

## **Summary of Advantages of Moving towards Call Sharing**

1. **A single contact number on which to call a Christian helpline.**
2. **Increased opening hours for callers to contact a Christian Helpline with potential to make this 24/7.**
3. **Maximizing effective use of our people resources.** All the lines are dependent on volunteers and as such at peak holiday times and on other occasions are stretched in maintaining advertised opening times.
4. **Increased capacity** to benefit local people from the areas in which the Helplines taking part operate as several lines will be available to take calls at the same time.
5. **Open the opportunity to groups elsewhere in the country to be trained** and involved in the ministry of a national Christian Helpline and to receive the necessary support to do so.
6. **Give a guaranteed quality of service delivery from working to a set of common core values.**
7. **Provide quality statistics** on the use of the service both in and out of hours so that the service can be improved. It also provides some statistics on individual listeners – for example length they are on the phone to each caller. This means each organisation that is part of the Call Share can get feedback for just their part of the service. Statistics like this could be necessary and/or useful for funding applications.
8. **Enable us to link together with Prayer Lines directly to receive callers** who ring them and need more specialist listening or counselling. UCB is interested in being able to do that with its Prayer Line such that the caller does not have to re dial.

Crossline in Coventry has been operating the system since February 1<sup>st</sup> 2007. To date because of being a recommended customer through UCB we have not paid anything for the very simple system we have. We have had only very minor problems with the system and usually as a result of human error and not the system.

The system allows any geographic phone number in the UK to be added so that people can work from home or an office base without having to use costly divert systems like BT Smart Divert and where the helpline has to pay for the calls. This means in practice since February Crossline in Coventry has not only saved the Smart Divert rental costs each quarter but also over £100 every quarter. If we had been or were being charged for the system then it would already of paid for itself more than twice over.

### **To re-emphasize there are no call charges per minute to pay.**

The only costs are maintaining a line rental cost with BT and the small number of outward calls made on your own lines. Should costs ever start to be incurred then these will be shared out fairly between those involved. I do not envisage that happening at all in the short term.

### **From December 1<sup>st</sup> Crossline Coventry, Martha & Mary Crisis Line and Crossline Hull will be part of the Call Share.**

John Pither, Chair of CHA (14<sup>th</sup> November 2007)