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|  | TELEPHONE & ANSWER MACHINE PROTOCOL | Standard Operating Protocol | |
| | | Revision # | 2.0 |
| | | Implementation Date | 1 st August 2013 |
| Page # | 1 of 3 | Last Reviewed/Update Date | 1 st January 2011 |
| SOP Owner | REFRESH, HULL | Approval | L. Starky |

1. Purpose

The telephone is the service's primary point of contact with service users/customers (young people, families and other professionals). The way you answer the phone will form our service user's first impression of the team and the service it offers. These phone answering tips will ensure that callers know they're dealing with a winning team:

- Answer all incoming phone calls as promptly as possible.
- When you answer the phone, be warm and enthusiastic. Your voice at the end of the telephone line is sometimes the only impression of ReFRESH a caller will get.
- When answering the phone, welcome callers courteously and identify yourself and the service.
- Prompt response to emails that come into the ReFRESH inbox

2. Procedure


Standard telephone answering response:

"Good morning/afternoon, ReFRESH, (Your name) speaking?" or

"Good morning/afternoon, ReFRESH, (Your name) speaking, how may I help?"

No one should ever have to ask if they've reached ReFRESH or ask who they are talking too.

- Take telephone messages completely and accurately promoting the use of the duty system (12.30pm to 2pm daily). If appropriate, defer all potential new referrals, requests for information, enquires, consultation to duty times (being sensitive to the needs of the caller and always taking the callers details and reassuring them that the duty worker will be in touch later that day or the next day). If there's something you don't understand or can't spell, such as a person's surname, ask the caller to repeat it or spell it for you. Then make sure the message gets to the intended recipient (all telephone messages should be emailed immediately to the recipient even if they are in the office).
- If a colleague is on sick/annual leave/left the service then please inform the caller and if necessary be proactive and deal with the call ("is there anything anyone else can help

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you with?). Please complete the relevant young person's/family case notes of any relevant conversation or details of work done.


- Telephone answer machines need to be checked by admin first thing in the morning and actioned: where appropriate refer messages to duty, email messages or update the whiteboard. Please delete all messages after they have been dealt with. Messages go direct to ReFRESH inbox – please delete from inbox when actioned.
- If visits are cancelled or changed staff need to be informed immediately by text or phone by the admin worker or worker covering admin.
- Return all your calls within one business day and reinforce the favorable impression of ReFRESH that we wish to promote.
- Always ask the caller if it's all right to put her on hold when answering the phone, and don't leave people on hold. Provide callers on hold with progress reports every 30 to 45 seconds. Offer them choices if possible, such as "That line is still busy. Will you continue to hold or should I have _____ call you back?" **Also use the Secrecy button.**
- When giving out the ReFRESH telephone number please only use **01482 331059** – please ensure all your email signatures and correspondence directs your clients and colleagues to the main ReFRESH number. No personal answer machines will be used with the exception of the main office phone in the administration/reception area.
- When on duty or covering admin please make frequent checks of the ReFRESH in-box which you can view as an additional inbox in outlook. If you action an email please delete to prevent duplication. If you are not sure how to respond to an email please refer it to line manager.

Routine answer machine message: *(See Section3 Process for Instructions)*

Thank you for calling ReFRESH, unfortunately no one is available to take your call but please leave your name and number and a short message. Alternatively, you can email the team on ReFRESH@hullcc.gov.uk or please call back. Our service opening times are Monday to Friday 9am till 5pm and we have a duty worker always available on those days between 12.30 and 2pm just ask for the ReFRESH duty worker. Thank you.

Holiday message:

*Thank you for calling ReFRESH. The service is now closed for the ***** holiday. If you would like to leave a message we will return your call when the office re-opens on *****. If you are calling because you are concerned about your own or someone else's use of drugs, alcohol or volatile substances you can contact FRANK. It's a 24 hour confidential helpline which offers advice, information and support. The number to call is 0800 77 66 00. Thank you.*

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Need to Know Principle

- When a caller requests information regarding a young person refer to the worker where ever possible. If urgent and worker not available, then young person's consent to share information needs to be checked before proceeding and the caller should be verified by calling them back.

Mobile Phones

- If there is a request from another agency, client, relative for a workers mobile phone number and if not sure, relay message to worker first.
- If mobile phones are to be used with young people and families then this should be for office hours only (and this needs to be communicated very clearly to a young person/family when they are given a worker's mobile number) and the use of personal mobile phones should never occur.
- When communicating with a young person or parent by text, a summary of the communication needs to be recorded on case notes.

3. *Process*

To set up extensions to gain access to voice mail you need to do the following:

#0# 3492 – divert when busy to cancel ##0#
 #0* 3492 – Ring no reply diversion to cancel ##0*
 #9 3492 to divert when going out the office to cancel ##9

To manually collect the voicemail please ring 3492 followed by # enter your extension number then you pin (default pin 1234) then options are given to re-record message.

All voicemail message alerts are set to the ReFRESH Inbox

Process for transferring calls

**3 when picking up a call to come to your own phone

'Recall' followed by extension number to transfer too.