

Cardiomyopathy UK Specialist Nurse Helpline Confidentiality Policy

Date: February 2023

Review Date: February 2024

Objectives of the confidentiality policy is:

- to protect the personal information of those who contact us
- to provide a service where people feel able to speak openly about their concerns, knowing that the information is kept private
- to ensure the protection of service users, staff and the general public
- to ensure that the helpline adheres to the Data Protection Act and the GDPR
- to ensure that helpline staff understand and adhere to the policy.

All contacts to the Cardiomyopathy UK Helpline are treated as confidential unless:

- A service user has requested or consented on information being passed on
- Helpline Specialists are concerned that there is a risk to the welfare or safety of a child, or a vulnerable adult is at risk.
- Helpline Specialists are concerned that there is a risk to the welfare or safety to the caller.
- Helpline Specialists are threatened or verbally abused by service users.
- A service user interferes with the delivery of our service.

The confidentiality policy in practice

- Caller information is retained for the purpose of returning calls or sending out requested literature. This information is kept on a secure electronic database. Any handwritten information is confidentially shredded.
- With caller consent the Help Line Specialist will use our bespoke helpline CRM system, Cardio Call, to detail the reason for the call and outcome. At the callers preference, the information captured can be anonymised or include personal information
- Callers to the helpline are free to speak to staff anonymously.

- Our telephone system may reveal the caller's telephone number. If helpline staff need to return a call the helpline telephone number will be displayed. Please note that if an individual has chosen to be anonymous or withheld their number then we will not be able to return calls.
- We do not pass on caller details outside of the charity unless this has been agreed with the caller. Where calls relate to other areas of the charity, we will pass on contact details. Voicemail messages or emails for specific members of staff or departments will be forwarded to the relevant person. Clear consent is not sought in these cases but is automatically presumed due to the nature of the enquiry.
- We do not share any caller information with a loved one, friend or family member or imply that we have spoken to anyone in a previous call.
- We do not mention any calls, emails, support group attendance or interaction from a patient outside of that interaction.
- Email correspondence is kept securely and electronically and will be forwarded only where necessary. For example, a fundraising query will be forwarded to the fundraising team. Emails are stored electronically for 24 months for training, evaluation and in case of query.
- Live Chat transcripts are stored electronically for 24 months for training, evaluation and in case of query. In most cases the helpline staff are able to see the geographical area of the service user and also any previous Live Chats.
- Anonymised statistical information relating to contact with helpline services is collected and used for statistical and monitoring managerial purposes and may be shared.

Concerns regarding a caller

If Helpline Specialists believe that a caller is at risk, then this information will be shared with Cardiomyopathy's Safeguarding Lead and Senior Leadership team who will involve the necessary external parties such as the emergencies services/social services.

Cardiomyopathy UK will inform service users of our intention to share information about the concerns they pose, where it is possible and safe to do so.

Principles for sharing information

If the right information is shared responsibly, it can significantly enhance the safety of those at risk of harming themselves or others. However, there is also the potential for harm if that information is not managed appropriately. Cardiomyopathy UK will act within the current legal framework with regard to information sharing and data protection. Helplines Specialists will consider our Safeguarding Children policy, Safeguarding Adults at risk policy and our Data Protection policy for this purpose. In all cases, Helpline Specialists have a duty to use their own discretion – in consultation with their supervisor and / or line manager – so

as not to increase the risk. The main principle upon which information will be shared is to increase the safety of those at risk of potential harm.

Training and publicity

Cardiomyopathy UK will ensure that staff fully understand the confidentiality policy, at their training and induction stage.

This confidentiality policy will be part of our publicity for the helplines and copies will be available to the public.