

Policy for Referrals and Signposting

We take the protection of the people who come to us very seriously.
We will only refer them elsewhere if we follow the guidelines below

Introduction

Parish Nurses are registered nurses who are employed or appointed by the local church 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. These guidelines are drawn from the Foundations of Faith Community Nursing Preparation to practice course, “Accessing Resources”.

Policy aims

We recognise that it is important to ensure that any referrals or signposting that we initiate are done in a way that is documented, effective and safe.

Principles

To ensure all staff and volunteers:

- Have access to these guidelines and follow them when making referrals or signposting to another organisation or service.
- Listen to and document the experiences of clients who access the organisations we may refer them to.
- Check that the organisations or services to which we refer or signpost patients
 - have appropriate accountability structures in place.
 - can demonstrate evidence-based outcomes that do not cause harm to a patient’s physical, mental, emotional or spiritual well-being.
 - do not make it difficult for a patient to leave or refuse treatment.
 - have up front transparency over any financial arrangements.

Scope

All staff and volunteers

Definitions:

Signposting is when our staff or volunteers recommend an organisation or service to an individual who then makes a self-referral.

Referral is when action is taken by a member of our staff or volunteers to contact another organisation or service, or when they accompany a patient to another organisation or service. It is always done with the patient's written consent. (The only exception to this is when there is a risk of harm to the patient or to others, in which case the patient is informed of the action and consent is desirable but not necessary)

All organisations and services includes other health providers, other voluntary organisations, other sources of spiritual support, faith development, or wellbeing whether within or outside of our organisation, and other churches or faith groups.

Policy:

1. We will keep records of all the organisations or services to which we refer or signpost people, detailing the
 - a) name, phone number and contact person
 - b) type of service provided
 - c) hours of operation
 - d) accessibility for people with disability
 - e) availability of translation facilities if needed
 - f) eligibility and criteria for care
 - g) financial implications (having made clear to the client that they would need to meet their own costs)
 - h) any relevant evaluative information or evidence-based outcomes.
 - i) discharge and follow up procedure
2. We will document when we have signposted or referred a patient to another organisation or service
3. We will record the outcome of that referral and take any follow up action needed.
4. We will investigate any complaints regarding referral in line with our complaints procedure.
5. We will not disclose patient information to any other organisation or service without the written permission of the patient or whoever holds their power of attorney.
6. We will not refer patients to the internet unless we have first checked the reliability of the sites to which we refer them.

Ethical considerations

- a. Confidentiality is required...please see our policy on confidentiality
- b. Autonomy of the individual or family is paramount.

- c. Respect for the individual or family's right to self determination is evident.
- d. The Parish nurse is an objective source of information and encouragement
- e. No referrals are made to persons associated with the Parish nurse who could benefit monetarily from the referral, or may be considered a 'conflict of interest'.

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