



Buddy Policy and Procedure

September 2006
Review November 2011.
Pages 3

Introduction

The purpose of the buddy system is to provide 'one on one' support, to another who has experienced ectopic pregnancy, on a more personal level. Sometimes people do not feel able to post about their feelings on the message board and it is more appropriate for them to be partnered with a buddy to explore their feelings about their particular experience.

To become a buddy you must fit the following criteria:

- You must be a registered volunteer with the Ectopic Pregnancy Trust.
- The Ectopic Pregnancy Trust must be in receipt of 2 references for the volunteer.
- You must have completed a Buddy Questionnaire form. ***Please note that some of the questions are very personal. Obtaining this level of information is about protecting the volunteer, as it will help to ensure we do not buddy a person with a service user, whose needs are too demanding for the volunteer. Any details that are sent to the Ectopic Pregnancy Trust are treated in the strictest of confidence and will never be shared with a third party as part of our commitment to maintaining the confidentiality of our volunteers and users.***
- You must have participated in the ongoing training and attained a level, determined by continuous assessment, deemed acceptable by the service provider, to work as a Buddy.
- Where possible it is preferred that you will have attended or have a commitment to attend, at least one Volunteer Training, Information and Support Day. These are held annually and usually the second or third weekend of September each year.

The role of a Buddy is to:

- Develop an understanding of the service user, they are in contact with
- Offer support through listening
- Signpost on to other services as required
- Share their own experiences as appropriate

Buddies are never required to

- Disclose personal information such as their last name, address or telephone contact numbers and must make the necessary arrangements to withhold their personal contact numbers when they telephone a client.
- The simplest way withhold your number is to dial **141** before the number you want. So, if you want to dial, say, 0171 634 8700 but want to withhold your number, you would dial 141 0171 634 8700. Always dial the 141 first, in front of any other numbers. When you dial 141, this is described as blocking your number, or 'blocking your CLI'. This stops the person you are calling from knowing your number, but your phone company and their operators can always see it when they need to.



Practical Guidance for Buddies

- People who are looking for support may require further medical information about their own ectopic pregnancy. A good understanding and knowledge of the information contained within The EPT's publications and the Medical Information Section of the website will equip Buddies for most questions they are likely to encounter. If the volunteer is unsure about how to answer any query of this nature they are encouraged to advise they don't know an answer but will source one and can then ask the question on the Helpline/Buddies support forum or contact their supervisor, with their question via email.
- Occasionally a person may have issues about the place where they were treated. Volunteers must be cautious not to agree or disagree with specific statements made by a person they are in contact with, and must remain impartial. For example if a person is unhappy with services they received or their care or treatment, they should be directed to their local PALS or other relevant agency.
- Sometimes people can be very angry about their experience and what has happened to them. It is important the buddy understand that the service users anger, should not be directed toward them personally, nor must a buddy accept anger directed at them. In this situation the buddy should end the call and contact their supervisor for debrief.
- If at any point a Volunteer has buddy contact, which they feel has resulted in their own beliefs, thoughts or feelings being explored and re-evaluated, they should contact their supervisor for debrief and support.
- Buddies are not expected to cope with a service user, if they do not feel able to support them. If you are in contact with a user, who you feel you cannot offer support to, contact your supervisor, a suitable replacement Buddy can always be found.

Confidentiality

Buddies, as EPT volunteers, will be expected to adhere to the Trusts' ***Code of Confidentiality**. It is their responsibility not to reveal to any third person, without the consent of the service user, any matter relating to them, which is known by the person, involved in his or her capacity as a volunteer of the Ectopic Pregnancy Trust.

Exceptions to this are detailed in the **Code of Confidentiality**. The individual's right to Confidentiality will be amended

- When there is a serious risk of harm to the client such as threatened suicide or personal fatality

Other examples may include

- Divulging information about possible child abuse – information must be disclosed to the proper agencies or where there is a need to prevent a serious criminal act, especially where others might be endangered or harmed, for example by physical assault or terrorism.



Supervision

Buddies are able to contact their supervisor with concerns at any time via email. Supervision will be provided through regular training support, conference calls. Should a Buddy need to speak to someone urgently, after contact with a service user, because they feel concerned either for the service user or themselves as the designated Buddy, they should contact the Service and Support Manager via the usual Help Line number until 16.00 on any normal working weekday or outside of these hours between 16.00 and 22.30 on weekdays or between 09.00 and 22.30 at weekends, on the contact numbers provided to Buddies once they are approved as a volunteer buddy

The Trust undertakes to review and amend the Buddy System procedures annually.

Devised September 2006.

Agreed Date:

Signature on behalf of the Trustees _____

Implementation Date: September 2006

Review Date: November 2011

Other documents to which this policy or the procedure statements refer:

Forms:

Call Log Sheet

Codes:

Code of Confidentiality

Policies:

Volunteer Policy

Procedures:

Volunteer Support and Appraisal Procedure

Handbooks:

Other:

Volunteer Role Description