



the brain injury association

Headway helpline

Confidentiality statement

Purpose of this statement.

Confidentiality is a matter of consideration and respect for the people we work with and for. It relates to sensitive information that we receive or have access to in the course of our work. This statement relates specifically to the Headway Helpline, which is a confidential service. In order to provide a service that meets the needs of people that contact us, we need to create a safe environment where people can discuss their issues openly and fully but also have safeguards in place should we believe someone is at risk of serious harm. We regard keeping our contacts with people confidential extremely important and we will only breach confidentiality in exceptional circumstances or with the persons consent.

Anonymity

- People that contact our Helpline do not have to give their name. If someone feels comfortable doing so they can use a pseudonym when contacting us. However if people want us to get in touch with someone on their behalf we will need their real name and possibly other personal details.
- Our telephone system shows the telephone number of incoming calls and we are able to retrieve the telephone number of anyone that leaves us a message on our answer phone. If anyone telephones the Headway Helpline and wishes their number to remain anonymous they would need to use the 141 system to do this or withhold the number from their end.
- If someone telephones the Helpline our number will not show up on itemised bills.
- If our Helpline staff contact someone via telephone this will show as an incoming call from telephone number 0115 9240800; this is our main reception telephone number. For privacy people can save this telephone number under a different name on their telephone to prevent other people knowing that it is Headway calling.
- If you leave a message on our Helpline answer phone we will not disclose what we are calling about to anyone but the original caller; that is, if a family member of the caller answers we will only disclose that we are calling from a confidential service and will try again later.
- If the Helpline sends someone an email this will appear as from 'Helpline' or Helpline@headway.org.uk
- If we send any letters or if people request we send them something in the post the item will be sent in a plain envelope and our logo will not be visible on the outer package of any post.

Our processes and record keeping

- We do not keep audio recordings of any of our telephone conversations.
- We do share some information within Headway, because we work as a team to provide the best possible support.
- We keep a small record of all contacts that our Helpline receives for the purpose of continuity. This documentation will be held and destroyed as per our Data Protection Policy.
- We also record some statistical information, to report on and improve our service. For example we keep records on gender and how someones injury was sustained and which area they are contacting us from. However the statistics we produce will never include personally identifiable information.

Exceptions

There are some exceptional circumstances when the Helpline will break confidentiality these include but are not limited to:

- If a caller directly asks us to pass on information about them to someone else
- We receive a court order requiring us to share information
- We receive a call about acts of terrorism or bomb warnings
- Someone threatens the safety of our volunteers or staff, or threatens the effective delivery of the Helpline service
- If we feel that anyone will be at risk of serious harm if we do not break confidentiality