



supportline@sarcoma.org.uk



The bone & soft tissue cancer charity

What you can expect when contacting the Sarcoma UK Support Line

Purpose

The purpose of the document is to demonstrate clear procedure and the expectation of the Sarcoma UK Support and Information Line

Responsibilities

Responsible for the update and running of information line - Helen Stradling (HS)/Sam Hackett (SH)/Claire Kelleher (CK).

Role of the Support Line

We know sarcoma is rare, with about 3,800 new cases diagnosed a year. Many patients and families find it difficult to access Sarcoma specific information and support. The aim of the support line is to ensure callers get access to the correct information and support.

Compassion, kindness, appropriate information and fostering a supportive environment are the working tools of the SL and when answering the call these will be paramount.

There will be no specific time limit for callers as we want you to feel that you have the time and opportunity to discuss all of the questions and concerns that you may have. We do, however, need to be aware that the support line is only open for a short number of hours each week and to ensure all users are able to access the service we may ask if we would be able to give you a call back on the next working day. We will also offer you a call back if your call is close to the end of the working day.

Answering of emails to the support line

Emails enquiries will be answered within 48 working hours and within the working hours of the support line being open. If we are trying to gain further information for you, we will let you know this and it may mean that your full question/concern is not answered within 48 hours. We will keep in touch to let you know how our research is going, sometimes we do ask medical professionals to help us with certain questions and this may necessitate us taking longer in answering your question.

Regular Closed Hours

If you call outside of the support lines opening hours you will hear an answer machine message will signpost you to the website for further information including common concerns. The option of leaving a voicemail will be given, and if you leave us a message with either your telephone number or email address we will contact you within 48 working hours. We will not leave answer phone messages for you unless you have specifically stated that we can do so.

Confidentiality Policy

The telephone and email services are confidential between you and Sarcoma UK. If you contact the support line you may choose to provide personal information which will only be used for the purposes of dealing with your enquiry.

Any personal information provided will not be passed onto anyone else without your express permission except in circumstances to comply with the nurses' code of professional conduct or the law. Examples of this might include anyone reporting potential serious self-harm, if it was felt a child may be at risk or anyone expressing the intention of harming someone else.

Data Protection Policy

Calls are recorded and monitored for training purposes. This is an important part of maintaining the information line service. Occasionally another member of the Sarcoma UK team maybe listening in to the call, it will be made clear to you at the beginning of the call. If you would prefer this not to happen, please just let us know.

All calls and emails are kept confidential to Sarcoma UK and are destroyed securely after use. If for any reason you wish to have your personal details removed from our records just let us know.

All information is recorded in line with GDPR (2018) please refer to the Sarcoma UK privacy policy for more information. Both callers and Emailers to the SL service are given advice on how to ask for their data to NOT be stored on the Sarcoma UK secure database.

Calls requiring immediate referral

The Sarcoma UK support line does not provide acute clinical advice, any callers requesting immediate clinical advice will be referred back to their local team or advised to call 999/111.

If there is an urgent concern about the mental wellbeing of the caller or it is felt the caller is at suicide risk, where possible the GP will be informed as they have a duty of

care to the patient in the community. Signposting to Samaritans should be given. Telephone number 116 123, email jo@samaritans.org, www.samaritans.org

Caller Abuse of support line staff

Verbal abuse over the support line is not acceptable, if at any time the staff of the support line feel the caller is being aggressive, or they feel uncomfortable, it is appropriate for the call to be firmly terminated.

Complaints

Any complaints will be addressed using the complaints procedure documented on the 'Contact Us' page.

<https://sarcoma.org.uk/about-sarcoma-uk/contact-us>

Feedback

As a charity we are looking to provide a very useful and informative service for you with the support line. We would very much like to hear your feedback and any suggestions for any ways in which the charity could look to increase our support services. We would very much like to use feedback from you and so please do let us know if you are not happy for us to do this. We will of course anonymise feedback given before reproducing.

Please feel free to email us your feedback to Feedback@sarcoma.org.uk