



**GOOD PRACTICE
GUIDELINES IN
PASTORAL CARE**

Vulnerable Adults

St Kea Church

Kea, Truro

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KEY CONTACTS

St Kea Safeguarding Officers:

Marc Baker (Vicar)

01872 260134

Alan Stanhope

01872 862397

Diocesan Safeguarding Officer

01872 274351

Adult Care & Support

0300 1234131

Out of Hours

01208 251300

Police Enquiries

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Central Referral Unit

08456 051166

CONFIDENTIALITY & PROTECTING THE PASTORAL CARER

- Confidentiality is a critical boundary which protects the privacy of the person and the integrity of pastoral work, in our church or organisation
- Confidentiality ensures the information a person reveals to us is not disclosed to anyone else, without the person's prior knowledge and consent, apart from exceptional circumstances where safeguarding is necessary
- Confidentiality establishes trust and a safe space for a person and for God to work
- Confidentiality should not need to be confused with secrecy i.e. concealing information which could be significantly harmful to others or collusion i.e. explicitly or inherently cooperating with illegal or unethical behaviour
- Exceptions to confidentiality include when the Pastoral carer:
 - has been required by legislation or a Court of Law to disclose certain information either to the Police or the Court
 - has reason to believe that others, particularly a child or vulnerable person, are or maybe, at risk of harm or injury
 - has reason to believe that the person is at risk of harming themselves
- Pastoral Carers working in a formal pastoral care role need to make a person aware of the boundaries of confidentiality from the onset of any care or support offered
- Pastoral Care offered informally in the everyday contexts of life, needs to assume that what is spoken by the person is to be kept confidential. Where there is any doubt, the Pastoral Carer needs to assume responsibility for clarifying this e.g. would the person like their situation to be kept confidential, be prayed for by a group of intercessors who would keep their details confidential or do they want it in the weekly news sheet!
- Confidentiality also extends to any written or electronic records and the safeguarding of these to protect the privacy of the person
- Written or electronic records should only be kept for the specific purpose and time needed. They need to be accurate, up to date, adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose for which they are intended and where appropriate without any identifiable information.

ETHICAL VALUES FOR PASTORAL CARE

- Pastoral Carers will be careful to respect the rights and dignity of every person as a unique individual, equal with them in the sight of God and regardless of race, religion, nationality, language, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, size, employment, income, disability, health, abode, or criminal record
- Will seek to accept and not judge a person and to allow them the safety, freedom and space to express themselves and to make their own decisions without force or manipulation, even when they disagree with the persons thinking, actions and life style
- Will be careful to ensure that they do not misuse or abuse the trust that is bestowed upon them by a person
- Will not subject any person to physical, psychological, verbal or spiritual harassment and will not tolerate such behaviour by others. Harassment can include physical, psychological, emotional, sexual or spiritual abuse including insults, unwelcome sexual behaviour, language or jokes, display of offensive materials, words, pictures, symbols, behaviour, gestures, or signals.
- Will not exploit people they are helping financially, sexually, emotionally, or in any other way.
- Will be careful not to create unhealthy dependencies for either themselves or the persons to whom they are offering pastoral care.
- Will maintain confidentiality, understanding that confidentiality does not necessarily mean secrecy.
- Will ensure that the person is safeguarded as far as is practically reasonable and that appropriate steps are taken to seek appropriate medical, legal or other professional assistance where required.
- Will seek to be honest and open and act with integrity.
- Will seek to hold appropriate boundaries and be confidently assertive when required without aggression



INTRODUCTION

These guidelines recognise that Christian pastoral care is fundamentally and intensely relational in nature and practice and offered from the gift of God's love for us and our love for one another. As such, there is a challenge to balance the desire for best and responsible practice in the worldly and natural realm with Godly wisdom and supernatural involvement in the eternal. Holding good practice, Biblical principles and God's Kingdom work in creative tension which bring safety and liberation to people and holding the ordinary and extraordinary and the specialist and the non specialist together under the umbrella of pastoral care, is indeed a challenge which requires the collective wisdom of us all and the continual guidance of God's Holy Spirit.

