
SOCIAL CARE STAFF – CODE OF CONDUCT

Purpose

The purpose of this code is for the Moonstone Care UK to set down the conduct expected of its social care workers and to inform service users and the public of the standards of conduct they can expect from social care workers. Social care workers are responsible for ensuring that their conduct does not fall below the standards set out in this code and that they safeguard the well being of service users.

Social Care Workers must to the best of their ability:

- Safeguard and promote the interests of service users and carers
- Strive to maintain the trust and confidence of service users and carers
- Respect the independence of service users and protect them as far as possible from danger or harm
- Balance the rights of service users and carers with the interests of society
- Take responsibility for their practice and learning
- Justify public trust and confidence in social care services

As a Social Care Worker you must safeguard and promote the interests of service users and carers. This includes:

- Supporting people's rights to control their lives and make choices about the services they receive
- Listening to, respecting and, where appropriate, promoting the views and wishes of service users and carers
- Valuing and treating each person as an individual
- Respecting and maintaining the dignity and privacy of service users and carers, ensuring the service users' rights to make choices

As a Social Care Worker you must strive to maintain the trust and confidence of service users and carers. This includes:

- Being honest and trustworthy
- Communicating in an open, accurate and straightforward way
- Being reliable and dependable
- Honouring as far as possible work commitments, agreements and arrangements
- Declaring conflicts of interest and striving to ensure that they do not influence your judgement or practice
- Not discriminate against service users on the ground of their race, nationality,

language, religion or beliefs, sex or sexual orientation nor on the grounds of their social standing, or between those who finance their own care and those that do not. You should take in account the customs, values, spiritual beliefs of all those for whom you care and treat them with respect

- Preserving a professional approach to your work in addition to creating a close relationship with your service user

As a Social Care Worker you must respect the independence of service users and protect them, as far as possible, from danger or harm. This includes:

- Challenging dangerous, abusive, discriminatory or exploitative behaviour and using established processes and procedures to report it
- Taking complaints seriously and responding to them or passing them to the appropriate person
- Respecting confidential information and gaining permission from those it concerns to share it for specific reasons e.g. consultation with managers or other members of the care team. Disclosures of confidential information without consent should only be made where they can be justified in the public interest (usually where disclosure is essential to protect the service user or someone else from risk of death or serious harm) or, where disclosure is required by law or order of a court
- Recognising the potential for power imbalances in working relationships with service users and carers and using authority in a responsible manner
- Not taking children, family, friends, pets or any unauthorised persons with you to any assignments
- Following practice and procedures designed to keep you and other people safe from violent and abusive behaviour at work

As a Social Care Worker you must, to the best of your ability, balance the rights of service users and carers with the interests of society. This includes:

- Taking necessary steps to avoid service users from doing actual or potential harm to themselves or other people
- Balancing the rights of service users whose behaviour represents a risk to themselves or other people with the paramount interest of public safety
- Being an important link between the service user and Moonstone Care UK whereby you report back to the Company on a regular basis any changes in the physical or social condition of the service user or any marked changes in their behaviour, which may require a reassessment to provide the care to meet the service user changing needs

As a Social Care Worker you must take responsibility, whenever possible, for your practice and learning. This includes:

- Working openly and co-operatively with colleagues and other professionals, recognising their role and expertise and treating them with respect
- Adhering to legal requirements and relevant standards of practice, and promoting and maintaining good practice
- Being free from the influence of alcohol and drugs (other than proper use of proprietary or prescribed medicines) while at work
- Informing your employer or the appropriate authority about any physical, mental, emotional or legal difficulties that might affect your ability to do your job competently and safely
- Undertaking learning, training and development, wherever possible, to continually improve your knowledge and skills and ensure that you work in a lawful, safe and effective manner
- Working within Moonstone Care UK policies and procedures at all times and in accordance with the standards laid down by the industry regulators, the Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- Being responsible for the quality of your work and contributing to the learning and development of others
- Informing your employer or the appropriate authority if you do not feel competent to carry out any aspect of your work and seeking necessary supervision and training
- Dealing, as far as is reasonable, with the concerns of colleagues about their ability to carry out work you have delegated to them

As a Social Care Worker you must justify public trust and confidence in social care services. You must not:

- Abuse, neglect or harm service users or carers
- Exploit service users, carers or colleagues sexually, physically, emotionally, financially or in any other way
- Abuse the trust of service users and carers or the access you have to their property, home or workplace
- Discriminate unlawfully against service users, carers or colleagues for any reason or condone any such discrimination on their part
- Put yourself or other people at unnecessary risk
- Under any circumstances agree to be signatory to a service users' will or accept personal gifts from service users or their carers, or gifts or payments from any service providers that would, or might appear to, place you under an obligation
- Behave in a manner that might damage the reputation of social care or social work, or reduce the trust and confidence of the public. Dishonest, indecent, violent or abusive behaviour even if not directly connected to your work practice, may call into

question your suitability to work in social care services

All those working for Moonstone Care UK must:

1. Protect the rights and promote the interests of service users and carers.
2. Strive to establish and maintain the trust and confidence of service users and carers.
3. Promote the independence of service users while protecting them as far as possible from danger or harm.
4. Respect the rights of service users while seeking to ensure that their behaviour does not harm themselves or other people.
5. Uphold public trust and confidence in social care services.
6. Be accountable for their practice and take responsibility for maintaining and improving their knowledge and skills.

