

## **DATA PROTECTION & CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

### **Introduction**

Volunteers are the life-blood of this organisation and without them the charity would not exist. The charity does not wish to swamp volunteers with complicated processes and procedures but we must be mindful of the ethical and legal aspects of our work. This policy exists to protect our contacts and is relevant to any person involved in furthering the aims of PMR-GCA Scotland

While common sense should prevail, we are bound by The Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) which is an Act of Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland which defines UK law on the processing of data on identifiable living people. It is the main piece of legislation that governs the protection of personal data in the UK.

Its guiding principles are to ensure that information is:

- used fairly and lawfully.
- used for limited, specifically stated purposes.
- used in a way that is adequate, relevant and not excessive.
- accurate.
- kept for no longer than is absolutely necessary.
- handled according to people's data protection rights.
- kept safe and secure

Any personal information about our members, contacts, volunteers, other people or organisations that could be used to identify an individual, whether in hard copy or electronic form, must be kept safely and only for as long as it is needed. When it is no longer required it should be securely destroyed or erased.

### **Database and electronic files**

The charity maintains an Access Database of members and other contacts, which is stored on a password protected cloud server. The complete information can only be accessed by the Database Manager and one other. No financial information is retained on this database.

Electronic files (e.g. the contact list spreadsheet, also protected by a password, which a Helpline volunteer may use while they are duty) should not be retained longer than is needed.

Information transmitted by email is often not secure so wherever possible limit the content to essential information only.

## **Financial Information**

Any personal financial information that the charity holds will typically be limited to the value of donations and Gift Aid Declarations received by the charity and is only held by the Treasurer.

## **Collecting information**

Support Group Leaders may collect personal information from their members. It should not be shared with anyone, including the Database manager, without the individual's consent. If they invite a speaker or guest to a meeting, said guest or speaker should indicate that they are aware that any personal information which is shared must not be divulged outside of the meeting.

Telephone contacts should, in the first instance, be asked whether notes taken may be retained.

Internet contacts via email or website contact forms have sight of our abbreviated policy (see below) and, in the case of website contact, are asked to indicate whether we may retain information.

## **General**

An individual contact has the right to request sight of any information which we hold about them, so any notes (handwritten or electronic) or records kept should be limited to specifics and not the note-takers personal opinion. Any such request should be referred to the Trustees.

Any breach of this policy, intended or accidental may involve either informal or formal (e.g. police) action, depending on the seriousness of the incident.

All personnel who have or may have access to our contacts or their personal information are required to confirm in writing that they will comply with this policy. Should they wish further information or help, they are invited to speak to their Coordinator or a Trustee.

Policy dated June 2016

*Abbreviated Confidentiality Notice: Your email address, name and any other information you provide such as address and phone number are held in strict confidence. We only keep your information so that we can keep in touch with you. We do not sell or share your information with anyone else. If your personally identifiable information changes, or if you no longer wish to keep in contact, you may correct, update or deactivate it by emailing us at [info.scotland@pmrandgca.org.uk](mailto:info.scotland@pmrandgca.org.uk) We will respond to your request as quickly as possible and certainly within 30 days. We will retain your information only as long as you remain interested in this charity and at your request will delete your details from our database.*