

CRUSE BEREAVEMENT CARE

The Recruitment and Selection of Bereavement Volunteers (B22)



With appendices:

- I Volunteer application form
- II Statement of Expectations
- III Action Flowchart for Bereavement Volunteers with Client Contact
- IV Secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information
- V Recruitment of ex-offenders

1 Introduction

Cruse's key resource is its volunteers. Effective recruitment, selection and retention of volunteers are vital for the organisation's future. Cruse has changed considerably in response to the needs of bereaved people, developing a range of services. As services have become more diverse and the context in which our volunteers operate increasingly complex, volunteering opportunities and the range of skills needed have broadened.

Given the nature of the work of Cruse and the vulnerability of bereaved people it is essential to have recruitment and selection processes that effectively screen volunteers. The application process that follows sets out minimum standards to protect clients and volunteers.

2 Aims

- To provide a high quality and safe service
- To recruit a volunteer base that meets the needs of bereaved people and reflects communities served
- To ensure accessible volunteering opportunities and a fair and welcoming application process
- To ensure compliance with Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Protection Of Children and Vulnerable Adults (POCVA) procedures (applicable in Northern Ireland only)

3 Making opportunities accessible

It is vital that Cruse extends its reach and addresses barriers that may be stopping potential volunteers from approaching the organisation. Cruse is firmly committed to diversity in all areas of its work, having much to learn and profit from diverse cultures and perspectives. Recruiting a more diverse volunteer force will make our organisation more welcoming to and representative of the local community and more effective in meeting needs.

Recruiting volunteers from a diverse range of backgrounds involves creating the right recruitment materials, targeting specific groups and giving an inclusive image of volunteering. The recruitment and selection process must not put unnecessary barriers in the way of people wanting to volunteer. Each individual

should be given the opportunity to discuss their individual needs and any support they require. The Cruse *Best Practice in Recruitment* contains key principles and sets out good practice.

Anyone with relevant qualities can apply to be a Cruse volunteer. There is no age limit policy in Cruse although Bereavement Volunteers working with clients 1:1, face-to-face need to be aged 18 or over. Volunteers over the age of 75 are covered by all legally required insurance policies but are not able to receive the additional cover from personal accident policy.

4 Planning Ahead - Identifying needs/skills gaps

Areas/ Branches /Services need to identify the skills, knowledge and experience needed to meet local needs, highlighting any gaps. The development of the Area Plan is fundamental to this process. Advice is available in the Area Planning Guide.

5 Initial Recruitment

Volunteering opportunities need to be widely promoted e.g. via adverts and leaflets, the media, word of mouth, talks and in a range of local settings targeting those that are currently under-represented. Recruitment materials need to present positive images of volunteering and reflect the ethos of Cruse. Pictures need to 'speak to' the sections of the population that we are particularly keen to recruit from and accessibility needs to be addressed considering e.g. medium used and issues of type style, size and colours. Audio and visual materials should be used, wherever possible, and consideration given to the production of materials in other languages.

An initial pack to send to people interested in volunteering could contain information about:

- Cruse the organisation (Give Cruse a Hand)
- The Service Model
- Volunteer roles
- Practical information - the recruitment and selection process, time commitment, training, expenses etc.
- Application Form
- Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form
- Information about recruitment event
- Training Course Details
- Opportunity for OCNW certification

It is important that this initial pack gives people the information that they need without overwhelming them. Details should be given of whom to contact with any queries or concerns.

A recruitment session may be held for those interested in hearing more about the work of Cruse and what volunteering involves. A PowerPoint presentation, which can be amended to suit local circumstances, is available in *Best Practice in Recruitment*.

6 Selection Process

Application Form

The standard Cruse application form is attached. All those interested in volunteering should be asked to complete the application form. Application forms in large print and on audiotape can be requested from Central Office.

Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

This should be enclosed with the application form. To ensure anonymity this should be returned in a sealed separate envelope.

Selection Interviews

Prior to interview an applicant should be asked if s/he has any support needs or accessibility requirements. A selection panel needs to be appointed that is appropriate for the role being recruited to. Interviewers should have experience of recruitment and selection and commitment to and understanding of diversity. Panel members should see application forms prior to the interview. Interviews should be conducted in suitable accommodation offering accessibility, privacy and adequate waiting areas. Sufficient time should be set aside for each applicant and for reflection and discussion between interviews.

