



Explanation Note

The text for this brochure is taken from a document issued by Cancer Support National in 2024 and is an update to the previous Code of Confidentiality.

The Code of Confidentiality is part of Cancer Support France Haute-Vienne's legal obligation to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Le règlement général de protection des données (RGPD)) implemented into French law (Act No. 2018-493) on 20 June 2018.

It is also an obligation under Cancer Support France Haute-Vienne's affiliation agreement with Cancer Support National.

Helpline 0800 240 200

Code of Confidentiality

For Cancer Support France Volunteers
(*Active Listeners, Language Supporters, Administration Council Members, Volunteers working with the association*)

Introduction

The fundamental aim of Cancer Support France is to support all anglophones living in France who are touched by cancer.

Confidentiality is one of the foundation stones of any support work.

People may be feeling vulnerable as a result of all that is happening in their life either as patient, partner, family member or close friend.

Great sensitivity to their needs, both spoken and unspoken, is essential.

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1.0 In order to feel able to speak freely, people in need must be able to trust the person they are talking to. This trust takes time to build up. Assuring them of our respect and our confidentiality is an important way of building this trust.

Any breaches of this Code, intentional or otherwise, can destroy a fragile relationship and could be the first step towards bringing Cancer Support France into disrepute.

The need for confidentiality exists with regard to every type of communication This could be:

- 1.1 by spoken word;
- 1.2 by email;
- 1.3 by letter or other written means;
- 1.4 by text or SMS (including WhatsApp and other communication groups);
- 1.5 through other social media such as Facebook;
- 1.6 in a report that the volunteer is privy to.

This list is not exhaustive and it also applies to all recorded information which may be stored elsewhere, for example, on computer.

2.0 To whom does it apply?

This Code applies to all Active Listeners and other members of Cancer Support France who may become party to information about a client or other person being supported. It includes:

- 2.1 All Active Listeners;
- 2.2 All volunteers giving language support;
- 2.3 All members of an association conseil;
- 2.4 Other volunteers who have contact with clients or who, due to their work within CSF, see or hear confidential information about a client.

3.0 For how long does this Code apply?

The requirement to treat all information about clients as confidential continues after the client and the Active Listener or language support volunteer have ended their relationship for whatever reason. In the case of other volunteers defined in 2.0 above, this Code continues to apply after the volunteer has left CSF.

4.0 When is it permissible to disclose information within Cancer Support France?

To fully support a client it may be necessary to share information with another member of the Cancer Support team, for example:

- 4.1 when multiple volunteers are supporting the client, for example with language and emotional support;
- 4.2 when the volunteer needs to consult another member of the team for information on how to best support the client;
- 4.3 when the volunteer needs support themselves from a fellow team member in relation to their work within the organisation.

Any such disclosure must be on a need to know basis only and, where possible, the client should remain anonymous.

5.0 When is it permissible to disclose information to a third party?

Exceptional circumstances may make it necessary to disclose information to a third party, for example:

- 5.1. if it is deemed that a client is at significant risk of harm (suicide, abuse), then there is a legal obligation to disclose information under the terms of the French law of 'non-assistance à personne en danger';
- 5.2 if is justified in the wider public interest, for example to protect others from risk of significant harm;
- 5.3 if it is required by law or court order;
- 5.4 if a client makes a formal complaint against a volunteer or the organisation, in response to such a complaint.

Any information given must be restricted to the minimum necessary and only disclosed to a person with a legitimate need to know.

6.0 Security and the General Data Protection Regulation

To ensure confidentiality, any information must be securely stored. See the **Guidance on GDPR for Active Listeners**.