

## BRIDGING THE GAP ISLINGTON

# Health and Safety Policy

### 1. Introduction

Bridging the Gap Islington is committed to the Health and Safety of volunteers, volunteer mentors, service users, employees and the wider public.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers and service users of Bridging the Gap Islington

### 3. Policy

- to provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our work activities
- to consult with our employees and volunteers on matters affecting their health and safety
- to provide information, instruction and supervision for employees and volunteers
- to ensure all employees and volunteers are competent to do their tasks, and to give them adequate training;
- to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health; for both employees and volunteers
- to maintain safe and healthy working conditions; and
- to review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals.

### 4. Responsibilities

Day-to-day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice is delegated to the Coordinator for Bridging the Gap Islington

### 5. Health and safety risks

Risk assessment will be undertaken by the coordinator. Actions taken to remove/control risk will be approved by the coordinator and supervisors of mentoring partnerships.

Bridging the Gap Islington carry out risk assessments, which are acted upon to lower risk. This includes a risk assessment of:

- the premises on which Bridging the Gap Islington operate
- the organisation's activities – this can be outlined in roles carried out by volunteers to be honest
- the roles carried out by volunteers
- service users that are referred to Bridging the Gap Islington

**Risk assessments will be reviewed whenever a relevant policy, such as the Safeguarding policy is altered**

Risk assessments for service users and mentoring meetings are Appendices A and B

Where other organizations have carried out relevant risk assessments Bridging the Gap Islington will rely on those assessments and expect volunteers and employees to follow any relevant guidance provided by the host organization.

### 6. Information, instruction and supervision

- Health and safety advice is available from the coordinator. Supervision of volunteer mentors will be arranged/undertaken/monitored by experienced staff.

- The coordinator is responsible for ensuring that Bridging the Gap Islington employees working at locations under the control of other employers are given relevant health and safety information.
- Bridging the Gap Islington will provide volunteers with any information, training or equipment they need to remain safe whilst carrying out their volunteering tasks.
- Volunteers are expected to remember their duty of care towards the people around them, and not act in a way that might endanger those around them.

## **7. Competency for tasks and training**

- Induction training will be provided for all volunteers and staff by the coordinator and supervisors.
- Training records are kept by coordinator
- Training will be identified, arranged and monitored by the coordinator and supervisors.

## **8. Accidents, first aid and work-related ill health**

- Health surveillance is not required in relation to any jobs at Bridging the Gap Islington
- All accidents that happen to volunteers, service users or employees when carrying out various activities are to be recorded and kept securely in written and electronic format.
- The coordinator is responsible for keeping a record of accidents.

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Version 3

APS Key area 1

## Appendix A Risk assessment – Service Users

Possible Risks	Action to reduce it
<p>Harm to themselves e.g. acts of bodily harm, drug alcohol abuse</p>	<p>Make sure service user understands mentoring expectations and of the agreements made by their referrer regarding drugs and alcohol. Mentors to go through adult protection and safeguarding training and procedures before mentoring. Mentor to report anything that causes a concern regarding self-harm to their supervisor.</p> <p>Referrer should be asked about any possible addictive, self-harm or other behaviour which might cause concern. Volunteer to be given appropriate training.</p> <p>If necessary, ask referring agency to provide support if service users behaviour causes concern</p>
<p>Service user might physically assault, sexually assault , or emotionally abuse volunteer mentor or supervisor</p>	<p>Ask service users and referrers about any previous history of assault or threatening behaviour.</p> <p>Service users who have previously threatened or assaulted people will generally not be offered mentoring</p> <p>Only accept service users for mentoring if there is some support from a referring agency, including confirmation that they are not known to have threatened or assaulted anyone and, if they are likely to have offended, information about any previous criminal history</p> <p>Supervisor should discuss each meeting with the mentor and encourage them to withdraw from the meeting if they feel at all threatened– while also giving clear guidance to the service user about exactly what behaviour causes concern.</p> <p>If the behaviour of a service user suggests they may not understand the limits and expectations of our service, a supervisor or the co-ordinator will meet or talk with the service user to discuss the expectations before they meet with their mentor again.</p>
<p>Service user might steal from mentor</p>	<p>Mentors to be advised to keep phones and valuables out of sight when meeting service user.</p>

## Appendix B Risk assessment of Mentoring Meetings

<b>Possible Risks</b>	<b>Action to reduce it</b>
Physical danger of tripping etc at agreed meeting place	Encourage volunteers to visit meeting venues first and avoid venues that are not well lit and in good physical condition
Service user might physically assault volunteer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Insist that volunteers only meet service users in public places where other people are present, preferably including cafe staff</li> <li>- Train volunteers to avoid words or actions that might appear provocative</li> <li>- Train volunteers to avoid getting between the service user and the door and to end the meeting if they feel at all threatened.</li> <li>- Ask service users and referrers about any previous history of assault or threatening behaviour.</li> <li>- Service users who have previously threatened people may only be seen where experienced professional staff are present</li> </ul>
Volunteer may feel threatened by service user	<p>Supervisor should discuss each meeting with the volunteer and encourage them to withdraw from the mentoring partnership if they feel threatened– while also giving clear guidance to the service user about exactly what behaviour causes concern.</p> <p>Volunteers will be trained to place themselves where they are visible to cafe staff and they have space behind them to move away from the service user if necessary.</p>
Service user may feel intimidated by volunteers who appear too smart or official or who wear inappropriately revealing clothing	Train volunteers in appropriate dress and behaviour/ body language
Service user may persuade volunteer to collude or condone criminal or offensive behaviour	Train the volunteer to identify and challenge unacceptable behaviour
Service user may obtain contact details for volunteer and contact them at inconvenient times	Insist that volunteers use Bridging the Gap mobile phones (not their own) and do not share addresses or other contact information including social network information
Service user might steal from volunteers	Remind volunteers to be careful about keeping valuable items with them and preferably out of sight when meeting service users
Friends or associates of the service user may interrupt the meeting and behave inappropriately	Volunteer should be trained in appropriate responses and should leave the meeting if necessary.
Service user may have used alcohol or illegal drugs before meeting	Provide training for the volunteer. Encourage them to discuss these issues with the service user and, if necessary, end the meeting and make arrangements to meet at another time, possibly earlier in the day, so the service user is less likely to have drunk or used.