Those applying to work directly with clients will be interviewed before and after training. Those applying to a non-client contact role will be interviewed before appointment or nomination for election.

The Area or Branch Management Committee is responsible for the appointment of a selection panel consisting of volunteers with the necessary experience and knowledge of Cruse, the role in question and recruitment and selection. The selection panel should comprise at least two people.

Each selection panel should agree a standard interview format for each volunteer role beforehand. Standard questions for Bereavement Volunteers with client contact should be used and added to as appropriate. The framework for questions can be found in *Best Practice in Recruitment*. The use of standard questions and scoring forms for interviews helps to ensure fairness and can be important in the event of dispute.

The initial selection interview for all volunteers should address:

- Commitment and motivation for wanting to volunteer for Cruse
- Skills, qualities, experience relevant to the role
- Understanding of and commitment to diversity
- Appreciation of the principles of confidentiality
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Factors of health, time and availability
- Personal experience of significant loss
- Convictions and cautions
- Whether any applicant for membership of a National, Regional, Area or Branch Committee would be disqualified from acting as a trustee under the Charities Act 2006 due to being disqualified as a company director; or

an undischarged bankrupt; or have defaulted under a county court administration order

Applicants who wish to work directly with clients

In addition to the above the post-training selection interview for Bereavement Volunteers with client contact should address:

- Understanding of the main effects of grief
- Acceptance of people as individuals, recognising and accepting diversity
- The ability to establish a supportive relationship
- Skills including listening, empathy and reflecting
- Ability to cope with the pain and distress of the client
- Personal experience of bereavement and significant losses
- The ability to recognise and understand issues of risk, trauma and complex grief
- Understanding of the service model
- Factors of health, time and availability
- Ability to use supervision effectively
- Awareness of boundaries and limitations
- Convictions and cautions identified in the CRB/POCVA check

The selection panel must consider the report of the trainers and any other input from them on the suitability of individual applicants.

Issues that may lead to non-acceptance include:

- The experience of a major bereavement within the preceding two years
- A wish to promote a faith/ideology
- Lack of understanding of diversity issues
- The weight or influence of personal problems
- Lack of time or commitment
- Lack of understanding or skills
- Convictions, cautions identified in the CRB/POCVA check

If there is discrepancy between the recommendations of the trainers and those of the selection panel, further discussion will take place before reaching a final decision. After that the decision of the selection panel is final.

Records of Selection Interviews

Care should be taken by interviewers when recording during and after an interview. Opinion should be based on an assessment of the interviewee's capability in relation to the role. Records should be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the Area or Branch designated office. Where there is no office records may be kept in the home of a senior officer e.g. Chair or Administrator. Recruitment records should be destroyed six months after completion of recruitment. Disclosure information must be kept separate from the applicant's file in secure, lockable, non-portable containers with access strictly controlled.

Electronic records must be password protected to allow only appropriate access.

References

References should be sought for all applicants, whatever the role that they are applying for. References for those seeking to work directly with clients should be sought prior to training. This will assist in screening out applicants who may be unsuitable at an early stage. These references should be available for the post training interview panel. If possible one reference should be from a place of work or volunteering. Referees should not be related to the applicant. If insufficient information is provided or concerns are raised in a reference these should be discussed with the referee. The Cruse leaflet should be sent with the reference request letter. References should be read after interview.

Decision

A final decision on selection should not be made until references and CRB/POCVA checks have been received. The selection panel's decision should be communicated in writing. Cruse reserves the right to decline a volunteer and is under no obligation to give explanations though where possible this should be the normal practice. Consideration should be given as to whether another volunteer role to the one applied for may be appropriate. If requested and considered appropriate unsuccessful applicants should be given the opportunity of a meeting to discuss their non-acceptance. The selection panel should agree on what information about its decision would be helpful to the applicant, remembering that it is good practice to offer constructive feedback. The decision of the selection panel is final.