Appendix 1

The standards of conduct, performance and ethics

The standards that follow are those which replaced the GSCC Code of Conduct and which we expect our employees to follow (in so far as they are relevant to their roles) as amended from time to time by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

1. You must act in the best interests of service users.

You are personally responsible for making sure that you promote and protect the best interests of your service users. You must respect and take account of these factors when providing care or a service, and must not abuse the relationship you have with a service user. You must not allow your views about a service user's sex, age, colour, race, disability, sexuality, social or economic status, lifestyle, culture, religion or beliefs to affect the way you deal with them or the professional advice you give. You must treat service users with respect and dignity. If you are providing care, you must work in partnership with your service users and involve them in their care as appropriate.

You must not do anything, or allow someone else to do anything, that you have good reason to believe will put the health, safety or wellbeing of a service user in danger. This includes both your own actions and those of other people. You should take appropriate action to protect the rights of children and vulnerable adults if you believe they are at risk, including following national and local policies.

You are responsible for your professional conduct, any care or advice you provide, and any failure to act. You are responsible for the appropriateness of your decision to delegate a task. You must be able to justify your decisions if asked to.

You must protect service users if you believe that any situation puts them in danger. This includes the conduct, performance or health of a colleague. The safety of service users must come before any personal or professional loyalties at all times. As soon as you become aware of a situation that puts a service user in danger, you should discuss the matter with a senior colleague or another appropriate person.

2. You must respect the confidentiality of service users.

You must treat information about service users as confidential and use it only for the purposes they have provided it for. You must not knowingly release any personal or confidential information to anyone who is not entitled to it, and you should check that people who ask for information are entitled to it.

You must only use information about a service user:

- to continue to care for that person; or
- for purposes where that person has given you permission to use the information or the law allows you to do so.

You must also keep to the conditions of any relevant data-protection laws and always follow best practice for handling confidential information. Best practice is likely to change over time, and you must stay up to date.

3. You must keep high standards of personal conduct.

You must keep high standards of personal conduct, as well as professional conduct. You should be aware that poor conduct outside of your professional life may still affect someone's confidence in you and your profession.

4 You must provide (to us and any other relevant regulators) any important information about your conduct and competence.

You must tell us (and any other relevant regulators) if you have important information about your conduct or competence, or about other registrants and health and care professionals you work with.

In particular, you must let us know straight away if you are:

- convicted of a criminal offence, receive a conditional discharge for an offence, or if you accept a police caution;
- disciplined by any organisation responsible for regulating or licensing a health or social care profession; or
- suspended or placed under a practice restriction by an employer or similar organisation because of concerns about your conduct or competence.

You should cooperate with any investigation or formal inquiry into your professional conduct, the conduct of others, or the care or services provided to a service user, where appropriate. If anyone asks for relevant information in connection with your conduct or competence, and they are entitled to it, you should provide the information.

We can take action against you if you are convicted of a criminal offence or have accepted a police caution. We will always consider each case individually to decide whether we need to take any action to protect the public.

However, we will consider rejecting an application for registration, or removing you from the Register if you are already registered, if you are convicted of a criminal offence or accept a police caution that involves one of the following types of behaviour.

- Violence
- Abuse
- Sexual misconduct
- Supplying drugs illegally
- Child pornography
- Offences involving dishonesty
- Offences for which you received a prison sentence

This is not a full list.

We will always look at any convictions or cautions we find out about, and we have arrangements in place to be told about convictions and cautions involving registrants.

5 You must keep your professional knowledge and skills up to date.

You must make sure that your knowledge, skills and performance are of a good quality, up to date, and relevant to your scope of practice.

You must be capable of meeting the standards of proficiency that apply to your scope of practice. We recognise that your scope of practice may change over time.

We acknowledge that our registrants work in a range of different settings, including direct practice, management, education or research. You need to make sure that whatever your area of practice, you are capable of practising safely and effectively.

Our standards for continuing professional development link your learning and development to your continued registration. You also need to meet these standards.

6 You must act within the limits of your knowledge, skills and experience and, if necessary, refer the matter to another practitioner.

You must keep within your scope of practice. This means that you should only practise in the areas in which you have appropriate education, training and experience. We recognise that your scope of practice may change over time.

