

Misuse of Service Policy

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Guidance

Defining Policy, Process and Procedure

	Definition	Purpose
Policy	An overall approach or principle of action in relation to a specific issue	Describes why this document is required
Process	Provides a high-level view of how the policy is implemented	Outlines what tasks should be performed, when, and by whom
Procedure	Detailed step-by-step instructions on how to do parts of that process or specific tasks	Details how the steps of each task need to be performed

Purpose

This policy outlines how to handle situations when Nightline is not the most appropriate service for the caller. This policy ensures that Nightline maintains a high standard of performance and consistency across calls and instant messaging.

Scope

This policy applies to all listening volunteers and members of the committee.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Repeat Caller	A caller that contacts the service a significant amount, quantified in this policy as more than 3 times a week, over a four week time period.
Dependent Caller	A dependent caller, in this policy, is referring to a caller who calls the service with the same or greater frequency of a repeat caller. In addition, volunteers who take these calls judge that the service Nightline provides is not sufficient or beneficial for the caller.

Roles and Responsibilities

Committee member	Responsibilities
Listening volunteer	The volunteer is responsible for following the policies put in place to ensure a consistent approach to all callers.
Internal Coordinator	The Coordinator is responsible for creating repeat caller guidance when they are made aware that a caller is starting to become a 'repeat', and contacting the service frequently. As well as this, the Internal Coordinator is responsible for making decisions about a caller's dependency on the service.
Head of Welfare	The Head of Welfare is responsible for informing the coordinator when a caller is becoming a repeated caller, when they are checking the logs for welfare calls. They are also responsible for checking in with volunteers following their shifts.

Legal considerations

There are no legal requirements for this policy.

Reviews and amendments

[List any changes to this policy that need to be recorded for historical purposes.]

Process

Nightline is committed to providing a listening service to all students. However, particular instances will require Nightline to consider if they are the correct service for the caller.

These include:

- Callers repeatedly contacting the service
- Sexually Explicit calls - see inappropriate calls policy
- Non-student callers