7 Training

Bereavement Volunteers with Client Contact

All volunteers and members of staff with client contact must have training in grief and loss and the provision of bereavement support. From August 31, 2008 all new client contact volunteers will be required to undertake the *Awareness in Bereavement Care* foundation training and undertake the two additional modules – *A Child's Grief* and *Sudden and Traumatic Death* within 12 months of induction. This is not a requirement for Bereavement Volunteers who do not have direct client contact.

It is expected that trainees will attend the entire course but to successfully complete it, they must attend at least 13 of the 16 sessions including the first one.

All trainees on the foundation course will be given the opportunity to seek OCNW certification for the course.

Bereavement Volunteers without Client Contact

It is good practice for Bereavement Volunteers without client contact to have an understanding of the service model and the needs of bereaved people, and to undertake at least 15 hours continuing professional development each year appropriate to the role, experience and agreed needs e.g. attendance at Regional or National conferences or shadowing.

8 CRB/POCVA Checks

Cruse requires all volunteers and staff working with clients to apply to CRB/POCVA for an enhanced disclosure. This requirement must be made clear to potential applicants at the beginning of the recruitment process. Cruse does not accept checks previously carried out for employment or volunteering in another organisation.

Should an established volunteer be the subject of new criminal charges later in his/her involvement with Cruse Bereavement Care, s/he must disclose this to the appropriate person responsible for the management of the service, whether or not the charges result in a caution or conviction.

Bereavement Volunteers with Client Contact

All volunteers/members of staff applying to Cruse to support adult clients face-to-face, individually or in groups are required to apply to the Criminal Records Bureau for an enhanced disclosure. The application must make clear that the position involves regular contact with vulnerable adults. In Northern Ireland POCVA rather than CRB checks are undertaken.

Those applying to work with children and young people are required to have an enhanced disclosure that is specific to working with children. The application needs to make clear that the position involves working with children.

It is important to seek CRB disclosures/POCVA checks as soon as possible e.g. soon after the start of training to avoid delays in those selected as Bereavement Volunteers being able to start work with clients.

When recruiting new volunteers in England and Wales, Areas and Branches should contact the CRB Lead Signatory at Central Office to request application forms. If this is done at the beginning of the selection process this will avoid delays later.

Selection must not be confirmed until after a satisfactory disclosure has been received.

Disclosure information must be kept separate to the applicant's file in secure, lockable non-portable storage containers with access strictly controlled. Disclosure information should not be kept for any longer than is absolutely necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep the disclosure for longer than six months, the CRB will be consulted. (See Cruse Bereavement Care Policy for the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders) Electronic records must be password protected to allow only appropriate access.

Recruitment of ex-offenders

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an individual from volunteering. This will depend on factors including: the nature of the position and the

circumstances and background of the offences. All such situations must be discussed with the Lead Signatory prior to recruitment.

Applicants should be made aware of the Policy for the Recruitment of Ex-Offenders; the CRB Code of Practice and the Policy on the Secure Storage, Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of Disclosures. The fact that a criminal record will not automatically exclude someone from applying should be made clear at any recruitment event and discussions prior to recruitment. Offences or other matters arising from the CRB/POCVA disclosure may be discussed at interview or in separate discussion.

All applicants should be asked about any convictions. The result of a CRB/POCVA check must only be divulged to those involved in the selection decision.

9 The Volunteering Relationship

It is very important that volunteers are not treated in such a way as to suggest a contract of employment. To avoid the possibility of creating such a contract with volunteers and adhere to national minimum wage legislation any training provided must be necessary to carry out the work of Cruse. Bereavement Volunteers must only be reimbursed for expenses they have incurred. Cruse has expectations of Bereavement Volunteers rather than required duties.

10 Induction

All volunteers joining Cruse should have an induction that addresses:

- How the organisation works
- Policies and procedures applicable to their role

Those transferring or taking on additional roles should receive an induction and or training relevant and tailored to the role being taken on and any individual needs.

