

The Ruth Strauss Foundation Family Support Service

Confidentiality policy and privacy information

Please note: our telephone support line will only start in September 2021

Background and purpose

In early 2018 Ruth Strauss, wife of former England cricket captain Sir Andrew Strauss, was diagnosed with an incurable lung cancer that affects non-smokers. Ruth died in December 2018; she was 46 years old and mother to two children, then aged 10 and 13.

In her memory, Sir Andrew launched the Ruth Strauss Foundation, with its mission to help families access professional emotional support when facing the death of a parent. The Ruth Strauss Foundation Family Support Service offers information, support, and guidance to family's where a child is facing parental bereavement. It does this through:

- Pre-bereavement Guidance Assistant and Practitioner through web contact and telephone support line
- Information and resources through the RSF website

The Family Support Service is free and confidential. You can contact us at any time via our web contact form. Our telephone support line is open Monday and Friday, please see Ruth Strauss Foundation website for opening hours. Anyone who is a parent or primary care giver to a child who is facing parental bereavement from any condition can contact the service.

The purpose of this document is to:

- demonstrate clear procedures and expectations for the Family Support Service in relation to confidentiality, and,
- provide privacy information.

Role of the telephone support line

Each year within the UK, 41,000ⁱ children under the age of 18 face parental death. This equates to a parent dying every 22 minutes, leaving dependent children. The role of the Family Support Service through its telephone support line is to offer a space that allows families to prepare for grief, death and dying. Through providing guidance to parents on how to start the difficult conversation with their children about their terminal diagnosis. By encouraging families to maintain an open and honest dialogue with their children, children will be able to live and enjoy the time that is left with the dying parent, without internalising questions, fears or worries. Creating meaningful moments together, for as long as possible, will prove vital for those that live on after the parent's death.

Confidentiality statement

The telephone and web contact are confidential between you and the Ruth Strauss Foundation Family Support Service staff. Appointments with the Pre-bereavement Guidance Practitioners are confidential between you and the Practitioner. Content and details of the conversation will not be shared even with the Ruth Strauss Foundation Family Support Service.

How the service works and what information we collect

You provide only basic personal information so we can deal with your enquiry and provide the right support, which may include booking you an appointment with a Pre-bereavement Guidance Practitioner. We ask that you do not provide us with any details of any health conditions or medical information.

Phone calls

If you call us when we are not able to respond immediately, you will be able to leave a voicemail which we will reply to within 48 working hours to your preferred email or telephone number. We will attempt to call you back twice, and we will only leave a message on your phone, if you expressly gave us consent in your message to do so.

Once we have recorded your basic details on our system, we delete the voicemail message.

Web contact form

You can also contact us through our web form. If you, do you will get an automated reply which will include this policy and privacy information.

Once we have recorded your basic details on our system, we delete the web contact form records from our system every month.

We keep the information on our system for 7 years from the first contact.

Appointments with a Practitioner

We may book you an appointment with the Pre-bereavement Guidance Practitioners. These are not our employees; they are self-employed and will explain to you how they handle and store your personal information.

The Ruth Strauss Foundation Family Support Service will only share with them the following information:

- Name of person they are meeting
- Whether they are the person who is unwell or not
- Whether the appointment will be via phone or video conferencing
- Either your phone number, or link to video conferencing
- Time and date of the appointment
- Number of children and age range as per these fields 0-2, 3-5, 6-10, 11-14, 15-18 years old
- If specific support has been requested by you
- What information / resource / signposting has already been offered.

No personal information provided will be passed onto anyone else without your express permission except in circumstances to comply with the law. Examples of this might include anyone reporting potential serious self-harm, if it was felt a child may be at risk or anyone expressing the intention of harming someone else. In which case we will contact your local GP services as appropriate (if we have the level of information available). We will also offer you a call back.

The Practitioners will only share anonymous metrics with us, this will include things like appointment length, whether this was a first appointment or a follow up, what terminal health condition the caller has, themes / topics covered during the appointment and impact of the call. We use this anonymous information to assess how effective or not the service is and to help us improve it.

Your privacy rights

You can request a copy of any information we hold about you. If you want a copy of information the Pre-bereavement Guidance Practitioner holds about you, you will need to contact them separately. We will respond to requests within **one month**. You can make this request by emailing us at support@ruthstraussfoundation.com.

You also have other rights, such as to correct inaccurate information, request data deletion, object to us holding your information, or to restrict what we do with your information. Not all the rights apply to all information in all circumstances. To make any rights request, please contact us.

You can also complain directly to the Information Commissioner's Office, the regulator for data protection law, see www.ico.org.uk

Complaints

If there is anything to do with the Ruth Strauss Foundation about which you feel you need to complain, please tell us as soon as possible. If we do not know about a problem, we cannot begin to resolve it for you and take action to ensure it does not happen again.

As we are a remote and flexible team, often the easiest way for you to register a complaint, and for us to resolve it, is by email. If you would like to discuss by phone, please send us an email and we will call you back to hear the details from you as a priority.

You can email us at info@ruthstraussfoundation.com or write to us at:

The Ruth Strauss Foundation

For Attention of Chief Executive Officer

c/o ECB Offices

Lord's Cricket Ground London

NW8 8QZ

ⁱ Childhood Bereavement Network. Key Statistics, 2015. <http://www.childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk/research/key-statistics.aspx>

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