**Deliverance Ministry:**

**Guidance for Clergy and Others Making Referrals**

Deliverance ministry is a specialist ministry which may be needed alongside the routine pastoral care offered through a parish priest or chaplain. Parish clergy are trained and equipped to offer initial pastoral care to an enquirer, including prayers for peace and protection, house blessings, and prayer for comfort and healing. Appropriate liturgical resources can be found in the *Common Worship* library. Such ministry should be undertaken sensibly and safely, within the guidance set out in the House of Bishops’ Policy Statement on Safeguarding and associated documents, and the Diocese of Chester Lone Working policy.

Sometimes it will be apparent that the specialist advice of the Deliverance Ministry Team (DMT) is required. In these instances, their advice must always be sought before any deliverance ministry is offered or carried out. **If you attempt this ministry without prior consultation and advice you will not be insured and may be liable for any harm caused, including psychological harm**. **It is the expectation of the Diocesan Bishop that clergy will always consult with the DMT prior to engaging in this ministry.**

Deliverance Ministry Advisers (DMAs) are appointed by the Diocesan Bishop and work as part of a team which includes advisers on medical and safeguarding matters. They are all trained to respond to requests, enquiries and assistance as necessary.

**The team are there to advise the clergy and other church officers and their names and contact details must not be shared more widely.**

In all cases, the following good practice guidance should be followed:

**Initial enquiry**

* First contact is often by phone. Listen carefully, treat the situation calmly, and make some short notes.
* Before ending the call, advise the caller that you have made some brief notes, gain their verbal consent for you to pass these to the Deliverance Team, and explain that someone will be in touch.
* These notes will need to be transferred to the Deliverance Ministry Referral Form, which is available on the diocesan website.
* Even if you are feeling confident about dealing with the case, contact the DMT before going further, by emailing the referral form to deliverance@chester.anglican.org. This will ensure that you minister safely and with guidance and the appropriate insurance cover. It also means that we can log patterns of activity and advise on steps you may need to take.
* You may need to take safeguarding advice. If the case involves children under the age of 18, or vulnerable adults, then you must contact the Diocesan Safeguarding Team (DST) before you go further, emailing safeguarding@chester.anglican.org and copying in deliverance@chester.anglican.org

**Initial visit (after seeking DMT advice)**

* There must be no under 18s present when you visit.
* **Always** visit with another person. Consider the gender of the person affected and whether this might influence who you have with you when you respond.
* Focus at first on what is good and right, rather than on what might be wrong, seeking to strengthen what is good.
* Be supportive and empathetic. Listen actively.
* Avoid any sudden actions which may aggravate the situation.
* Consider the obvious: electrical and plumbing problems, creaking of an old house, trees brushing against the windows etc.
* Consider the possibility of medical causes and seek advice based on your observations.
* Do not collude with people’s interpretation of events either by what you say or in the use of prayer. Listen without judgment.
* On meeting the client, it is useful to find out:
	+ who has experienced precisely what and when.
	+ who first experienced it.
	+ any recent crises, worries, mental health concerns.
	+ any recent bereavements or past bereavements.
	+ any children or vulnerable adults
	+ any medical treatment or current medical concerns.
	+ drug and alcohol issues.
	+ possible natural explanations.
	+ any contacts with the occult.
* With their permission, and drawing their attention to the privacy notice, take brief notes, using the referral form.
* If a safeguarding disclosure is made, or if your visit raises safeguarding concerns, follow the “4 Rs” process (Recognise, Respond, Record, Refer) and inform the person that you are concerned for their wellbeing and will need to take advice. Draw the visit to an appropriate close before sending the details of the disclosure to safeguarding@chester.anglican.org and awaiting further advice.
* Never undertake a ministry you are not comfortable with, and always act under the guidance of the DMT.
* If you feel that deliverance ministry is required, draw the visit to an appropriate close and seek further advice from the DMT.
* Only those appointed/authorised to do so (IE, the DMT) should engage in deliverance ministry.
* **Know that exorcism is rare and needs to be authorised by the Diocesan Bishop in writing.**
* A return visit may be necessary, accompanied by a DMA.
* Keep the first visit simple: offer general prayers, a copy of the Lord’s Prayer, a palm cross, a copy of one of the Gospels.

**Follow up**

* **Take notes securely** and after the visit use Part Two of the *Deliverance Ministry Referral Form*, which should be returned to the DMA who is working with you, or to deliverance@chester.anglican.org. These notes will be held in a confidential space. They can be accessed by the Deliverance Team Leader and the Director of Ministry. Details will always be shared with the DST if there is a safeguarding concern.
* Contact the person needing support two weeks after the visit to see how things are and report back to the DMA.
* Be prepared to offer ongoing pastoral support within the context of the ministry of your parish or context.

**Things to remember**

* **Always** be aware of our responsibility those who are children, young people and vulnerable adults. If children or vulnerable adults are found to be involved then contact the DST by email: safeguarding@chester.anglican.org There are clear statutory safeguarding procedures that the DST can advise on.
* This ministry is discreet and avoids publicity. Should there be any specific concerns regarding this, please contact the Director of Communications, Harriet Roberts: harriet.roberts@chester.anglican.org