



SELF-HARM

Self-harm is defined as 'a person deliberately inflicting injuries upon themselves, often as a way of relieving emotional pain'.

HARCSAC's policy regarding self-harm and clients is as follows:

- We do not exclude clients on the basis of self-harm. However, it is not acceptable for clients to self-harm on the premises.
- If a client attempts to self-harm on the premises they will be asked to leave. If the harm inflicted is severe enough to require medical treatment an ambulance should be called to the premises; the name of our organisation and the nature of the work carried out must remain confidential.
- Under no circumstances will volunteers offer to take the client to hospital or to anywhere else in their car (see Personal Safety Procedures).
- If a client does self-harm or attempt to self-harm, this information will not be disclosed to other agencies in the interests of client confidentiality.
- If a caller to the helpline discloses that they are intending to self-harm, the volunteer should stay on the line with them and explore the material that they bring and any alternatives to self-harm that there may be in their circumstances at this time.
- If a caller discloses that they have self-harmed and need treatment, the volunteer should ask if they would like her to call the emergency services. The volunteer **will not** do so without their permission. Stay on the line with the client. If they are willing, the volunteer should enable them to explore the material that they bring and other alternatives to self-harm in the future.
- Confidentiality must not be breached under any circumstances other than those expressed in the Confidentiality Policy.

When a client is known to self-harm, a verbal agreement will be made between volunteers and client at the outset of support outlining these points.