify any damage caused.

TAKING CALLS/MAKING APPOINTMENTS

All calls/drop-in's relating to the service, other than administration, must be noted down in the relevant log sheets.

HINT: Let the phone ring at least 3 times before picking up the instrument - this gives nervous callers time to compose themselves. Also, using the phrase "how can I help you" can sometimes be more effective than "can I help you".

Keep your tone friendly and welcoming. Remember you are the **very first contact** that a client may have with the agency and we don't want to scare them off!

1. When an initial request is made for a counselling appointment, whether over the phone or if a potential client drops in, an Initial Contact/Referral Form must be completed and then passed on to either the Manager or the Administrative Assistant (ensure a contact number is noted). Please emphasise to clients the need to inform us of cancellations as early as possible. Please also point out to them that Counsellors have to come in specially to see clients.
2. Appointments should be noted in the diary (after being arranged with the Counsellor) - giving initials of Counsellor and client i.e. MZ/--, and the Counsellor should be advised of the room allocated - this is very important in order to avoid misunderstandings, as there are some days when we are quite busy.
3. When arranging more than one evening or weekend appointments, try to arrange for two appointments to coincide so one person can 'cover' for both Counsellors wherever possible.
4. Please note in diary if clients phone to confirm or cancel appointments. Also please inform relevant Counsellor and 'cover/ person if appointment is cancelled.
5. **No information regarding a client - including a date of an appointment or whether an appointment has been made - is given to a third party** (even if it is a husband or wife of the client) unless previously agreed with the Counsellor or Manager. If you are not aware of an agreement, check with office staff.
6. Do not discuss clients or OACAS business in public places or where you can be overheard!!!

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INITIAL CONTACT/REFERRAL FORM

Date _____ Referral taken by _____ Method _____

Name _____

Address _____

Tel. No Home _____ Work _____

Mobile _____

Can we contact you at the above address by phone? Yes / No

If you have an answer phone do you wish us to leave messages? Yes / No

Can we contact you at the above address by letter? Yes / No

Can we leave a message with a family member if you are not available? Yes / No

Can we contact you at work by phone? Yes / No

When is the best time to contact you? _____

What times suit you best (Day/Evenings)? _____

Can you manage stairs? _____

Action Taken:

Any further action to be taken:

Please Note

If the client is referred by an outside agency/third party e.g. Social Work Dept, Police then the referrer should be asked: "Is there a history of violent or potentially violent incidents where the client is a threat to him/herself or others?"

Yes / No If yes – any details?

Reference No. _____