

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BEREAVEMENT SERVICE VOLUNTEER

Availability

Volunteers must inform the office if they are not available for visiting for a period of three weeks or longer.

Referrals

Volunteers must contact any clients referred to them as soon as possible after the initial discussion with the Service worker. The first appointment should be reported to the office so that the case can become “active”.

The volunteer should not intentionally harm their clients physically, sexually or emotionally.

Contract between Volunteer and Client

Volunteers must make an agreement with their client about what they are offering.

This will include an agreement about frequency and duration of visits, confidentiality and the purpose of the visits. The volunteer should honour this agreement with the client and discuss any changes necessary to the contract with the client. This is discussed in more detail during training and in the training handout “Making a contract with your client”.

Consultation

Any queries or problems arising in the course of the volunteer's work with the client should be reported as quickly as possible to the volunteer's supervisor and, if this is not possible, to the office.

Boundaries

Volunteers should be aware of their own and the Service's limitations and not make unrealistic commitments or perform tasks for clients which are outside the aims of the Service.

Volunteers must never visit a client without making an appointment.

The bereavement visit is for and about the client. Volunteers may not use the meeting to consider or work through their own issues.

Self disclosure must generally not be used, and if used, only when it is in the interests of the client and has, if at all possible, been clearly considered by the volunteer and spoken about in supervision.

It is sometimes appropriate for volunteers to give information. It is rarely appropriate for volunteers to give advice.

Client details must remain confidential at all times. This is explored in more detail in the CARIS Islington Confidentiality Policy.

Accountability

Volunteers should act professionally towards clients at all times, have a good attitude to the work they take on through the Service, and act in a positive manner.

Reports

All reports should be completed promptly and returned to the office within four weeks of termination of a case. Copies of letters written to clients should be included if not already forwarded and on file.

Policy and Guidelines

Volunteers should:

- act as representatives of the Service and not imply that they represent any other organisation
- abide by the policies of the Service at all times
- seek guidance from the Service workers and/or the management committee in cases where there is as yet no policy or guideline
- respect confidentiality and not discuss clients with anyone outside the Service
- adhere to the Service's Equal Opportunities Policy and provide a service as far as possible free from discrimination.