

Support hub - welfare rights advice service

Privacy information and terms of service

The Royal Free Charity support hub was set up in 2018 to provide information and support to Royal Free London patients and carers affected by long-term health conditions.

One of the services we offer is welfare rights advice and assistance. Our advisers support an array of things including benefit applications, appeals, and housing advice.

This service is funded thanks to the generosity of Royal Free Charity donors, so there is no cost to you, the service user. If you have any questions, please email elizabeth.fowler@royalfreecharity.org.

Privacy information

The below information lets you know about how we handle your personal information. If you have any questions about this, wish to make a request to see your information, exercise any of your other data protection rights, or have a complaint please contact the support hub lead, Liz Fowler: elizabeth.fowler@royalfreecharity.org.

Please find the Royal Free Charity privacy notice here where you can read more about your data protection rights: <https://royalfreecharity.org/privacy-policy/>.

Where is my information kept?

We record and hold your information in your client file in our secure client case management database.

Do you need my consent?

We need your personal information to understand your situation. We use it to help with your enquiry or case. We are an advice service and will be working on your behalf, so we need this information to be able to support you. We will ask for your consent when opening your enquiry or case. If we have ongoing casework, we will ask you to sign a consent form to agree we can store your information. You can withdraw consent at any time.

Who can see my personal information?

Your information can only be accessed and used by the support hub team (including welfare rights advisers, support hub lead and coordinator). We will ask for your agreement before we contact any third parties; we will ask you to provide your consent via the initial consent form. We

will also give feedback to the medical professional at Royal Free London who initially referred to you about the outcome of our support with you. Again, you can withdraw consent at any time.

Will my personal information always remain confidential?

We protect your confidentiality. However, we can share your personal information in the following circumstances:

- When there is a legal requirement – because of a law or a court order.
- Where there is an overriding public interest (e.g. to prevent serious crime or serious harm to self or another person)
- To prevent abuse to you or another person or people (e.g. physical, sexual, psychological, financial)

How long will you keep my personal information?

The RFC Support hub retains your personal information for the advice industry standard of 6 years. If you'd like your information removed before this, please get in touch.

What if I want more detail?

Full details can be found on the Royal Free Charity privacy policy:

<https://royalfreecharity.org/privacy-policy/>. The information below outlines our terms of service. If you have any queries please talk to your welfare rights adviser, or you can contact the welfare rights supervisor: suki.jandu@royalfreecharity.org or the support hub lead: elizabeth.fowler@royalfreecharity.org

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Your adviser

An experienced welfare rights adviser will contact you to discuss your situation. They will assess the level of assistance you need, provide general advice, and follow up in writing. In some cases, we may act on your behalf. If we do this, your adviser will manage your case and keep you informed.

We kindly ask that you keep us updated and respond to our correspondence to help progress your case. If we do not hear from you for a month, we may assume you no longer require our assistance and close your case. It can be re-opened if appropriate if you get back in touch. The welfare rights supervisor will oversee the casework.

Zero tolerance of abuse

The Royal Free Charity will not tolerate abuse or violence directed at staff or volunteers. Our staff and volunteers are dedicated to delivering for clients and have the right to work free from fear of assault or abuse in a safe and secure environment.

This includes inappropriate or aggressive words or behaviour, including:

- discrimination e.g. racism, sexism or homophobia
- abusive or intimidating language
- swearing
- violence or threatening violence
- sexual harassment

We reserve the right to withdraw our service because of abuse, violence, inappropriate words or behaviour.

Feedback and complaints

We are always keen to learn and improve our service. If you have any feedback or suggestions for the service, please email: suki.jandu@royalfreecharity.org and/ or elizabeth.fowler@royalfreecharity.org

As we are a charity service, it is important that we show the impact of the support we give, (i.e. how it might have made a difference to people), so that we can show why the support hub is important to fund as a service, as well as for us to learn how we can improve. Additionally, a Royal Free Charity volunteer may be in touch with you after our support to gather feedback.

In the unlikely event that you are dissatisfied with the quality of the service, please contact your welfare rights adviser in the first instance. If you remain dissatisfied, please email the welfare rights supervisor, Suki Jandu: suki.jandu@royalfreecharity.org

You can find the full Royal Free Charity complaints policy online:
<https://royalfreecharity.org/complaints-policy>

Please keep this information for future reference.

Ends