



## **Keeping Safe physically and emotionally when working or volunteering for Streetlight UK**

### **PHYSICAL SAFETY:**

- Team Leader undertakes risk assessments prior to any visit.
- Use of the 'Safe word' AMBER needs us now – if you feel in danger
- Phone always with team leader when on outreach
- Team carry panic alarm
- Team go out in pairs or larger groups other than pre-arranged 1-1 sessions
- Covid-19 PPE is available
- Ensure you don't agree to come out if you are physically unwell.
- Team should be aware at all times of their exits and any situations which could develop into threats in accordance with their training.
- If at any point any team member should feel uncomfortable for any reason they should say the safe word and the Team Leader should facilitate their immediate exit.
- At no point should the team members give out their full name, address or personal phone number. The Streetlight UK outreach mobile number is the only number that should be given out to service users and professionals.
- Team members should not use toilets in brothels whilst on outreach.
- Team members should not accept any food or drinks from anyone else whilst on outreach.

### **EMOTIONAL SAFETY:**

- When we feel we have made a difference and been appreciated it brings positive things out in us but if we don't feel appreciated we may feel vulnerable or like we have not done enough. That's when we must remind ourselves of our motivation: Why are we doing this? Our purpose is not to 'fix their entire lives' or 'rescue'. We aren't doing this for the thank you. One of the emotional costs to us may be that the women we are supporting aren't currently in a position whereby they can emotionally give much back to us.
- We have to show love in action and support them as much whether they seem appreciative or not. Part of the 'emotional cost' to us is that we don't necessarily know what the outcome is and we don't know what their choices might look like tomorrow.
- Our society is so focused on achieving goals but with our women it's about THEIR personal goals. Our desire may be for them to exit the sex industry but we aren't in control. Our desire cannot be the driving force.
- We can only do what they ask us to support them with, we journey with them and are motivated by them not our own desires.
- We have to respect their free will even if we disagree.

- There will always be situations that emotionally affect us. Our boundaries, policies and 'do's and don't's' documents are there to keep us safe.
- If your attachment to one or more particular individuals becomes too strong, you need to ensure you are having routine supervision.
- Supervision: The role of supervision is to have a place to go and not know the answers, and a place to work things out. It's also a place to be reassured, supported, and somewhere to take the emotional disturbance of work to be survived, shared, understood and reflected upon, and to receive helpful and constructive feedback. As a volunteer your supervision should be with your team leader, you can request this when you feel you need it and an appointment will be arranged. As a member of staff, your supervision is essential and will be booked monthly in advance by your line manager.
- Be careful not to give physical contact e.g. hugs to a woman
- Be clear of your boundaries in different situations
- Be honest with each other as a staff and voluntary team about your capacities and what you feel comfortable doing.
- Be mindful how much time and thought is going into things outside of Streetlight time.
- De-brief at the end of an outreach time and for staff, write up notes as this keeps it professional.
- If you need to express emotion/cry, do so in the office, where it is a safe place to do so. Try not to take the emotion home with you.
- We are there to support, don't over-offer what we can do. Be aware and honest of our limitations and be honest about what you can and can't do.
- If you take too much on, you may begin to feel responsible, if this happens, try to take a step back and talk to your team leader. Remember the metaphor: You must ensure your own windows are clean before you try to clean someone else's.