Following recruitment and selection **all** volunteers should be given or have access to an induction pack containing:

- The Statement of Expectations
- Confidentiality Policy – shortened version (and advised where the full version is located). Confidentiality Policy signature sheet
- Child Protection Policy
- Vulnerable Adults Policy
- The Supervision Standard
- The Complaints Procedure
- The Health and Safety Policy
- Organogram – Roles and Responsibilities - who is who in the Area / Branch / Region / Nation / Central Office
- Contact Numbers of Supervisor(s), Management Committee
- Overview of the Organisation
- Cruse website member's password
- Hours Form
- Expenses Claim Form

Details of future training
Welsh language policy (in Wales)

These are all available in the members' section of the Cruse website.

In addition all Bereavement Volunteers with client contact will be given:

An Identification Badge
Personal Record Book.

As soon as a Bereavement Volunteer has been accepted, the Area/Branch/Service must register their details with Central Office for entry on the national database so that they are able to receive central communications and vote in elections. At this point Bereavement Volunteers go on a database and have voting rights as a member of an Area or Branch.

11 Statement of Expectations

Volunteers do not have any form of contract of employment to perform work or provide services. They offer their time and effort for free, though they may receive reimbursement of expenses.

All Bereavement Volunteers are required to sign a Statement of Expectations (Appendix 2). This sets out a shared and clear understanding of expectations about role and responsibilities by both Cruse and its volunteers. It is not a contract and is not intended to create any legal relationship including that of employer and employee. The obligations are binding in trust only. Because of the risk of inadvertently creating a contractual relationship it is essential to use the format and wording of the statement attached.

12 Review Period

All new Bereavement Volunteers and existing volunteers who have taken on a new role will have a review of progress at six months and at 12 months after their induction. At the end of the six and twelve month period (for non-elected posts) a decision about competence of the Bereavement Volunteer will be taken. This review will consider competence and suitability and training and support needs. Bereavement Volunteers not considered suitable may be asked to leave. The recommendation will be discussed and confirmed by the management committee.

13 Former clients

Volunteering for Cruse provides a way in which people who have come through bereavement may be able to help others. The involvement of former clients also contributes to a user-led approach that is vital to ensure that bereaved people are at the heart of development.

14 Bereavement

People who approach Cruse to volunteer may have experienced a recent bereavement. Consideration needs to be given to the nature of the volunteering role and the bereavement experienced in order to come to a decision about whether the timing is appropriate for a person to apply to work for Cruse.

15 Transfer or Addition of Roles

Any volunteer transferring from or wanting to add client contact to a non-client contact role should undergo the same selection process as someone applying new to Cruse i.e. with a selection interview before and after training and the taking up of references. New references need to be sought specific to the role being applied for.

Volunteers taking on a non-client contact role should be interviewed and briefed, informed in writing of the outcome and if accepted inducted into the new role. This should be formally recorded in the management committee minutes.

Transfer within the organisation

If a Bereavement Volunteer wishes to transfer to another service a transfer form should be completed. A reference should be provided by the previous Area, Branch or Service. If the Bereavement Volunteer with client contact has not had a CRB /POCVA check because of the length of time s/he has been with Cruse this should be sought at this point. If the CRB check is more than five years old a new check should be sought at the point of transfer.

It is expected that a Cruse Bereavement Volunteer in good standing will be accepted by another service provided suitable for the role and subject to a satisfactory reference and CRB check (not applicable in Northern Ireland).

16 Identification

All Bereavement Volunteers with client contact should be provided with an identification badge that includes a photo. This should be signed by the Chair/Service manager and renewed every two years. The Administrator is responsible for ensuring that volunteers return their old identification badges for destruction.

Cruse Bereavement Care
VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

IF YOU REQUIRE THIS APPLICATION FORM IN LARGE PRINT, OR ON AUDIO TAPE PLEASE CONTACT CRUSE CENTRAL OFFICE ON: 020 8939 9533

Surname	
Other Names	
Address	
Postcode	
Email Address	
Telephone Nos: Home Work Mobile Fax No:	
Do you have any specific needs e.g. accessibility	
Why are you interested in volunteering?	<p>Please tick all that apply</p> <p>I want to help others <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I have spare time and want to use it productively <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I am interested in voluntary work <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I have personal experience of bereavement <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I have personal experience of being supported by Cruse <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I have referred people to Cruse for support <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I have skills I can bring to the organisation <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Any other?</p>

