

## Policy for Lone working

Church name: Churches in Croxley Green CIO

### Introduction

Parish Nurses are registered nurses who are employed or appointed by the CIO to lead whole person health ministry. Parish Nursing Ministries UK is a charity that provides training, coordination and resources to help and support this practice.

Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close supervision, such as when alone on church premises or visiting homes of clients or other venues on behalf of the church. Although there will always be some risk in church work, wherever possible, steps should be taken to preserve safety, both for those employed or appointed by the church, and to the benefit of their clients.

### Policy aims

To encourage safe working for all volunteers and staff  
To protect volunteers and staff from false accusations  
To ensure that lone working is risk-assessed and safe systems put into place.

### Scope

This policy applies to all church volunteers and staff who may be working alone in the church building, driving alone, or visiting private homes on behalf of the church

Notes: This is a simplified version of larger documents which are available on the NHS website and others. It captures the main points that are likely to affect working with churches.

## Principles and Procedure:

### Travelling

1. Before leaving home staff and volunteers should always check that they have their mobile phone fully charged with emergency numbers programmed in.
2. If using public transport, staff and volunteers should plan the route in advance, have extra change for alternative route if necessary, sit in a more crowded place or near driver, and get off if feeling uncomfortable with behaviour of others.
3. If using taxis, staff or volunteers should book in advance if possible, only use licensed companies, have their numbers programmed in to mobile phone for quick access, wait in a public place and sit behind driver.
4. If walking late at night, know routes, walk with others or get a cab, don't use phone or earphones, walk confidently and keep to main roads.
5. If driving, staff and volunteers should always ensure they have spare food, drink, blankets, a small amount of coins, high visibility jacket, first aid kit, torch, and mobile phone.
6. With all of the above, staff should be encouraged to recognise warning signs and be encouraged to heed them.
7. Before setting off for visits or meetings, the Parish Nurse or volunteer should ensure that someone knows their intentions, their mobile number and expected time of return. If confidentiality of the visit is an issue, it may be necessary to formalise this arrangement with a "buddy" person who does not know the client.
8. If possible, first home visits should be scheduled for when a colleague is able to visit with you.

### If working alone in a building:

1. Staff and volunteers should always lock the door and not open it to anyone without being confident of their identity and intention.
2. They should have a phone with them at all times.
3. They should not engage in any potentially hazardous activity, e.g. climbing a ladder or using machinery.
4. When leaving a building at night, staff and volunteers should not leave one person to lock up alone.

5. Staff and volunteers should never invite a lone client into their own home or the church building when they are there alone.
6. For reasons of transparency it is not advisable for two people to be in the church building or in a staff member's home alone for any length of time.

**General:**

1. Training: all staff and volunteers should be offered training in personal safety and how to react when faced with violent behaviour or language. This should include the procedure for dealing with anyone whose mental health gives cause for concern or endangers others.
2. Children, teenagers and vulnerable adults: Please see the church's policy on safeguarding for special arrangements when working or travelling alone with children and vulnerable adults.
3. All meetings and visits should be recorded in a diary, which should be kept securely for five years.
4. Any occurrence or near miss occurrence where the staff member or volunteer felt threatened should be reported in an agreed manner and support offered.
5. Making visits: a checklist for staff and volunteers:

***Always ask: Do I really need to make this visit/meeting and do I have to make it alone? Could I ask this client to come to the centre/office?***

***If it is someone of the opposite gender, try to ensure that you are not alone together in their home. Instead, try to make the appointment when another person is at home, take someone with you or meet in a public place.***

***If a lone visit is unavoidable, ensure that someone knows where you are, who you're with and what time you expect to finish. Suggest they phone you at an agreed finishing time.***

***Ask yourself what if? And cover all possible outcomes.***

***If you do not feel confident to go, don't go.***

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**Methods of distribution.**

Copies should be made available to all those working in any capacity on behalf of the charity

**Review dates: May 2018, April 2019, February 2022**

## **Appendix:**

### **Risk Assessments for church-based lone working should include**

- ? Safe access and exit
- ? Risk of violence/
- ? Safety of equipment for individual use
- ? Channels of communication in an emergency
- ? Site security
- ? Security arrangements including alarm systems/response to personal alarms
- ? Level and adequacy of on/off site supervision.

### **Risk assessments for mobile lone workers should include:**

- ? Client risk assessment where applicable
- ? Arrangements for home visits including consideration of alternatives
- ? Travelling between appointments
- ? Reporting and recording arrangements
- ? Communication and traceability
- ? Personal safety/security arrangements

**Following completion of a risk assessment, consideration should be given to any appropriate action that is required**