



Bedford Open Door. 120 Tavistock Street, Bedford MK40 2SA.

Tel: 01234 360388 Fax: 01234 346946 Email: [counselling@bedfordopendoor.org.uk](mailto:counselling@bedfordopendoor.org.uk) Website: [www.bedfordopendoor.org.uk](http://www.bedfordopendoor.org.uk)

## Confidentiality Policy 2010

Bedford Open Door regards confidentiality as part of our duty of care and professional obligation towards our clients. The young people who use our service need explicit assurance that their personal information will be respected and protected from unauthorised disclosure wherever possible.

We recognise that the right to confidentiality is rooted in Common Law, in statutory provisions such as the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998 and in the contracts between client and counsellor and client and the agency.

However, we also recognise that there are some exceptional circumstances when the needs of the client or the wider public interest may potentially outweigh our duty of confidentiality.

### By Exceptional Circumstances we mean:

When a young person under the age of 18 years, or a vulnerable young adult, discloses that either they or another child or vulnerable adult, have been abused (physically, sexually or emotionally). In such a case, Bedford Open Door's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy would be followed.

Where a client discloses that there is high risk of serious harm to themselves (and their mental capacity may be impaired) or high risk to the safety of others through malicious intent.

Where there is any reasonable suspicion of threat to national security.

In the event of a Court Order to disclose records.

### We acknowledge the Rights of Clients in the following ways:

To know the extent and limitations of the confidentiality they are being offered.

To be told the circumstances in which their confidentiality may be breached.

To have a clear therapeutic contract which they can understand and accept.

To know who will make, keep and have access to their notes and records, how such records are kept and for what purposes.

To be informed before their confidentiality may have to be breached (unless there are cogent, defensible reasons why this cannot be the case).

To know what information may be disclosed by their counsellor and how and to whom it will be given.

To be involved in the decision making process where possible.

### In Exceptional Circumstances

Where counsellors may consider there are exceptional circumstances that warrant a disclosure in breach of client confidentiality they must:

1. Discuss the matter with their supervisor, the Counselling Co-ordinator or another senior professional within the organisation as a matter of urgency, and
2. Endeavour to discuss the matter with the client where possible.



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**Where disclosures are deemed necessary they will (unless in circumstances of imminent very high risk) be channeled through the Counselling Manager, Child Protection Officer or other designated person within the agency who will be responsible for contacting Health Professionals, Social Services or the Police.**

#### **Confidentiality within Bedford Open Door**

Counsellors are expected to share any concerns promptly with their Supervisor and the Counselling Manager or other senior professionals within the organisation. All staff and volunteers at Bedford Open Door are expected to be familiar with the Confidentiality Policy and to show respect for client confidentiality.