<p>What skills/qualities/experience could you bring to Cruse?</p>	
<p>What areas of work are you interested in?</p>	<p>Working with clients <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Administration <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Management <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Supervision <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Training <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Income Generation <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>PR <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Any Other <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>How did you hear about volunteering with Cruse?</p>	<p>Word of mouth <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Advert <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I have been supported by Cruse <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Posters/leaflets <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Internet <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other (Please specify) <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Do you have any criminal convictions/cautions (with the exception of fixed penalty traffic offences?)</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Previous convictions will not prevent full consideration of your application to work with Cruse. All those applying to work directly with clients will be asked to apply for a CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) disclosure in England and Wales and a POCVA check in Northern Ireland. Other applicants can seek a confidential discussion.</p>

<p>Please give the names and contact details of two people who have known you for some time (not relatives) and are willing to act as referees. If possible, one should be from a place of work/organisation where you have volunteered. At least one should have had contact in the last two years.</p>	<p>1st Referee Name: Address: Postcode: Email Address: Tel Numbers: Home: Work: Mobile: How long has this person known you and in what capacity?</p> <p>2nd Referee Name: Address: Postcode: Email Address: Tel Numbers: Home: Work: Mobile: How long has this person known you and in what capacity?</p>
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Signed:

Date:

Please return this form to:

The details provided on this form will not be disclosed to any third party unless required by law.

Statement of Expectations



A shared and clear understanding of roles and responsibilities by both Cruse and its volunteers is necessary if Cruse is to provide its clients with a consistent and reliable high quality service. This document seeks to make clear those expectations. It is not a contract and is not intended to create any legal relationship including that of employer and employee. The undertakings set out below are a commitment in trust only between the Bereavement Volunteer and the organisation - Cruse Bereavement Care. The commitments set out below are expected to be adhered to as a means of protecting the client, the volunteer and the organisation.

The characteristic spirit or ethos of Cruse is communicated in all our dealings both with people who are in contact with the organisation and the volunteers and staff within it. The qualities and values that we bring to our work should be the same within the organisation as they are in our dealings with our clients. We are unlikely to give a good service if the way we work with one another within the organisation is at odds with the values that we hold to in our client work.

Similarly, the duty of confidentiality that we have to our clients is mirrored by a duty of confidentiality to our colleagues in Cruse.

There is very heavy demand for the services of Cruse Bereavement Care, and therefore the organisation strives to maximise opportunities for volunteer recruitment and training. These use valuable resources which have been raised for charitable purposes. Therefore, Cruse will expect Bereavement Volunteers, once trained, to give a commitment to service provision which reflects the investment made by the charity. This is normally expressed as a number of clients to be seen, or as an amount of time which it is hoped the Bereavement Volunteer will be able to spend on the work. Cruse will aim to be as flexible as possible, and recognises that volunteers need to fit volunteering in with their other commitments. However, Cruse will not be able to support volunteering which does not make a reasonable contribution to the organisation. Local circumstances will vary, and therefore local services that cannot accommodate a particular volunteer should make efforts to enquire whether another Area/Branch or another local service may be able to do so. This may not be possible in every case.

All Bereavement Volunteers including those in management roles are expected to:

Adhere to the policies, practice and standards of Cruse as appropriate to the prevailing context

Sign and adhere to the Cruse Confidentiality Policy

Be familiar with the Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Policies

Participate in a review of his/her volunteering after six months and twelve months

Commit to ongoing organisational and personal training and development (15 hours each year is considered good practice) appropriate to the role, experience and agreed needs

Discuss and seek to address any concerns about his/her voluntary work for Cruse

Negotiate and agree if a period of inactivity becomes necessary
Understand that unresolved concerns will be dealt with through the appropriate procedures and that Cruse has the right, using these, to end a volunteer's role with the organisation
Notify their car insurer that they are a Cruse volunteer
Complete promptly expenses claims and all relevant documentation
Give as much notice as possible of any intention to cease volunteering for Cruse and to participate in any leaving procedure
Notify Cruse of any Criminal charges

In addition

All Bereavement Volunteers working directly with clients are expected to:

