

Procedures for Volunteers Working in the Office at Leith Walk

Diary

Firstly, a reminder that AdvoCard's office diary needs to remain confidential. It contains names and often other information about service users that we have a responsibility to keep private. While we know it would sometimes be quicker for you to take the diary and make the appointment yourself, we appreciate your patience and know you understand our reasons. We also have to consider other things when making appointments, such as room availability, staff cover and other things that might be going on in the office.

Filing cabinets

Similarly, the filing cabinets hold a lot of confidential information, as you would expect. Again, we ask that you respect the confidentiality of the project and users of the service by always asking us to access a file or any other information that is stored within them.

Computers

Please be aware that a lot of people have access to the computers in the small meeting rooms. If you and/or a service user have been working on it, remember to delete your work when you have finished and empty the recycle bin. If you want to save a document, liaise with support staff as to how to do this so that we can both store it and find it again!

Resources

Jean and Marion are maintaining a large leaflet collection in Reception. Please browse through these and let them know if you want copies of anything. If there are any leaflets/topics we are missing, please tell Jean.

Similarly we have a large library of books in Reception, most of which can be borrowed. Jean has sign-out sheet for all loans. While there's no

time limit on how long you can have a book out, we need to be able to keep track of who's got what.

Record Keeping

AdvoCard is being increasingly asked to subject the work of the project to external scrutiny. This is part of a wider movement to improve advocacy provision across Scotland. For this reason record keeping by the volunteer of the work they have done is ever more important. It helps us to monitor your work and to report to outside agencies if asked.

There are also Data Protection issues involved. Please don't take offence if we are quite strict about volunteers keeping accurate and up to date records. It will benefit you too. Many volunteers do of course already do this and we thank you.

Personal Details

Please remember to let the office know if you move house or change your phone number, so that we always have up to date contact details for you.

Similarly, please let us know if you are going on holiday/going to be unavailable for a time. This is allowed! However, it is helpful if we know, so that we can avoid frustration and confusion on both sides.

Arrangements for appointments

We often have to juggle arrangements for many appointments here in the office. We try to be efficient but our recording and communication systems aren't perfect and at times we may forget to confirm an arrangement, or think that things have been agreed and confirmed when in fact you may be waiting for a final phone call.

If you have any doubts about an arrangement, or feel uncertain whether or not a meeting is to go ahead it would be really helpful if you could call the office to clarify, rather than assume its not happening because you haven't heard from us.

We realise that this puts some of the responsibility for arrangements on to you, but it will really help us out and avoid the occasional mix ups that happen.

Website

Thanks to Nick Gardner, AdvoCard volunteer, we have a website. This is crucial to our profile and accessibility as a service, as people will expect to be able to find out information about our services and volunteering opportunities in this way.

Our website is still very much a work in progress and we are still getting to grips with keeping it vibrant, up to date, accessible and appropriate to our target groups.

If you have any ideas on how we can improve the site, any difficulties using it or any expertise we can tap into, please let Jean or Jane C know. Our address is: www.advocard.org.uk