



## **Vulnerable and Suicidal Clients Policy**

**Last reviewed: June 2021**

**To be reviewed: June 2022**

1. This policy is to be used in situations where a mediator or other member of staff has concerns about the personal safety of a client. Such situations arise where a client has disclosed an intention or plan to harm themselves, or someone else, or even to commit suicide. This policy should be read in conjunction with the safeguarding policy.

2. If a mediator or member of support staff has concerns about a client's intention to harm themselves, or others, the matter should be notified to Louisa Whitney as a matter of urgency, using the emergency contact details provided.

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3. The mediator or member of support staff should also consider whether to provide the client with the following details of support organisations:

Samaritans - 116123

Mind - 0300 123 3393 or text 86463

Saneline - 0300 304 7000 - 04.30 - 10.30pm daily

Support Line – 01708 765200 - info@supportline.org.uk

C.A.L.M. (for men) 5pm – 12pm daily - 0808 802 58 58 (London)

Silverline – (over 55s) – 24 hrs a day - 0800 4 70 80 90

Hub of Hope – contains post code search facility listing mental health services local to you -

<https://hubofhope.co.uk/>

4. The FMC Guidance on Confidentiality states as follows:

1 Subject to paragraphs 5.2.2, 5.2.3 and 5.2.4 below, the Mediator must not disclose any information about, or obtained in the course of an Information and Assessment Meeting or during a mediation process to the other participant or to anyone including a court appointed officer or the court, without the express consent of each Participant, an order of the court or where the law imposes an overriding obligation of disclosure on Mediators to do so. 5.2.2 Where it appears necessary so that a specific allegation that a child has suffered significant harm may be properly investigated, or where the Mediator suspects that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, the Mediator must ensure that the appropriate agency or authority is notified. Wherever possible, the Mediator should make such a notification after consultation with his or her PPC. 5.2.3 The Mediator may notify the appropriate agency if he or she considers that other public policy considerations prevail, such as an adult suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. Wherever possible, the Mediator should make such a notification after consultation with his or her PPC.

5. A fee earner/member of support staff may seek the client's consent to make such a disclosure. However, if they are concerned that this may have a negative effect on the client, they may (preferably in consultation with the partner) disclose the information to a third party without consulting the client beforehand.

6. If the mediator or member of staff thinks the client may be going to hurt themselves or has already hurt themselves, the relevant steps to take are as follows:

- If they are concerned that the client has already hurt themselves and they know their location – call 999 (they do not have to be in the same location as the client to do so). Note that for online meetings the mediator should ask at the start of the meeting where each party is so this information is readily available.
- Alternatively, they may call 116 123 (the Samaritans) who can call an ambulance on another person's behalf.
- In addition to this, the mediator or member of staff may, if they have their details, call the client's GP
- Some areas have mental health crisis teams that can be contacted – details can be found here, using the client's address <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-urgent-mental-health-helpline>

7. Whether the emergency services are contacted or not, in any circumstances where there have been concerns about a client harming themselves, Louisa Whitney should be notified so that the mediator or member of support staff can be given the relevant support. The mediator should also contact their own PPC.

8. If they can, the mediator or member of staff should take notes of what the client said, how they seemed (e.g. anxious, agitated, relaxed, distant) and how the mediator or member of support staff responded.

This policy statement came into force on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021. We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually. This policy statement and accompanying procedures were last reviewed on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021.

Signed:  .....

Louisa Whitney.

Date: .....23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021.....