Attend supervision as required by the Supervision Standard
Work normally with one client at a time up to their first review of progress. Thereafter to be prepared to take on 2 or more clients at a time in agreement with their Supervisor
Keep the designated supervisor informed of:
beginnings, endings and difficulties with clients
any changes in personal circumstances that could affect bereavement support work
Support only those clients allocated by Cruse and not offer any other support or counselling in the name of Cruse
Complete promptly records of client work
Attend two additional modules in the first twelve months after induction – A Child's Grief and Sudden and Traumatic Death
To undertake a minimum of 15 hours ongoing training and development each year. A minimum of 6 hours should be devoted to skills training

Cruse Bereavement Care is expected to:

Inform volunteers of and implement the policies, practices and standards of Cruse
Provide introductory and ongoing training and development
Provide support and supervision in accordance with Cruse policies and standards
Reimburse the costs of travelling incurred in the carrying out of voluntary work
Provide professional indemnity, employer's liability (which includes volunteers) and public liability insurance, provided always that the volunteer works within the policies and procedures as laid down by Cruse
Provide information on:
new developments within Cruse
developments in bereavement support

BEREAVEMENT VOLUNTEER

I have read and agree with the contents of this document

Signed: _____ **Name**

Date: _____

FOR CRUSE BEREAVEMENT CARE

Signed: _____ **Name:**

Position in Cruse Area/Branch/Service

Date: _____

Two copies of this form should be signed, one to be retained by the Area / Branch / Service and one by the Bereavement Volunteer

