



Welcome to your regular **Almoner's Briefing** produced by the Masonic Charitable Foundation (MCF). Maintaining support and contact with Lodge Members and their families is at the heart of the role of Almoner so we hope this Briefing will assist you and keep you abreast of relevant information.

- ❖ **State benefits** – as Almoner you are likely to come into contact with individuals who are claiming state support and you may want to understand more about what is available and who is eligible. There are a number of organisations which provide information on different types of benefits and who may be eligible:
 - **Turn2us** helps people in financial need gain access to welfare benefits, charitable grants and other financial help – online, by phone and face to face through its partner organisations.
 - Anyone can check if they are missing out on state support using the 'Turn2us' online benefits calculator – www.turn2us.org.uk
 - The MCF has produced a **free** guide on state benefits which can be viewed by clicking the following – [Guide to State Benefits](#)
- ❖ **Support** - your Provincial Grand Almoner (PGA) is always a good point of contact and you can speak to him to request assistance for a Brother or family member. This may include commissioning a visit from a trained Visiting Volunteer to help complete an application to the MCF for additional support.
- ❖ **Pastoral Care** – our Almoner Factsheets have been created for you and provide specific information relating to 'life events'. Since our last **Almoner's Briefing** we have published factsheets covering the topics of debt, trauma & PTSD. To view these **free** resources and our 'Almoner Tale' video series please visit our Almoner Resources page – www.mcf.org.uk/almoner
- ❖ **Skills** – dip back into your Almoner's Guide for information on essential skills and qualities needed for your important role. We believe that building a rapport with somebody is key for establishing relationships and will encourage a person to open up and share information with you. Read more about establishing rapport in our **free** Almoner's Guide on the MCF website - www.mcf.org.uk/almoners-guide
- ❖ **Data Protection** – following the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in May 2018, the MCF has produced a **free** training resource for Almoners. The short interactive online session has been designed to provide you with hints and tips to help you comply with the new legislation. Find the session under the 'training' section of our Almoner Resources page - www.mcf.org.uk/almoner
- ❖ **Information to share** – you are encouraged to read the following information out at your next Lodge meeting as part of your Almoner's Report or circulate to members of your Lodge. We will provide you with something suitable to share within each **Almoner's Briefing**. Read on for more information...

Did you know that the Masonic Charitable Foundation may be able to assist those who are facing a personal crisis?

The MCF may be able to provide long term support to assist with everyday living expenses, and may also be able to offer one-off emergency grants to deal with an immediate crisis. These grants can cover costs such as rental/mortgage, utility, or council tax arrears, deposits for accommodation and rent in advance. Emergency grants can be processed quickly, sometimes even on the same day, so that the situation does not spiral out of control.

If you believe somebody is facing a personal crisis, speak to me, the Provincial Grand Almoner or the MCF's Enquiries Team on 0800 035 60 90 (calls are free) or email help@mcf.org.uk

We hope you have found our **Almoner's Briefing** useful. To provide any feedback please email masonicsupport@mcf.org.uk

Be the first to receive the latest news about the wider work of the MCF (and get a free MCF lapel pin!) by signing up to receive our regular e-newsletter at www.mcf.org.uk/sign-up. The e-newsletter contains further information, resources and stories about the MCF which may be of additional interest to you as Almoner.

Disclaimer: this information does not constitute legal advice and, while care has been taken to ensure that the information is accurate, up to date and useful, the MCF will not accept any legal liability in relation to the content

