



## **Referral Policy**

This policy outlines the referral criteria and procedure for Individuals & Families to receive help from The Cowshed.

- We primarily accept referrals from recognised professionals on behalf of individuals and families
- 'Professional' refers to local authority appointed: Social Workers, Probation Officers, Housing Officers, Health Visitors and Childcare Workers and other such government professionals who work with those in need.
- We also accept referrals from other professional bodies that have interactions with individuals and families in need such as;
  - The NHS
  - Citizens Advice
  - Church Officials (All Faiths)
  - Educational Establishments
  - Registered Charities
- In the case of referrals from other charities once it has been accepted The Cowshed will treat referred clients as their own and will coordinate needs, additional information and delivery directly with the client. If it is a secondary referral i.e. not originating directly with the Charity then the original referring agency should be signposted to complete a referral directly to the Cowshed.
- Determination of need
  - Professionals must use their judgement to determine the level of need;
  - in exceptional circumstances, The Cowshed may contact the client directly or send a volunteer to assess the need.
- As our provision is for crisis support we will
  - Only accept referrals for the same individual once in a 6 month period unless there are exceptional circumstances
  - typically try to provide 7 days worth of clothing and other relevant essential items
- We will not accept referrals directly from an individual or family, in these cases they will need to get a recognised 'professional' to endorse their referral. The Cowshed will endeavour to signpost them to a suitable organisation to assess their need and submit a referral on their behalf

## **Referral Procedure**

In order to make a referral to the Cowshed the recognised professional needs to fill out the relevant referral form on the website, or email [referrals@thecowshed.org](mailto:referrals@thecowshed.org) and request a referral form.

The online form contains all of the details required in order for the referral to be actioned and so it is essential that all fields are completed. A separate form should be submitted for each individual being referred. Once the form is entered on the website it is automatically sent to the referral centre in Hurst.

After a referral form is received it will be reviewed by a member of our referral team who may then contact either the referrer or the client if any additional information is required. When all the information is received we will then make up the referral, we will endeavour to provide all items requested where possible but on occasion there may be some items unavailable due to stock and levels of demand.



If a referral is missing some items we will liaise directly with the client to see if they wish for delivery of the partial referral or to wait for the additional items to come in to stock. In the case of a partial delivery The Cowshed will automatically log a new referral for the missing items which will be delivered once they come in to stock.

Once a referral is completed we will contact the client in order to arrange delivery or collection.

We also offer a service where individuals who have been referred can come to the Referral Centre and select items they require directly. (N.B. This service is currently suspended due to COVID 19 safe working regulations)

We endeavour to fulfil all referrals within 5 working days, often this can be quicker though. If the referral is urgent or an emergency we will do our best to fulfil the request as quickly as possible and subject to stock can usually respond within 24 hours or less.

