



Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy

1. Introduction

Nantwich Buddies is committed to maintaining high standards of confidentiality and Data Protection in all aspects of its work. This includes the creation and handling of records and information pertaining to employees, volunteers, clients and prospective clients. This policy gives guidance on maintaining confidentiality, the circumstances in which disclosures of confidential information may be permitted and details the principles of the Data Protection Act which must be followed.

2. Disclosure of information

2.1 Volunteer/Client files

All volunteers/clients have the right to view their files, therefore information held within them must be appropriate and factual. This data will only be used for the purposes for which it was gathered and will not be disclosed to anyone outside of Nantwich Buddies without prior permission.

If a client or volunteer asks to see their file, the volunteer coordinator should organise this and answer any questions about what has been written. Nantwich Buddies asks that clients/volunteers give at least 24 hours' notice when requesting access to their files.

2.2 Information about staff/volunteers

A request for a member of staff/volunteer's home address and/or telephone number should always be referred to the individual concerned before any information is disclosed. This should be done via the Volunteer Coordinator. Staff/volunteers should never divulge a colleague or another volunteer's personal circumstances, including details such as their address, health conditions etc, to anyone without the permission of the volunteer.

2.3 Client confidentiality

Information concerning clients will be treated as confidential and only used for the purposes for which it was gathered. No information which could lead to clients or their families being identified shall be disclosed to anyone outside Nantwich Buddies without their express permission. The only exceptions to this policy are:

- If the client poses a threat to the safety of themselves or others (including Nantwich Buddies' volunteers/workers). In such circumstances, the police or other appropriate services may be informed. The decision to inform such agencies will be taken by the Volunteer Coordinator and Founder.
- If there is a suspicion that the client is being subjected to abuse of any kind, the issue must be referred immediately to the Volunteer Coordinator to be dealt with under the Nantwich Buddies Safeguarding Policy.

3. Information handling within Nantwich Buddies

Information handling measures will ensure any discussion concerning confidential client/volunteer information cannot be overheard by other staff, volunteers, clients or anyone else who is not permitted access to such information. These include:

- Do not gossip about clients or volunteers.
- Do not discuss personal facts about one client/volunteer with another client/volunteer or in the presence of another client/volunteer.
- All recorded comments must be factual and accurate.
- Do not leave information lying around on desks or open on your computer screen. Lock your computer when it is not in use and ensure data is locked away securely.

4. Record Keeping

All clients and volunteers are covered by the relevant provisions of the Data Protection Act and GDPR.

In accordance with the Data Protection Act, all personal information will be:

- Processed fairly and lawfully
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Accurate and, where necessary, kept up-to-date
- Not kept longer than is necessary for that purpose
- Processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under the Data Protection Act
- Not transferred to countries without adequate protection

- Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to personal data.

4.1 Staff/Volunteer Details

Staff/volunteer details, gathered at time of Registration with Nantwich Buddies are held on a spreadsheet which is password protected with limited access. The Volunteer Coordinator and three other volunteers are able to access full data for team members. Staff/volunteer data held on the spreadsheet consists of contact details and any relevant experience applicable to their volunteering.

Any paper notes/files are stored in a lockable filing cabinet and destroyed when no longer needed.

4.2 Client Details

Contact details of each client and the support provided to clients by Nantwich Buddies is recorded on a spreadsheet which is password protected with limited access. The Volunteer Coordinator and three other volunteers are able to access full data for all clients. The information will be factual and where an opinion is recorded it will be clear that this is opinion and what this is based on. Paper copies of documents are not retained.

Any paper notes/files are stored in a lockable filing cabinet and destroyed when no longer needed.