

## **Missing Link/Next Link - Service User Charter**

### **Our promise**

We are aware that domestic and sexual violence and mental ill health occur in all cultures and communities. We will actively promote equality, fairness and respect. We will ensure that all people engaging with our services are treated with courtesy, empathy and dignity.

We want you to be satisfied with the service you receive from us. So whenever and however you contact us you are entitled to our high standards of service.

We will always strive to deliver our services with pride, passion and professionalism and continuously improve our services to you.

### **Our Quality Standards**

As a Service User of Missing Link, you can expect that we will:

- Provide a professional service delivered by staff that have appropriate skills and training.
- Treat you fairly and with respect.
- Provide you with a copy of any advice given or support/care plans and actions agreed.
- Keep you informed throughout your involvement with us.
- Protect your confidentiality by handling your information sensitively and securely.
- Ensure the person you contact takes ownership of your enquiry/support.
- Offer you the chance to make suggestions on how we can improve our services.
- Provide an easy and effective system for you to make comments and raise concerns.

### **Missing Link would like to ask you as a user of its services to:**

- Co-operate and participate in the service we offer you.
- Attend appointments on time, and keep us informed if you are unable to attend appointments.
- Keep us informed about any information relevant to your support.
- Respect the privacy, dignity and confidentiality of other service users and staff.
- Respect the premises and facilities provided.
- Help keep our workers safe when at your premises or in the community.
- Not use abusive language or act in an abusive manner.
- Whilst Missing Link/Next Link does not expect its service users to be free from drug and alcohol use, service users are expected to be able to engage in support sessions in an appropriate manner.

## **Missing Link/Next Link – Data Protection Statement/Privacy Notice**

### **How we use the information you have given us**

Missing Link will ensure that any information that you give us or any information that we record about you, will be held securely and not be shared with anyone else, except in exceptional circumstances.

Missing Link Service Users have the right to see information we hold about you with certain exceptions (see below). Missing Link will store any information we hold about you securely for a minimum of 6 years, after which all information will be safely destroyed.

Missing Link complies with the **Data Protection Act 1998**.

Under this Act, every person has a right of access to personal data about themselves and where access is refused there is a right of appeal to the Courts or the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). This Act underpins and guides practice held within the Missing Link/Next Link Confidentiality, Information Governance and Data Protection Policy and Procedure (Available on request).

### **Data Protection Principles**

Missing Link will comply with the eight enforceable principles of good practice, which state that data must be:

- fairly and lawfully processed;
- processed for limited purposes;
- adequate, relevant and not excessive;
- accurate, and where necessary, up to date;
- not kept longer than necessary;
- processed in accordance with the data subject's rights;
- kept secure;
- not transferred outside the EEA without adequate protection.

### **When information can be withheld**

There are some situations when organisations are allowed to withhold information, e.g. if the information:

- has been provided by someone on a confidential basis;
- would identify someone who has complained;
- would endanger anybody;
- would risk damage to your physical or mental health, or cause you serious distress;
- is about the prevention, detection or investigation of a crime.

An organisation does not have to say why they are withholding information.

### **Communication with Relatives & Carer's**

It is recognised that relatives, carer's or others are involved in, and often an integral part of, some service users lives and support systems. In these circumstances, it may be helpful for service users to authorise staff to communicate regularly with identified relatives/carers, etc. In order to do this the "Consent to Share Information" form must be completed and signed by the service user to allow Missing Link/Next Link staff to share information. In the absence of consent, information will not be shared except under certain circumstances, including a safeguarding issue, such as child protection or that of a vulnerable adult, in which case the relevant agencies may need to be informed. These circumstances are outlined in Missing Link's Confidentiality Policy.

### **Timescales and Charges**

Missing Link/Next Link may make a reasonable charge for copying information requested. The cost will not exceed £10. Any requests for information must be made in writing and will be responded to within 40 days of receipt of the agreed fee and the information request.