- Child callers - see call taking policy

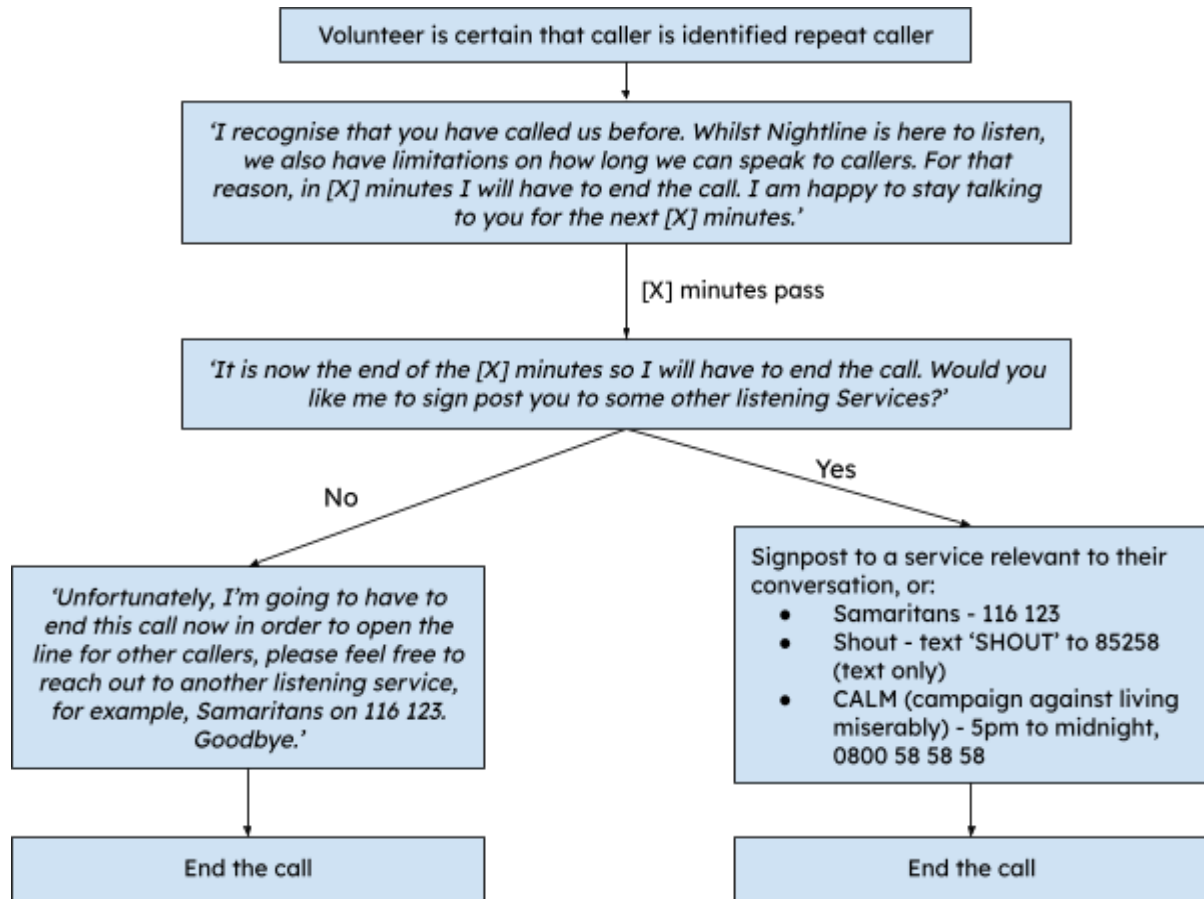
Repeat Callers

Nightline acknowledges that with a service that is open overnight, with less demand than other services, there may be callers who repeatedly contact the service. Although Nightline welcomes callers to call on multiple occasions, we appreciate that there may be individuals who then become dependent on the service, and begin calling at the same or greater frequency of a repeat caller. In addition, volunteers who take these calls may judge that the service Nightline provides is not sufficient or beneficial for the caller.

Each individual case will be handled separately, however, if Nightline feels a caller is becoming reliant on the service, a decision will be made by the committee about if a caller should be allowed to continue using a service with the same frequency, or at all. There are multiple approaches to this situation, these are listed below:

Repeat Caller

If Nightline makes the decision that a caller may continue calling, they may decide to limit the amount of time the caller is allowed to use the service for per night. This allows other callers to access the phone lines.



However, Nightline recognises that repeat callers may be hesitant to talk about the more heavy topics and may need some time to chat generally. Therefore, if certain topics are brought up, volunteers must not end the call.

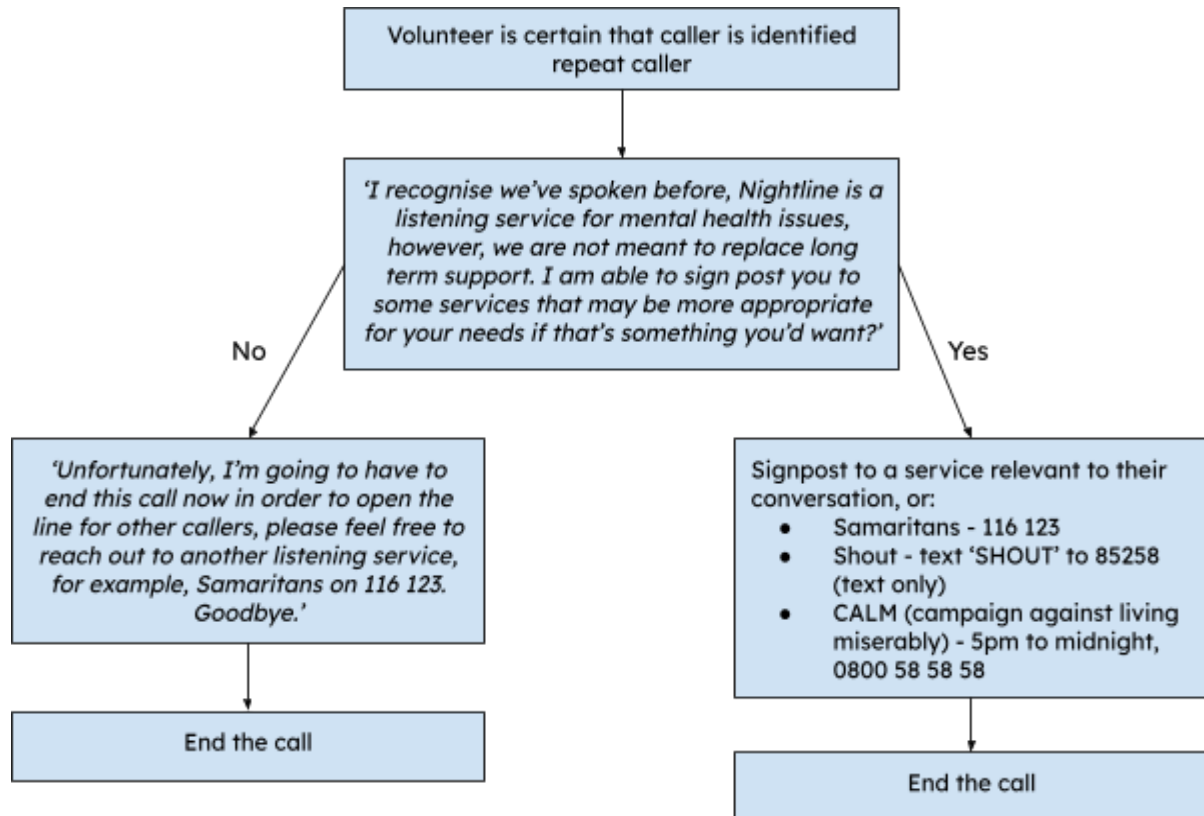
These are:

- Suicide calls

If a caller begins to mention suicide/suicidal ideation/suicidal phrases, volunteers must not end the call, but operate the suicide policy and stay on the call until the caller makes the choice to end the call.

Dependent Caller

If a decision is made that a caller is becoming dependent on the service or Nightline is not the appropriate service for the caller, volunteers must signpost the caller to another service.



Non-student Callers

Nightline recognises that at times, individuals who are not students may call as we are a listening service with less demand. However, Nightline is not set up for non-student callers, and therefore, if a volunteer is made aware that a caller is not a student, they must refer them elsewhere.

