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What is a **SUPPORT PERSON?**

An explanation of what to expect as the
Support Person in Newcastle Diocese

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The support person, could be responsible for the following matters:

- Liaising (which could include attending any meetings) with the statutory agencies to provide support to the victim/survivor, the support person is not the victim/survivors advocate at any meeting they attend;
- Listening to and representing the victim/survivor's pastoral needs;
- Identifying any therapeutic or other needs the victim/survivor may have, and offering choices as how these may be best met;
- Listening to and representing the victim/survivor's views during the management of the safeguarding concern or allegation;
- Recording any meetings or contact they have with the victim/survivor and passing on relevant information (e.g. to prevent/protect others from harm, any further information supplied in relation to the safeguarding concern or allegation) to the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor as appropriate, this should be made clear from the outset of the relationship between the support person and the person being supported. Records of meetings would include dates, times, locations and an overview of the meeting rather than a specific and detailed account

The support person will not be responsible for managing the case and will pass on written records to the DSA.

The support person is NOT the confidant of the victim/survivor.

The support person must be bound by a responsibility to disclose to the appropriate authorities (e.g. the Police, DSA etc.) where:

- Others are at risk of harm;
- The victim/survivor makes disclosures of intentions to hurt themselves;
- Safeguarding information is shared to assist in the prevention, detection or prosecution of a crime.

It is important to recognise and to acknowledge where others may still be at risk, the Police (and possibly Children's / Adult's Services or the Local Authority) will need to be informed. If the support person is unsure whether to share information, they should seek advice from the DSA and/or diocesan registrar.

The support person will NOT attend core group meetings.

A support person will be offered to all victims/survivors/complainants.

Where the victim/survivor accepts the offer of a support person a written description of the support person's agreed role and responsibilities should be provided to the victim/survivor at the commencement of such an arrangement.

The particular role the support person plays must be agreed in consultation with the victim/survivor.

All support persons must attend a training programme delivered by the Church of England National Safeguarding Team which introduces and explains their role. All support persons must be prepared to attend quarterly peer supervisions with the DSA (and any one to one supervisions considered to be necessary). An enhanced DBS will be required for the role of support person.

