

Carer Group Agreement

Joining in with a group or an online virtual event can be daunting especially if it's a brand-new experience.

We have established some group ground-rules for the understanding and comfort of everyone involved.

The Purpose of your group is for carers to discuss and provide peer support about their caring roles.

Having a caring role can be challenging, and this will be a safe space for everyone to talk openly, in confidence and without being judged, if they want to.

We welcome all carers from all types of caring roles, and all backgrounds, we ask everyone to bear in mind that other carers might talk about things that you could find difficult to hear. If you do find something difficult to hear and you need to talk to one of our team about that, please do let us know and we can arrange a separate 1-1 call to support you.



Discussion can get lively, and there can be lots of views exchanged which is the purpose of the group, however there may be times where we will need to bring everyone back to this group agreement to make sure that everyone has a good experience of the group.

By attending a group, you agree and consent to the following:

1. Anything discussed in the session is confidential and is not revealed outside the group. The exception is if you or someone else is at risk of harm. Carers Support West Sussex will always keep you fully informed of any actions we may have to take because of a disclosure. See our Safeguarding page for more details:
<https://www.carerssupport.org.uk/safeguarding/>
2. Discussions tend to focus around your caring role rather than other personal matters.
3. If we feel that discussions around personal matters are impacting the group or individuals, we will bring the conversation to a halt. A 1-1 call can be arranged separately if required.
4. We are unable to have private conversations with you after the groups. If you would like a 1-1 session, please let us know and we can book you into a phone surgery.

5. Each carer has the opportunity to talk should they wish to.
6. We all listen to each other and only one person talks at a time: please avoid interrupting or talking over anyone, so that everyone has time to talk and is heard.
7. Consideration is given to the caring situation and feelings of others. Everyone may not agree with but respects other's points of view and ways of expressing themselves.

However, we will not tolerate:

- the use of swearwords
- language or opinions that could discriminate against anyone due their race, nationality or origin, age, religion or belief, gender and gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, or disability
- conversations which are argumentative
- pushing your opinions or beliefs onto others

In these incidents we will ask you to stop and if you continue we will ask you to leave the session.

8. You are free to leave the session at any time

In-person groups – additional ground-rules:

9. Everyone has different views about their personal space and whether they are happy for someone else to touch them, for example shaking hands or having a hug. Even if you want to thank or comfort someone, please just check with the person that this is ok with them first.
10. Mobile phones do not need to be off but, in consideration to speakers or other carers, we would be grateful if you could put them either on vibrate or silent. If you need to take a call, please take it outside of the group.

Online groups – you also agree and consent to the following:

11. I understand that others may be able to see and hear my space at home and that it is my responsibility to ensure this is an appropriate environment
12. I understand the session will not be recorded, either by Zoom, CSWS or by anyone participating unless agreed by all. I will not share or publish it in any way to external parties.
13. I will not forward the session invitation to anyone else.

14. I will not take any 'screen shots' of the session – recognising others in the group may not wish their identity to be shared.
15. I am responsible for providing the wifi/phone/laptop etc I need to access Zoom.
16. If I wish to prevent my email address from showing on the screen, I will change my profile
17. I will keep audio on mute and turn on when I wish to speak or ask questions.
18. For my and other's safety, I will keep my camera on in the group and also if we go into breakout rooms so people can see me. If I need to have my camera off I will inform the group facilitator.

If attendees are unable to follow these ground-rules and continue to do something we have asked you not to, we will need to tell you to stop attending the group and take further action if appropriate.

Updated September 2024