

Covid-19 Telephone Befriending Protocol

21 April 2020

ADCA has a duty of care to safeguard the welfare of all the people we support, including you as a volunteer. If you are concerned about someone you are supporting please call the Helpline.

Telephone befriending is just that – being a friend at the end of the line! You are not there to give advice or solve problems, you are there to listen, chat and be supportive, without judgement. It is important to recognise that everyone is feeling under stress about what is happening at this time, and to recognise this in yourself as well as in the person you are supporting.

- **Record** all your befriending calls in your ADCA Befriender's Notebook in accordance with the instructions you have been given.
- **Keep your notebook safe** as it may contain confidential information subject to Data Protection legislation. Do not share its contents with anyone except the Helpline team or Tracey or Lynn. When your formal befriending role comes to an end, your notebook(s) must be returned to the Helpline team, who will be responsible for safe disposal of this information.
- **Do not discuss people you are befriending** with family or friends.
- **Do not accept** offers of gifts or bequests or money from someone you are calling, or their family or friends. You can suggest that they make a donation to ADCA – details are on our website.
- Aim to make your calls about **5 to 10 minutes** long. What matters is the **regularity and friendliness** of your calls, rather than the length. However, keep in mind that the aim is not to become best friends, but to provide a supportive service during a time of crisis, which will eventually pass.
- **Do not share personal information** such as address, date of birth, or financial details.
- **Ask if they need help with anything** and remind them (if necessary) that they can call the Helpline to request a shopping delivery or prescription collection.
- **Distress:** If the person you are calling becomes distressed or frightened during a call, reassure them that their feelings are understandable, but you are there for them, and remind them when you will be calling again. If appropriate, you can give them the number of the new 24hr NHS Mental Health Helpline for Cheshire (0300 303 3972). After the call, if you are concerned about them, let the Helpline know.
- **Advice:** Feeling heard is more important to people than getting advice. If you do get asked for advice about something specific, suggest that they call the Helpline about it. The Helpline will point them in the right direction.
- Wrap up with the reassurance that you will call again at the agreed time.
- Report any need or other important information to the Helpline.
- Contact Tracey or Lynn in the first instance if problems arise with the befriending relationship.
- If you become distressed or overwhelmed, call the Helpline – we are all in this together.
- Keep any personal information shared with you **CONFIDENTIAL**, and **ONLY** share such information with the Helpline, or Tracey or Lynn. This is **VERY IMPORTANT**.

Key contacts

ADCA Helpline	07984 785907	email : adca.audlem@gmail.com
Tracey Humphries	07845 495973	
Lynn Morear	07595 919727	