

Renewal Listening Service

Confidentiality policy

SOP Reference: Confidentiality policy	Date:
Author:	Signature:
Date of next review:	

Policy Statement

Renewal Listening service is an organisational member of the BACP follows their code of ethics and practices.

Confidentiality is an integral part of Listening, the only time the service would share any information given by a client would be:

- If the client is involved in criminal action (following appropriate consultation)
- If a client or third party is at risk of harm especially a child or vulnerable adult
- At the specific request of the client (written confirmation or permission will be sought)

In all cases the listener would, in the first instance, be encouraging the client themselves to disclose the information to the appropriate party.

In the case of a threat of suicide, the GP and Renewal Listening Service Manager will be notified. If the client is a partner at Renewal, the Service Manager will be notified and a decision made on the basis of the client's request about who else should be notified (e.g. a Pastor).

In the case of a possible breach of the Child Protection Act, Social Services will be notified after appropriate consultation with the Safeguarding Officer at Renewal.

In the case of a criminal act, the Police may be notified.

Signing in on arrival

Clients will not be required to put their name in the signing in book in reception. For Health and Safety reasons the client will be required to sign in as 'client' in the main reception, for the purpose of safe evacuation in the event of an emergency.

Notes and log

In keeping with the BACP, Listeners will be required to keep notes and a log. In order to offer confidentiality these will be kept on BACPAC. A one sentence description of the topics discussed during Listening will suffice as a record of the session.

Permission slip

When a client wishes a Listener to contact a third person in regard to the sessions, they will need to sign a permission slip to authorise contact. When a Listener feels there is a need to contact a GP or other professional, they will discuss this with the client and no contact will be made unless the client signs the consent form. This will be the policy unless there are circumstances as outlined above and repeated below:

- If the client is involved in criminal action (following appropriate consultation)
- If a client or third party is at risk of harm especially a child or vulnerable adult
- At the specific request of the client (written confirmation or permission will be sought)

A copy of the Permission slip can be seen in the appendix.

The room

The room designated for therapy has a CCTV camera in the room (video only, no audio). This is for the safety of both the Listener and client. The client will not face the camera. There will be a sign on the door to stop people from interrupting the session and the client will not be easily visible from the window in the door.

Supervision

The listening team has one-to-one and/or group supervision. Cases can be brought to supervision and confidentiality is maintained. However, in the case where a person is easily identifiable to the team, efforts will be made to keep supervision of that case between the specific Listener and the Supervisor. In this way even people having a high profile in the church could access the Listening Service whilst maintaining confidentiality.

Meetings outside of the listening session

As some of the Listeners attend Renewal as members of the congregation, it is even more likely that they may see clients outside of the Listening Service (inside or outside church). In this case the Listener will be discreet and keep acknowledgement to a minimum (for example just a smile).

If the client wishes it, the Listener will ignore the client outside the listening relationship. It is therefore helpful if the client does not approach the Listener on a social basis whilst the listening relationship is in progress and for a period of time afterwards. Listeners do not work with people in a listening role that they know in other types of current relationships.

Internal referrals

When a person has been referred for therapy by a pastor or church member, that leader sometimes may want to check on the progress of the client. This information is confidential and the Listener will not be obliged to share any information, unless the client wishes for a minimum of information to be passed on such as "yes I am still seeing the person you referred and we are working well together". The Listeners are not trying to be secretive but are essentially maintaining professional confidentiality.

The Listener may mention to the client that a leader has asked after their progress and the client then can choose whether to contact the leader or not. If more communication is needed between the Listener and the referring leader, a permission slip will need to be signed by the client.

External referrals

We may take referrals from many sources and will only pass information about a client at their request or in the case of risk, to their GP, Social Services or the Police.

Training

All practicing Listeners have to be involved in ongoing professional development (OPD) according to the BACP guidelines. Training often involves the writing of case studies or using examples from practices to illustrate points. The Listener always protects the confidentiality of the client by changing the name and details so that the client is in no way identifiable. If a client does not wish their material to be used in such a way their wishes are upheld. In this case when the initial agreement is signed the client will cross through that section and sign by the side of it in the margin, to indicate that their material is not to be used in this way.

Data Protection

The service is covered by and complies with the DPA policy of Renewal Christian Centre.