

**23 June 2025**

## **LIFELINE POLICIES AND PROCESSES**

**I would like to request information from Life Line on the following processes in relation to:**

- **The governance on calls received, and if internally, there is a policy in terms of colleagues sharing information 'in situ'. Specifically in relation to B5 counsellors openly sharing information in relation calls 'on the floor' , in real time and what the process is for call handlers to 'off load', is it normal practice to share call recordings with one another in real time outside of Business Hours.**

Our privacy notice highlights the governance processes regards calls received ([Privacy policy | Lifeline Helpline](#)). Counsellors are supported in real-time by Shift Leaders to assess risk, and determine the most supportive and appropriate pathway. Information is shared on a strict need-to-know basis. The UK GDPR lawful basis for processing/sharing information is a Public Task, specifically the provision of Health and Social Care treatment. Counsellors have various supports to offload including regular clinical supervision, post-shift debrief, out of hours on-call support function. Counsellors do not have access to audio call recordings and therefore do not have the capacity to share recordings with each other at any time.

- **If counsellors have access to the Call Recording System used by BHSCT, for downloading or retrieval of MP3 call recordings and if so, what is the governance around such access to these systems.**

Counsellors have no access to call recordings. Access is limited to a very small number of managers who only access records in relation to complaints, or where a crime has been committed. Staff may be required to listen to one of their own calls as part of the complaints process if a concern is raised.

- **The reporting procedures for Lifeline to the Public Health Agency, and if the information is anonymised in terms of the KPI's supplied to the PHA.**

Lifeline report aggregated, anonymised KPI's to the PHA on a monthly basis. There is no personal identifiable information within this. The same holds true for any ad-hoc monitoring or reporting requests.

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- **The governance around ensuring maximum confidentiality is adhered to.**

Lifeline staff follow SHARE NI guidelines on confidentiality. Our processes for sharing information can be found in our privacy notice here: [Privacy policy | Lifeline Helpline](#)

- **The process for having recordings of calls to Life Line deleted where the mental capacity is not where it should be in relation to callers not requesting not to have the call recorded, and if that a process exists to have these recordings removed from BHSCT telephony/VOIP systems.**

All calls to Lifeline are recorded. If a caller does not wish for the call to be recorded, they can request a call back which would be unrecorded. The retention period for audio recordings is 3 years.

- **The geographical (not actual) locations where Life Line calls are responded to, i.e. Home Workers or Office based and where these offices are located.**

Lifeline counsellors are based in designated office space in Belfast and Derry. In extenuating circumstances, there may be home working however this is infrequent and subject to a remote working agreement whereby the Counsellor confirms a confidential working space is available for the duration of the shift.

- **If callers have a concern that confidentiality has been breached what the reporting process for initiating investigations in to such suspicions.**

Callers are welcome to raise any areas of concern regards data protection or complaints to [dataprotection@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:dataprotection@belfasttrust.hscni.net) and [complaints@belfasttrust.hscni.net](mailto:complaints@belfasttrust.hscni.net) respectively.