

Racing's Support Line – Racing Welfare's multi-channel digital and telephone helpline to launch on Monday 18th January

Friday 15 January, 2016

On Monday 18th January, Racing Welfare will be unveiling a new and important extension to its current services. **Racing's Support Line** will provide new ways for people to receive support from the charity as well as continuing to offer the 24 hour telephone helpline that has been in operation since 2009.

"Funding from The Racing Foundation has made the development of Racing's Support Line possible. Both organisations recognize that extending the charity's service delivery through a digital platform will allow its services to reach more people; particularly those who are living and working in rural areas away from the main racing centres."

The Digital Support Services will empower people by giving them access to the information they need, at precisely the moment they need it. Many people find it easier to disclose difficult material online rather than in a face-to-face situation or on the telephone and the ability to start a sensitive enquiry in a low-pressure online environment will engage many more people with the charity's services. With more than 54% of adults now owning a smartphone and a further 30% of adults regularly using a tablet, the Digital Support Services will be fully accessible via these devices.

The features of **Racing's Support Line** include:

- A 'Getting Support' area on the website which contains extensive and detailed information and advice in relation to accidents and injuries; money advice; illness and disabilities; family and relationships; addiction and recovery; retirement; housing and retraining.
- An 'Ask a Question' feature which allows users to seek personalised advice and coaching through a web form.
- A 'Live Chat' feature which lets people communicate directly in real-time with an advisor.
- Online financial grant and housing application forms - meaning that users no longer have to make a special journey to a Racing Welfare office to complete these documents.
- An optional user account feature which allows people to track the status of any questions they have asked or of applications that they have made.
- The continuation of Racing Welfare's 24 hour telephone helpline – which is fully integrated with the digital services. Additionally, the charity's highly trained helpline operators can now undertake benefits checks through Turn2Us.

Racing Welfare's Welfare Officers will continue to provide their expert service from the regional offices in Newmarket, Lambourn, Malton, Middleham and Epsom along with a roving Welfare Officer based in the Midlands; however, the digital platform will allow them to have more time to dedicate to those most in need of specialist help.

Dawn Goodfellow, Chief Executive, said: "*The launch of Racing's Support Line will help Racing Welfare get closer to its vision that no-one from the thoroughbred racing and breeding community is left unsupported. We are committed to developing our services to match the needs of the people we support. The availability of online advice and support is going to help us reach many more people throughout 2016 and beyond.*"

The Digital Support Services can be accessed at www.racingwelfare.co.uk from 18th January. The 24 hour helpline will continue to be available on 0800 6300 443.

ENDS.....

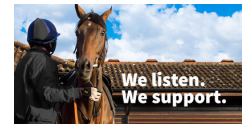
Press contact

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Notes to Editors

Racing Welfare is a UK-wide charity whose headquarters are in Newmarket. It serves the needs of racing personnel from the beginning of their careers through to retirement. The wide range of help provided

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includes provision of affordable housing, mentoring schemes for young workers, advice for those coping with illness and disabilities; through to specialist counselling and support at times of need or personal crisis.

Launch events are being held to demonstrate Racing's Support Line on the following dates:

18th January – Newmarket, The Racing Centre
26th January – Lambourn, Queen's Arms, East Garston
3rd February – Epsom, Epsom Racecourse
16th February – Malton, Jack Berry House
17th February – Middleham, The Key Centre

Please contact if you are interested in attending any of these dates.

Equine Productions have produced a 1m:30 video for the launch of Racing's Support Line. It will be launched on Monday morning - please contact if you would like a copy of the file for promotional purposes.

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