TAUNTON WELCOMES REFUGEES

charitable incorporated organisation number 1183921

Taunton Welcome Refugees

4a. Confidentiality Policy & Procedures

Policy Statement

Taunton Welcomes Refugees (TWR) recognises that the proper use of confidential information underpins our service. All information about adults and young people is treated as confidential, to be shared only as necessary in support of the volunteer and to assist the family. TWR ensures that personal and operationally sensitive information is maintained confidentially by the charity.

Any disclosure of confidential information about a family or supported individual to another person for the purpose of assisting them is only undertaken with the expressed permission of the parent/s or individual, except where disclosure is necessary to protect the welfare of a young person or vulnerable adult or, in very limited and extremely rare circumstances, where a person is suspected of a disclosable offence or terrorism.

TWR's position on confidentiality is made clear to all connected with it. The trustees of TWR are responsible for ensuring that the requirements of this policy are met throughout the charity.

Procedures

1 Families and Individuals: Information and consent

1. Families and individuals are given clear information, verbally and in writing, which explains TWR's position on confidentiality.
2. At the initial visit (from the Trustee Link) consent is sought from the family or individual to share general information about the kind and level of support TWR is providing with the charity and the relevant volunteers and with other supporting agencies.
3. Consent is sought from families who have self-referred to inform their Health Visitor or other agency, that they have requested TWR support and to share general information with them (see b. above).

4. Specific consent is sought from the family or individuals in order to share additional information as part of local multi-agency arrangements.
5. Families and individuals are informed of any communication between TWR and other agencies unless this will impact on the safety or welfare of a young person or vulnerable adult.
6. Family and individual records are held securely on the TWR database and they are aware that they have the right to request to see their record.

2 Safeguarding

1. Where it is considered necessary for the welfare and protection of a young person or vulnerable adult, information is shared with the appropriate authority in line with TWR's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies.
2. Families and individuals are kept informed of TWR's actions in passing on information unless to do so would put the young person or vulnerable adult at greater risk of harm.
3. Where there are concerns about the safety or wellbeing of a young person or vulnerable adult, adherence to TWR's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies overrides the Confidentiality Policy.

3 Trustees

1. TWR's Confidentiality Policy and Procedures are provided to all new trustees as a key part of their induction. All trustees comply with its requirements.
2. General information provided to the board of trustees about families and individuals relates to the nature and level of referrals and local trends. Personal information, or information that could identify a family or individual is not provided.
3. Case studies that are provided to the board of trustees in order to illustrate the work and outcomes of TWR are made anonymous.
4. Trustees and those attending board meetings, including any staff, are aware that information relating to families and individuals and the operation of the scheme is treated in confidence.
5. Where there are concerns for the safety or welfare of a child or vulnerable adult, the designated named person for Safeguarding and Child Protection has access if needed to a relevant trustee, specialist safeguarding adviser to the Board or an external expert to ensure that the most appropriate process is being followed and to ensure the best possible support for the family or individual. They are not normally identified.
6. Confidential Board discussions relating to personnel issues or sensitive operational matters are minuted separately as a confidential item and their circulation is appropriately restricted.
7. Trustees ensure that the confidentiality of families, supported individuals and volunteers, and confidential information relating to the operational

work of the charity is maintained at all times in line with this policy and procedure.
8. Breaches of confidentiality are treated seriously and may result in the individual concerned being required to leave the charity.

4 Volunteers

1. TWR's confidentiality policy and procedure is provided to all volunteers as a key part of their induction. All volunteers comply with its requirements.
2. Volunteers discuss their support of families and individuals with their Trustee Link, in a confidential setting, for the purposes of supervision and to ensure the best possible support to the family.
3. Volunteers meeting together for peer support do not share information that may identify or breach the confidentiality of the family or individuals they support.
4. Volunteers ensure that the confidentiality of families and supported individuals and other volunteers is maintained at all times in line with this policy and procedure.
5. Breaches of confidentiality are treated seriously and may result in the individual concerned being required to leave the charity.

5 Records

1. TWR complies with the requirements of Data Protection (as specified in our Data Protection Policy) and the principles of good practice.
2. TWR ensures that all manual or electronic records, or backed up data, containing personal information, including family, individual, volunteer or personnel files, are kept securely.
3. Access to volunteer and family and individual files is carefully restricted to the appropriate personnel, the trustee/s responsible for spot-checking files.
4. Access to personnel files is restricted to the individual's Trustee Link.
5. Care is taken to ensure that minimal information about the supported family or individual is recorded within the volunteer file.
6. Care is taken to ensure that families or individuals are not identified on notice boards, whiteboards, photographs, accessible card index files etc.
7. Trustees and volunteers are aware that information is held about them and that they have the right to request to see it; personal information is not shared with external agencies without permission.
8. Family, individual, volunteer and personnel records are securely destroyed in line with TWR's Record Keeping and Retention Policy.
9. Statistical information about the number and location of families and individuals supported and the type of work undertaken may be shared with funders in line with the requirements of the service level agreement or contract. Information that may identify a family or individual is not shared except with their specific permission.

6 Confidentiality within TWR

1. The trustee/delegated adviser responsible for sampling files for the purposes of safeguarding audits, and for reviewing volunteer and personnel files for the purpose of quality assurance will ensure a record is maintained of that access.
2. Where a family or individual moves area, seeks support from a new refugee support charity, and they have given consent, appropriate information is shared with the new charity in order to ensure the best possible support can be provided.
3. If consent is not given and there are, or have been, safeguarding concerns in the family with the individual concerned, TWR will share appropriate information with the new support charity.

7 External proceedings

1. External auditors accessing family or individual files for quality auditing purposes do so in the presence of the TWR Chair or Coordinator and a record is maintained of that access.
2. If TWR is requested or required to provide evidence in court proceedings, and the request does not fall within one of the exemptions identified in this policy, evidence will normally only be provided in response to a court order.
3. Where TWR is asked by the police to provide information, the trustees are made aware of the request and TWR's guidance is followed. Whilst TWR would not wish to be obstructive in a police investigation, confidentiality to our service users is of the utmost importance and this will mean that we would normally not pass information to the police unless it fell within one of the exceptions identified in this policy or was subject to an order of a court requiring disclosure.