BEREAVEMENT VOLUNTEER

I have read and agree with the contents of this document

Signed: _____ **Name**

Date: _____

FOR CRUSE BEREAVEMENT CARE

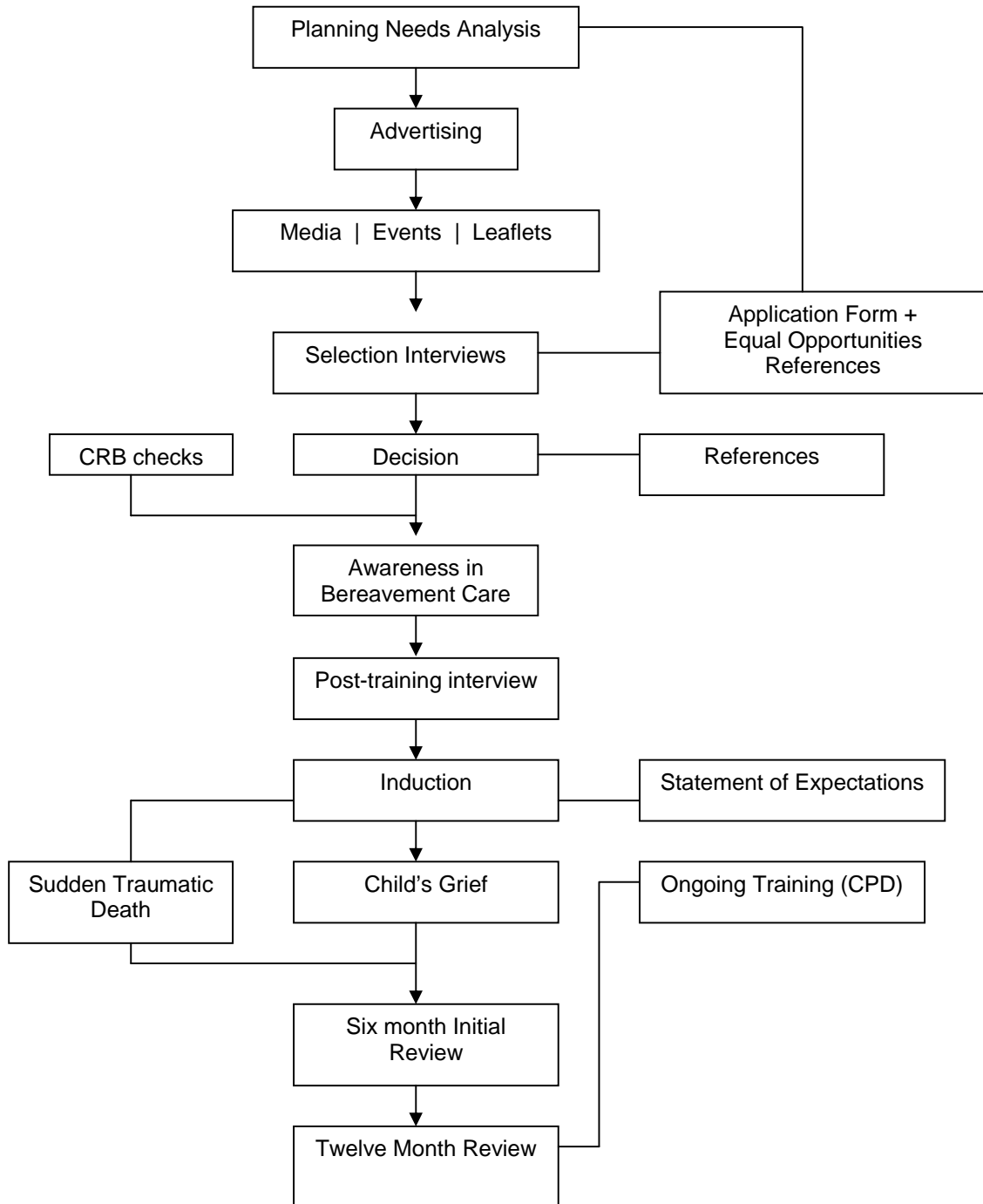
Signed: _____ **Name:**

Position in Cruse Area/Branch/Service

Date: _____

Two copies of this form should be signed, one to be retained by the Area / Branch / Service and one by the Bereavement Volunteer

Appendix : Action Flowchart Bereavement Volunteers with Client Contact



Appendix IV

Secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information

This policy may be made available on request to anyone wishing to see it.

General Principles

As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, Cruse Bereavement Care must comply fully with the CRB Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information and with its obligations under the Data Protection Act and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of Disclosure information.

Storage and Access – Guidance for those receiving disclosures

Disclosure information must never be kept on an applicant's personal file. It must always be kept separately and securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, Disclosure information must only be passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. A record must be maintained of all those to whom Disclosures or Disclosure information have been revealed. Those handling disclosure information in Cruse Bereavement Care need to be aware that it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

Usage

Disclosure information must only be used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep Disclosure Information for any longer than is absolutely necessary. This is generally for a period of up to six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep Disclosure information for longer than six months, we will consult the CRB about this and will give full consideration to individual rights under the Data Protection Act and Human Rights Act before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding safe storage and strictly controlled access will prevail.

Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any Disclosure information is immediately suitably destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, Disclosure information will not be

kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack). We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the Disclosure or any copy or representation of the contents of a Disclosure. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a Disclosure, the name of the subject, the type of Disclosure requested, the position for which the Disclosure was requested, the unique reference number of the Disclosure and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

Policy for Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

As an organisation using the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Cruse Bereavement Care must comply fully with the CRB Code of Practice and undertake to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

Cruse Bereavement Care is committed to the fair treatment of its volunteers, potential volunteers, staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.

This policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is made available to all Disclosure applicants at the outset of the recruitment process.

We actively promote equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar an applicant from volunteering/working for Cruse. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of offences. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

A Disclosure is only requested for voluntary or paid positions where it is relevant. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, all application forms, volunteer/job advertisements will contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.

Where a Disclosure is to form part of the recruitment process, we encourage all applicants called for interview to provide details of their criminal record at an early stage in the application process. We request that this information is sent under separate, confidential cover, to a designated person within Cruse Bereavement Care and we guarantee that this information is only seen by those who need to see it as part of the recruitment process.

Many positions within Cruse Bereavement Care involve working with vulnerable people. They are vulnerable because they have just been bereaved, and sometimes because of other aspects of their personal situation, such as their age.

At interview, or in separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position could lead to withdrawal of an offer of volunteering/employment.

We make every subject of a CRB Disclosure aware of the existence of the CRB Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.

We undertake to discuss any matter revealed in a Disclosure with the person seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of volunteering/employment.