What is Pastoral Care?

- It's the activity which flows from the attitude and commitment to love one another because we ourselves, are first loved by God.
- It's ultimately concerned with developing quality relationships and enabling one another to recognise, follow and become more like Jesus.
- It participates in God's missional activity to reconcile the world to Himself.
- Embraces a wide range of activity in support of one another, in and beyond the Church i.e. in gathered and dispersed church.
- It might involve: sustaining others through prolonged difficulty or immediate need, enabling the journey of healing and wholeness, considering the process of reconciliation with God, self and others, offering guidance about other resources and enabling different perspectives.
- It might take the form of: listening, encouraging, visiting, hospitality, advocacy, mentoring, befriending, celebrating, practically helping, prayer, comforting, enabling.
- Might happen: formally in planned and organised ways or informally through everyday spontaneous moments.
- Might be offered by an individual, by small groups, through a particular ministry, through an outreach project, by one church or a group of churches.

A CHRISTIAN PASTORAL CARER

A Christian Pastoral Carer is someone who either formally, as part of a pastoral team, group or network or informally, as part of their fellowship group or everyday relationships in the community, offers care and support to another, in the knowledge of being loved themselves by God and in the hope of sharing that love with others

Christian Pastoral Carers might be seen as part of the **ALL, SOME** and **FEW** of the Body of Christ

The 'All' - All Christians have a God given responsibility to 'care' for others – this is a quintessential aspect of the outworking of what it means to be a member of the Body of Christ. Its emphasis is upon growing and maintaining a Christ centred loving relationship with others, and it mostly happens in informal and often unplanned ways. The ALL help to grow pastoral churches or communities which care for others in organic ways, rather than within formalised pastoral structures or systems.

The 'Some' - Some Christians are particularly gifted and called by God to provide pastoral care in a more focussed way. This might include offering and providing pastoral care in more planned or formal ways, perhaps as part of a dedicated team of pastoral carers. It might involve the Pastoral Carer undertaking training and / or developing knowledge, Insights, skills and expertise in pastoral care at a greater depth than 'the all'. The SOME use their gifts for the good of the whole body.

The 'Few' - A few Christians are particularly called and gifted to resource, lead or co-ordinate the work of pastoral care in planned, structured and formalised ways. The FEW may have specialist knowledge, experience and skill to enable, encourage and equip the pastoral care work of 'the all' and 'the some', and provide them with for example, training, leadership, help to reflect on their practice and support

BIBLICAL VALUES FOR PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral Carers are called to value each person as created uniquely in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), with purpose, potential and capacity to live life to the full (John 10:10)

Pastoral Care that is inspired and enabled by Christ will contribute towards:

The equipping of God's people so they can do His work, so that the Church, the Body of Christ, can be built up, until we come to unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son, that we will be mature and full grown in the Lord ... so that the whole Body is healthy and growing and full of love (e.g. Ephesians 4:11-16)

The mission work of the Church (e.g. John 17:20-23; Acts 2:44-47; Acts 6:1-7)

Pastoral Carers are called to love others through Christ-like love (John 13:34-35, Romans 12:10; Romans 13:8), led and living by the Holy Spirit, manifesting the fruit of the Holy Spirit and informed by the indwelling Word of God (Galatians 5:13-26 and Colossians 3:12-17)

Pastoral Carers are called to be burden bearers and burden sharers with and for others, whilst not creating dependency or denying the person their responsibilities and capabilities (Galatians 6:1-5)

Pastoral Carers are called to relate to others with an emphasis more on listening than speaking, and to be mindful and careful of the words that they speak (James 1:19-27; Proverbs 18:19)

Pastoral Carers are called to exercise confidentiality and discretion (Proverbs 11:13; Proverbs 20:19)

