

The York Deliverance Advisors group has drawn up this set of guidelines and principles to enable all clergy to minister appropriately and safely in this area. It replaces the previous guidelines published in 2002.

The names of the Advisors are available in the York Diocesan Handbook, and the Chair of the group is the Bishop of Hull.

**General Background:**

We begin with three quotes about this ministry, which we feel sum up three of the most important principles when considering this subject:

*"There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight."*  
CS Lewis: The Screwtape Letters

Christian deliverance is one aspect of Christian healing. Christian healing has been defined as.... *'the whole work of Christ, in a person's body, mind and spirit, designed to bring that person to that wholeness which is God's will for us all.'*

Bishop Morris Maddocks, *Twenty Questions about Healing*, SPCK 1981, p. 7

*'Nowadays the term 'deliverance ministry' is often used in preference to the word 'exorcism', for whilst exorcism is a perfectly good New Testament word, it implies a rite to deliver someone from demonic possession. Such a rite is rarely appropriate even though a person may feel under some evil influence. The term 'deliverance ministry' is much wider and includes counselling, confession, anointing and Holy Communion as means of ministering to those who seek freedom from evil, whether the source of that evil is from within themselves or from some external influence'*

Bishop Dominic Walker, *The Ministry of Deliverance*, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1997, p.2

**Deliverance Ministry in the Anglican Context**

In the Anglican context deliverance is regarded as a specialist ministry. For that reason, every Diocese has a group of trained Advisors chaired by a Bishop whose role it is to support and advise in these matters. Individual members of this group are available for consultation. Please note that the Diocesan Advisors are not there to take over from your pastoral role, and you will be expected to remain involved throughout. It is anticipated that you will provide follow up and continued pastoral support as required.

We would like to draw your attention to the Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy Chapter 5: Ministry in times of Deepest Need and in particular we quote below sections 5.3-5.5)

5.3 The clergy should be aware of and respect the boundaries between the ministry of healing and the deliverance ministry. People have a right to know what is being

provided and how they will be ministered to: no one should be ministered to against their will.

5.4 Deliverance is an area of ministry where particular caution needs to be exercised, especially when ministering to someone who is in a disturbed state. The current House of Bishops' guidelines on the deliverance ministry which are known as The House of Bishops' Guidelines for Good Practice in the Deliverance Ministry 1975 (revised 2012) should be followed and cases referred to the diocesan advisers for the deliverance ministry when necessary. The advisers' special expertise should be used in order to help as effectively as possible those who think they need this ministry.

5.5 The ministry of exorcism and deliverance may only be exercised by priests who have been specifically and personally authorized by the bishop, normally for each instance of such a ministry. If this ministry is sought in connection with a child or vulnerable adults, the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser must be involved and may need to ensure that a referral to the statutory authorities is made, in accordance with national and diocesan safeguarding policies.

**Safeguarding:**

Where children are involved, the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor must be informed before you take action. PAGC pp36-37

In the light of these guidelines and current safeguarding practice, the Diocesan Deliverance Advisory Group makes the following suggestions for good practice:

**Overarching Principles to observe when Deliverance Ministry may be required**

You will need:

- To make your own spiritual welfare the highest priority – do not 'go it alone'. If you know in advance that there may be the possibility of deliverance ministry, do ask a trusted colleague to pray for you whilst you visit, and consider taking a colleague with you. It may be appropriate to take a colleague of the opposite gender with you, depending on the pastoral context.
- To know your own presuppositions and limitations
- Good listening skills
- Ability to consult others.
- Be aware of boundaries of confidentiality and safeguarding issues. Always ensure that people know that you may have to consult with an advisor at the outset.

**To note:**

- Deliverance Ministry is not regarded by EIG as a general parish activity.

**Guidelines on receiving a request for help:**

- Pray before you visit, for the person and situation

- Listen, and take a careful and full history  
(it can help to take factual notes as an aide-memoire using only initials of any people concerned or involved. Be aware of data protection and confidentiality issues. Such cases are often complicated and confusing, and even brief written notes can help.)  
In particular try to find out:

What?           What exactly do people say has been happening?  
What evidence is there for this?

When?           When did the phenomena first start?  
Do the time and date have any significance?  
What seems to have triggered off the phenomena?

Where?           Where did the phenomena occur?  
Is there any evidence history of previous disturbances on the same site?  
Did the previous occupants experience the same trouble?

Who?           Who are the witnesses and do they seem reliable?  
Does the evidence seem to agree?  
*(If there is only one witness their testimony may well be accurate, but be wary.)*

- Be aware of any contextual and cultural issues and 'local superstitions' (for example phrases such as: 'everyone knows that house is haunted')
- Note any medical history and use of medication.
- Who else is in the house, and their ages – have other people had the same experiences?
- Reassure the person that you are taking what they have told you seriously, and that you will consult with an advisor and get in touch again at a date and time that is mutually agreed.
- Finally: offer prayers, and if appropriate give a copy of the leaflet 'prayers to use at home', or similar.

### **What happens next:**

You as the minister will remain the primary contact with the client(s), with back up and support from the advisor. This may be by telephone conversation, or by accompanying you on a visit or subsequent visits. They will not take over your pastoral responsibilities as parish priest or chaplain.

After the issue has been resolved, you are encouraged to keep in contact with the client(s)

### **Golden Rules:**

1. Listen carefully, but do not collude or jump to conclusions
2. Seek help, advice and supervision

3. Bring love and reassurance
4. Always look for a natural or psychological explanation
5. Proclaim the victory of Christ
6. Overcome evil with good, and avoid any hint of 'Christian magic'
7. Avoid too narrow a view of evil – remember the real evils in society and the battle for peace and justice
8. Do not sensationalise deliverance ministry

(adapted from Dominic Walker – the Ministry of Deliverance 1997 London DLT)

**And finally:**

This ministry involves pastorally sensitive matters. It is not appropriate for the media to be involved.

**Resources:**

The Ministry of Deliverance Dominic Walker DLT 1997 (now out of print)

Deliverance Michael Perry (ed) SPCK 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 1996 copyright the Deliverance Study Group

A time to Heal – Report for the House of Bishops on the Healing Ministry CHP 2000.  
Copyright the Archbishops Council

The House of Bishops' Guidelines for Good Practice in the Deliverance Ministry 1975  
(revised 2012)

Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy CHP 2015, especially Section 5:  
Ministry at times of deepest Need

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