When accepting a service user, you have a duty of care. This includes the duty to refer them to others for care or services if it becomes clear that the task is beyond your own scope of

practice. If you refer a service user to another practitioner, you must make sure that the referral is appropriate and that, so far as possible, the service user understands why you are making the referral.

In some circumstances, a person is entitled to be referred to another practitioner for a second opinion. In these cases, you must accept the request and make the referral as soon as you can.

If you accept a referral from another practitioner, you must make sure that you fully understand the request. You should only provide the care or services if you believe that this is appropriate. If this is not the case, you must discuss the referral with the practitioner who made the referral and, as appropriate, the service user, before you provide any care or services.

7 You must communicate properly and effectively with service users and other practitioners.

You must take all reasonable steps to make sure that you can communicate properly and effectively with service users. You must communicate appropriately, cooperate, and share your knowledge and expertise with other practitioners, for the benefit of service users.

8 You must effectively supervise tasks you have asked other people to carry out.

People who receive care or services from you are entitled to assume that you have the appropriate knowledge and skills to provide them safely and effectively. Whenever you give tasks to another person to carry out on your behalf, you must be sure that they have the knowledge, skills and experience to carry out the tasks safely and effectively. You must not ask them to do work which is outside their scope of practice.

You must always continue to give appropriate supervision to whoever you ask to carry out a task. You will still be responsible for the appropriateness of the decision to delegate. If someone tells you that they are unwilling to carry out a task because they do not think they are capable of doing so safely or effectively, you must not force them to carry out the task anyway. If their refusal raises a disciplinary or training issue, you must deal with that separately, but you should not put the safety or wellbeing of the service user in danger.

9 You must get informed consent to provide care or services (so far as possible).

You must explain to service users the care or services you are planning to provide, any risks involved and any other possible options. You must make sure that you get their informed consent to any treatment you do carry out. You must make a record of the person's decisions and pass this on to others involved in their care. In some situations, such as emergencies or where a person lacks decision-making capacity, it may not be possible for you to explain what you propose, get consent or pass on information. However, you should still try to do all of these things as far as you can.

A person who is capable of giving their consent has the right to refuse to receive care or services. You must respect this right. You must also make sure that they are fully aware of the risks of refusing care or services, particularly if you think that there is a significant or immediate risk to their life.

You must keep to your employers' procedures on consent and be aware of any guidance issued by the appropriate authority in the country you practise in.

10 You must keep accurate records.

Making and keeping records is an essential part of providing care or services and you must keep records for everyone you treat or for whom you provide care or services. You must complete all records promptly. If you are using paper-based records, they must be clearly written and easy to read, and you should write, sign and date all entries.

You have a duty to make sure, as far as possible, that records completed by students under your supervision are clearly written, accurate and appropriate.

Whenever you review records, you should update them and include a record of any arrangements you have made for the continuing care of the service user.

You must protect information in records from being lost, damaged, accessed by someone without appropriate authority, or tampered with. If you update a record, you must not delete information that was previously there, or make that information difficult to read. Instead, you must mark it in some way (for example, by drawing a line through the old information).

11 You must deal fairly and safely with the risks of infection.

You must not refuse to treat someone just because they have an infection. Also, you must keep to the rules of confidentiality when dealing with people who have infections. For some infections, such as sexually transmitted infections, these rules may be more restrictive than the rules of confidentiality for people in other circumstances.

You must take appropriate precautions to protect your service users and yourself from infection. In particular, you should protect your service users from infecting one another. You must take precautions against the risk that you will infect someone else. This is especially important if you suspect or know that you have an infection that could harm other people. If you believe or know that you may have this kind of infection, you must get medical advice and act on it. This may include the need for you to stop practising altogether, or to change your practice in some way in the best interests of protecting your service users.

12 You must limit your work or stop practising if your performance or judgement is affected by your health.

You have a duty to take action if your physical or mental health could be harming your fitness to practise. You should get advice from a consultant in occupational health or another suitably qualified medical practitioner and act on it. This advice should consider whether, and in what ways, you should change your practice, including stopping practising if this is necessary.

13 You must behave with honesty and integrity and make sure that your behaviour does not damage the public's confidence in you or your profession.

You must justify the trust that other people place in you by acting with honesty and integrity at all times. You must not get involved in any behaviour or activity which is likely to damage the public's confidence in you or your profession.

14 You must make sure that any advertising you do is accurate.

Any advertising you do in relation to your professional activities must be accurate.

Advertisements must not be misleading, false, unfair or exaggerated. In particular, you should not claim your personal skills, equipment or facilities are better than anyone else's, unless you can prove this is true.

If you are involved in advertising or promoting any product or service, you must make sure that you use your knowledge, skills and experience in an accurate and responsible way. You must not make or support unjustifiable statements relating to particular products. Any potential financial reward should not play a part in the advice or recommendations of products and services you give.