



SAFEGUARDING ANNEX: EXTERNAL CONCERNS

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Source of advice: Jaq Athorn, The Birchall Trust, www.birchalltrust.org.uk

How to respond if a person discloses any recent or historical experience of rape, sexual abuse, violence or other form of abuse which *did not occur* in the context of Lancaster Men's Hub activities or proceedings:

Unlike a situation in which some form of abuse occurs during or in the context of an LMH activity, this is not a matter of direct responsibility for LMH. However, LMH wishes to promote the wellbeing of all its participants and encourages people to break out of isolation and any sense of vulnerability they perceive. Therefore, a report of any form of external abuse, current or past, is a matter of concern and must be treated as such.

This NHS link provides a good, basic overview of what to do if someone discloses a rape or sexual abuse: www.nhs.uk/live-well/sexual-health/help-after-rape-and-sexual-assault

There are key things to always remember if someone discloses recent or historic rape, sexual abuse, violence or other form of abuse:

- Keep calm and listen to the person making the disclosure. This can be incredibly helpful to anyone who talks about an event. Avoid judgement and assure them that you believe them.
- If the person is over the age of 18, they do not have to report the event to the police. Putting on pressure to do so can raise panic and fear in the person.
- Remember that if they've disclosed to you, it's because they trust you. Holding that trust is incredibly important.
- If you feel it is important to safeguard this person because they are at risk of harming themselves, harming others, or are at risk of being harmed by someone else, then please talk this through with your Safeguarding Contact. If you feel they are in imminent danger of attempting suicide, call 999.
- Offer the telephone number of the Samaritans for out-of-hours calls as they can support anyone in distress: Samaritans 116123
- You do not need to record the matter for LMH purposes.

Remember that the disclosure has been made in confidence. It is important that you keep that confidence and do not talk of the matter with others. However, you should seek guidance from the persons responsible for overseeing the safeguarding of participants, i.e. the Safeguarding Contact or any Trustee. They, in turn, can support you.

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