

Section 4: Arranging therapeutic support

3 minutes read

Last updated: 18 November 2021

Version: 1

Requirements

4.1 The person providing the therapeutic support must have appropriate qualifications and must be registered with the requisite professional body.

4.2 The support is intended to meet immediate and medium-term needs (not long-term needs) and must be arranged as quickly as is practicable in the circumstances.

4.3 Any decision to end this support must be based on a review of the needs of the survivor or victim rather than on an arbitrary end-date. This review must include the victim's or survivor's views of their needs. In case of children and young people, the review must include their parents (or guardians) unless they are implicated in the safeguarding concerns.

4.4 Any communication and contracting by the Church Body/DSA/CSA with a therapist needs to comply with the UK data protection law (e.g. data processing agreement) and appropriate legal advice sought.

Good Practice Advice

A helpful starting point for Church Bodies in implementing the requirements in this section is an exploration of the [different types of therapy](#) that victims or survivors may need. These can be provided by statutory services or specialist providers in the third sector. The priority should be arranging help promptly to meet immediate need. Church Bodies should consider suggestions by survivors or victims about therapists who can meet their needs.

Church Bodies may have existing commissioning arrangements for therapy but these may not be suitable for all victims or survivors who are eligible. In these situations, the Church Body should consider offering financial assistance to fund the identified therapy, if it cannot easily locate another provider or alternative statutory provision. This offer should be in addition to the other services summarised in Section 3 of this Guidance. (In practice, a victim or survivor has a menu of options and so, for example, they can decline the offer of a Support Person but still be eligible for funding for therapy).

DSAs and CSAs in cathedrals without a safeguarding SLA with the DBF should lead the discussions with victims and survivors about arrangements and funding for their therapeutic support and assist them to organise it (they can do this directly or through the Support Person).

Where there is an ongoing criminal investigation, an offer of funding can be made by the Church Body via the police, usually with the Officer in the Case (OIC) as an intermediary. Some victims and survivors do not want Church Officers or safeguarding professionals to know their personal or contact details and this can complicate the arrangement of funding for their therapy. In these situations, the Church Body can make an offer of funding through the OIC, stipulating that therapists should invoice the Church Body directly using minimal information that does not lead to the full identification of the victim or survivor.

After disclosure, Church Bodies' offers of financial assistance for therapeutic support for victims and survivors should be made swiftly. However, this should not be an open-ended commitment. For instance, financial assistance can be offered for initial therapy sessions (e.g. up to 15) with a later review to ascertain if more sessions are required. The combination of swift, generous support and clear, managed expectations can be extremely important at this stage.

If the survivor or victim is likely to make a formal legal complaint (either to the police or within a civil claim) regarding their abuse, any therapeutic support should follow the Crown Prosecution Services [guidance for pre-trial therapy](#). The funding of therapy does not jeopardise insurance cover and is not, at this stage, a legal admission of liability. (see the Ecclesiastical Insurance Group's [guiding principles](#) document).