

# Witness Service

*Carolyn Hodrien, Victim Services Director*

## Independent National Charity

- Free, practical and emotional support to witnesses and victims of crime
- Extensive network of offices in communities across the UK
- **Witness Service in every criminal court in England and Wales to support witnesses with the process of giving evidence**



Services provided

Young Witness service

Court Martial Service

General Medical Council Service

## Young Witness Service



We supported 12,963 young witnesses in  
the last year

## What does the Young Witness Service do?

- One to one sessions taking away the mystery of court
- Pre trial visits
- Support on the day for family and friends

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COPING WITH THE EFFECTS OF  
CRIME TOGETHER

Covering your tracks

You & Co is Victim Support's youth programme that helps young people cope with the impact and effects of crime. You do not have to report the crime to the police to get support from us.

HIDE THIS SITE



Welcome to the interactive courtroom. There are lots of pieces of information in this courtroom to help you understand what happens when you are a witness at court.

Most of the images you see can be clicked to find out further information, give it a try. If you have any questions that are not answered in the interactive courtroom, check these out with your witness supporter or a trusted adult.



Outside court

Waiting room

Courtrooms

Live link room

Aft





## My bag

There are some things that would be helpful to bring with you to court, especially as you may need to wait before being able to give your evidence.

### Things you can bring:

- ✓ Something to keep you occupied e.g. toys, games, books, iPod, mobile phone (make sure this is something that won't disturb others)
- ✓ Medicine from a doctor (if you need it)
- ✓ Snacks, drinks or money for both (ask your witness supporter if this is allowed or if there is a café at court)
- ✓ Jumper or cardigan in case it gets cold

### Things you can't bring:

- ✗ Sharp items
- ✗ Anything that could be used to hurt anyone else
- ✗ Cameras or video recorders

## Chloe's Story



find the strength



# General Medical Council - Witness Service

## GMC - Mapping the needs of witnesses

- Feelings of isolation during preparation of a case for hearing
- Need for someone to speak to
- Feeling intimidated waiting to give evidence on the day
- Lack of information about the hearing outcome

## About the service

- Victim Support provides free, independent, confidential support on behalf of the GMC
- Emotional support available for complainants and witnesses throughout fitness to practise case
- Gender specific volunteers on request
- Referral System

## Who it is for?

- Any** witness or complainant who feels in need of emotional support

## It is not used for:

- The person who the allegation is against (refer BMA)
- Expert witnesses

## How we can help

- *Emotional Support*
- *Information*
- *Practical Help*
- *Pre-Hearing Visits*

## The Process of Referral

Referrals come directly from witnesses/complainants or from medical practitioners via GMC Connect

Witnesses are contacted within five working days

Service explained and local/on-the-day support offered

GMC advised that witness is being supported

## Pre Hearing Visits

Arrangements can be made to meet particularly vulnerable witnesses for a pre-hearing visit

In some instances volunteers can be assigned early and the witness may meet their supporter in advance

## Impartiality

Victim Support offers an impartial service to witnesses wanting emotional support during fitness to practise investigation and adjudication stages.

### **The Witness Service does not:**

- Offer legal or medical advice
- Discuss details of the case with the witness
- Coach witnesses on how best to present their evidence

## Benefits

- Witnesses feel supported and more confident
- Greater witness satisfaction
- GMC can become more aware of support needs
- Time for GMC staff to concentrate on preparing the case
- Comfort for legal staff to know the witness will be there!



## Any questions

Carolyn Hodrien  
Victim Services Director

Numbers: 07866559244

Email: [Carolyn.hodrien@victimsupport.org.uk](mailto:Carolyn.hodrien@victimsupport.org.uk)

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