**Diocese of Portsmouth Healing Prayer Ministry Guidelines**

**APPENDIX 3. Safeguarding Guidelines for Healing Prayer Ministry**

Although this ministry can take place in a variety of formats and places, at all times consideration should be given to the principles of good safeguarding and care:

**Authorisation and Accountability**

All those involved in pastoral ministry should have in place a system of structured supervision and support for their own development and as a way of ensuring best practice. This should include accountability to the Incumbent and PCC.

**Prayer Ministry Group Leaders** should:

* Be safely recruited and DBS checked.
* Complete/attend appropriate safeguarding training as outlined in the Safeguarding Training Policy and Pathways 2018, which can be viewed on the Portsmouth Diocese website <https://www.portsmouth.anglican.org/safeguarding> (Training Pathways: ‘Prayer Ministry Team Leader’. Currently this is Foundation Level C1, and the C5 refresher module every 3 years after this when it becomes available. Consideration should also be given for leaders to complete the S1 Safer Recruitment and C2/3 Leadership modules as appropriate.)
* Oversee any pastoral follow-up care and keep the incumbent and PCC informed as necessary.
* Be mindful of training and pastoral support for team members.

**Prayer Ministry Team Members** should:

* Be safely recruited and DBS checked.
* Complete/attend appropriate safeguarding training as outlined in the Safeguarding Training Policy and Pathways 2018, which can be viewed on the Portsmouth Diocese website <https://www.portsmouth.anglican.org/safeguarding> (Training Pathways: ‘Prayer Ministry Team Member’. Currently this is Foundation Level C1, and the C5 refresher module every 3 years after this when it becomes available.)
* Be prepared to stand down temporarily during times of personal difficulties.
* Not undertake ministry beyond own competence and limitations, and be willing to refer to others if required.

**Setting**

Anyone coming for prayer ministry may be regarded as vulnerable in some way. Therefore everything possible should be done to minimize the risks involved especially when working with the young or vulnerable adults and risk assessments should be completed for pastoral activities in these circumstances or when in a home, hospital or residential setting. In undertaking risk assessments consideration should be given to:

* Any personal safety issues arising when offering prayer ministry in a person’s home.
* How best to ensure the safeguarding of children and adults who are vulnerable.
* The need to introduce team members to members of staff when in a hospital or home setting.

**Confidentiality**

In order to build a relationship of trust it is important to treat information shared in confidence. The exceptions are:

* When specific permission has been given by a person to share something they have said to another person.
* If something has been said which places a person at risk, there is a duty of care to pass this on to the Parish Safeguarding Officer or appropriate agency as soon as possible.

**Touch**

Touch should always be used with care and forethought, with permission sought in a way that the person may accept or decline without prejudice. Be aware of the difficulties that touch could generate and mitigate the risks by:

* Working in pairs.
* Ensuring there is a man present for ministry with a man and a woman present for ministry with a woman.

**Insurance**

The PCC is responsible for ensuring that adequate insurance is in place for all church activities. In the context of pastoral care parishes should check their insurance cover if they plan to undertake activities that may go beyond what would generally be considered to be the provision of traditional pastoral care. In all activities parishes must also make sure they are following the House of Bishops’ Guidelines for Safeguarding as well as Good Practice in the Healing Ministry.

Mary Daisy, Diocese of Portsmouth Safeguarding Adviser (Policy and Training).

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