



NEW DIRECTION SUPPORT

PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Name: New Direction Support

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Policy Statement

This organisation believes that staff need to observe professional boundaries in their relationships with people with learning disabilities and their relatives, friends, visitors and representatives, and that behaviour outside those boundaries should be regarded as abusive and a reason for disciplinary action. We recognise that it is often difficult to draw precise lines defining appropriate behaviour, so we encourage staff to be transparent in their dealings with individuals with learning disabilities and others, and to discuss with managers any ambiguities that arise. The starting point is that the needs of people with learning disabilities should be at the centre of our care practice; any relationship that might jeopardise that objective must be questioned.

The Policy

The aim of this policy is to lay down the principles and values underlying our approach to professional boundaries in relationships with individuals with learning disabilities and their relatives, friends, visitors and representatives.

The Parties Involved:

Staff

This policy applies to all staff of the organisation, including temporary staff and volunteers, not merely those who have regular contact with a person with learning disabilities in a care-giving capacity.

5 key points:

- Staff in learning disability services work with vulnerable people and the risk of professional boundary violations is relatively high.
- Boundary violations may range from accepting gifts from people or families to inappropriate touching or sexual behaviour.
- Care workers providing direct personal care need to be aware of professional boundaries.
- This organisation learning disability service has introduced training and reflection for care workers on professional boundaries **(amend as appropriate)**.
- Consideration of warning signs and use of case scenarios can help staff to reflect on their own relationships with service users.

People with Learning Disabilities / Individuals with Learning Disabilities

These terms are used in this policy to include anyone who has received or is currently receiving our support and/or care services.

People Associated with People with Learning Disabilities / Individuals with Learning Disabilities

This policy includes relationships with people directly associated with any individual with learning disabilities in a personal capacity, i.e. their relatives, friends, visitors and representatives.

Professional Boundaries

Professional relationships must be distinguished from personal relationships. Although we believe that staff can, quite properly, gain satisfaction from developing and sustaining relationships with individuals with learning disabilities, the key consideration should always be the needs of the individual, as opposed to the personal or mutual satisfactions that characterise personal relationships. Staff must therefore on occasions refrain from allowing a relationship to develop to the extent that they would find personally satisfying or to include a dimension that they would

find personally satisfying in order to ensure that the needs of the individual remain paramount. Any member of staff who feels that a relationship is developing that might be judged as inappropriate should discuss the situation with their manager. The action to be taken may include varying the staff member's duties in order to limit contact with that person; discussing the situation frankly with the person in order to re-establish appropriate boundaries; or, in extreme circumstances, controlling an individual's contacts with the organisation.

This includes relationships between staff members regardless of their job title. Inappropriate behaviour from any member of staff should be discussed in an open and honest manner with the home manager.

If the inappropriate behaviour involves the manager, then it should be discussed with a senior member of staff.

It is important to recognise that any purported abuse of power leads ultimately to inappropriate behaviours becoming acceptable and therefore it is the responsibility of all staff where they have concerns to flag up such concerns as early as possible.

Professional Codes of Practice

All staff should be familiar with and comply with the Code of Conduct for Healthcare Support Workers and Adult Social Care Workers in England, copies of which are supplied to all staff.

Nursing and other professional staff should, in addition, comply with the standards of conduct and practice set by their own regulatory bodies. Breaches of any of these codes by staff will be reported, and the organisation will cooperate with any action taken by a regulatory body.

Action Outside the Work Situation

Although we do not, in general, seek to regulate the private behaviour of staff, we recognise that occasionally an individual's behaviour outside of work may call into question their suitability to work in social care services. Action will be taken if this suitability is challenged. It is the responsibility of all staff therefore to behave, both at work or otherwise, in ways that uphold their own credibility and the organisation's reputation.

Related Policies

Code of Conduct for Workers

Monitoring and Accountability

Recruitment and Selection

Relatives, Friends and Carers

Social Media and Networking

Related Guidance

Skills for Care <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Leadership-management/managing-people/code-of-conduct/Code-of-Conduct.aspx>

Skills for care Code of Conduct <http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Standards-legislation/Code-of-Conduct/Code-of-Conduct.aspx>

Training Statement

All staff, during induction are made aware of the organisations policies and procedures, all of which are used for training updates. All policies and procedures are reviewed and amended where necessary and staff are made aware of any changes. Observations are undertaken to check skills and competencies. Various methods of training are used including one to one, on-line, workbook, group meetings, individual supervisions and external courses are sourced as required.

This policy will be reviewed by the Registered Manager.

Signed:

Date: 3rd August 2026

Review Date: 9th March 2029