

BRIDGING THE GAP ISLINGTON

Termination Policy

1. Introduction

Bridging the Gap Islington expects mentoring partnerships to end in a planned manner at the end of an agreed period. However it realises that some mentoring partnerships will end early or in an unplanned way

Factors that are most likely to cause early or unplanned termination of mentoring partnerships :

- If Mentee/ Mentor had conflict or reported that they did not engage well with each other
- If Mentee/Mentor had external factors that conflicted with being able to take part in mentoring
- If either mentee or mentor, either with or without explanation, fails to maintain contact with Bridging the Gap Islington or with each other.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, and service users of Bridging the Gap Islington

3. Termination at the end of the agreed period.

A mentoring relationship is a relationship with goals and boundaries. The agreed length of the relationship is an important boundary. The mentor has agreed to help for a limited length of time and their personal circumstances may make it difficult to continue longer. The mentoring relationship should help the service user to form friendships but it should not become a substitute for meeting new people.

Guidelines for planned termination

- Most mentoring relationships arranged by Bridging the Gap Islington will have an intended length of 16 meetings over 16 weeks. With the agreement of all concerned, there can be some flexibility about this length but it will not usually be extended by more than 4 weeks.
- Ending any relationship can be difficult and stressful. It is also an opportunity to understand and overcome feelings about any sort of change. The last 3 or 4 meetings should include a discussion of the end of mentoring and, if necessary, the period of mentoring may be extended (by up to 4 weeks) to allow this to take place.
- If the mentor and service user wish to continue a friendship after the end of mentoring, they should leave a gap of at least 6 weeks after the end of mentoring before meeting as friends, so there is a clear break and a new start. The mentor should return the mobile phone that they have used for mentoring to Bridging the Gap Islington and should not give their personal contact details to the service user until 6 weeks after the end of mentoring. They should not contact the service user at all unless the service user has indicated that they wish to keep in contact.

- If a service user wishes to have a second mentoring relationship, Bridging the Gap Islington may agree to suggest another mentor. But service users are unlikely to be offered a third mentoring relationship.

4. Unplanned terminations

Unplanned Terminations of mentoring partnerships may be the result of a variety of situations. In any case, termination of the mentoring partnership might help to provide closure and opportunities for learning.

Guidelines for unplanned or early terminations

- If the service user does not maintain contact with the mentor, for a period of over two weeks, then the mentor should inform the supervisor, who will contact the referrer to seek further information and consider whether it is possible to resume mentoring.
- If the mentor does not maintain contact with the supervisor, then the supervisor will attempt to make contact by means of phone, email and text for a period of up to 4 weeks
- If it becomes clear that contact with mentor or service user has been lost for over 4 weeks, then the co-ordinator will send a letter to both of them, stating that the mentoring partnership is considered to have ended. The person who has maintained contact will be reassured and offered another mentoring partnership if possible. The person who has lost contact will be encouraged to make contact again when convenient.
- If mentor and mentee raise concerns about each other, supervisor might try to give advice /constructive criticism to each before suggesting termination. However if problems persist, supervisor will verbally clarify the reasons for termination with both the mentee and mentor, and agree that it is probably the best solution.
- The supervisor might like to facilitate a conversation between the mentee and mentor to discuss what worked and didn't work in their relationship and to identify ways to handle future situations more effectively. However if neither are willing to meet, it might be suitable for the supervisor to discuss with the referrer.
- Both parties should be encouraged to share their feelings about ending their relationship. Mentors who are terminating because of time limitations or other reasons not related to the mentee need to make particularly clear to the mentee that s/he did not do anything to make the mentor leave.
- If the match ended due to factors other than relationship conflict the supervisor/referrer should reassure the mentee/mentor that they were not to blame and help him or her process any feelings about the termination of that relationship.
- It might be that mentee/mentor would like to be reassigned with a different person. Where a mentoring partnership has been terminated, the referrer will be informed and will be invited to make comments and suggestions to ensure more successful partnerships in the future.

5. Documentation

Termination of partnership should be recorded. Reasons for the termination are also good to document for evaluation purposes and the improvement of services.

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APS Key area 4