

Code of Conduct for HPSS Managers

Department of Health Social Services & Public Safety

2003

Introduction

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety believes that a commitment to ethical management and continuous professional development will ensure a high quality of management in the Health and Personal Social Services (HPSS). This Code of Conduct has been designed to be applied to all those designated as managers who are working in the HPSS. It states that managers will be expected to work with integrity, honesty and openness, probity, accountability and respect. Managers will be expected to take advantage of the opportunities open to them to progress their continuing professional development.

HPSS managers are already subject to the Nolan principles on Conduct in Public Life, to corporate governance codes of conduct and other standards of business conduct. Many HPSS managers will also be members of professional bodies that have their own code of conduct, this code should be observed in this wider context.

Code of Conduct for HPSS Managers

As a HPSS manager, I will observe the following principles:

- Make the care and safety of service users my first concern and act to protect them from risk.
- Respect the public, service users, relatives, carers, HPSS staff and partners in other agencies.
- Be honest and act with probity and integrity.
- Accept responsibility for my own work and for the management of the performance of the people I manage.
- Show my commitment to working as a team by working constructively with all my colleagues in the HPSS and in the wider community.
- Take responsibility for my own learning and development.

1. I will make the care and safety of service users my first concern and act to protect them from harm, injury or loss. This means in particular that I will:

- respect and protect service user's confidentiality where possible;
- use the resources available to me in an effective, efficient and timely manner having proper regard to the best interests of the public and service users;
- bring to attention any practices or occurrences that may, or may have compromised the safety and care of service users;

- be guided by the interests of service users while ensuring a safe working environment;
- act to protect service users from harm, injury or loss by identifying and reducing risk by putting into practice the appropriate support, supervisory and disciplinary procedures for staff;
- ensure that service users are involved in and informed about their own care, ensure that their experience is valued, and they are involved in decisions; and
- seek to ensure that anyone with a concern is taken seriously and treated fairly in accordance with the relevant procedures.

2. I will respect and treat with dignity and fairness the public, service users, relatives, carers, HPSS staff and partners in other agencies. As a manager I will play my part in making sure that no one is unlawfully discriminated against because of their religion, political opinion, beliefs, race, colour, gender, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, age, social and economic status or whether or not they have dependants. I will also play my part to ensure that:

- the public are treated with respect, are taken seriously, are properly informed and given the opportunity to influence services;
- relatives and carers are, with the informed consent of service users, involved in the care of service users and their experience is valued;
- policies on equality, diversity and human rights are promoted at all times;
- partners in other agencies are valued for their contribution to improving health and social services and have their ideas and ambitions taken seriously; and

➤ HPSS staff are:

- valued as individuals, colleagues and are treated with dignity and respect;
- appropriately informed about the management of the HPSS;
- given appropriate opportunities to take part in decision-making;
- entitled to have their ideas and realistic ambitions taken seriously;
- given all reasonable protection from harassment and bullying;
- provided with a safe working environment;
- helped to maintain and improve their knowledge and skills and developed to achieve their potential; and
- helped to achieve a reasonable balance between their working and personal lives.

3. I will be honest and I will act with integrity and probity. I will ensure that:

- I act in an unbiased manner at all times;
- the best interests of the public and service users are upheld in decision-making and that decisions are not influenced by gifts or inducements;
- I understand and act on my responsibility to protect HPSS resources from fraud and corruption and that any incident of this kind is reported to the appropriate authority;

- information about my own performance or the performance of my organisation is presented accurately, consistently and correctly irrespective of the circumstances or consequences;
 - judgements about colleagues (including appraisals and references) are consistent, fair and unbiased and include all information which affects a colleague's performance, eligibility and conduct; and
 - I contribute to the creation of an open and learning organisation where concerns about individuals perceived to be breaking the Code of Conduct can be raised without fear.
4. I will accept responsibility for my own work and the proper management of the performance of the people I manage. I will seek to ensure that those I manage accept that they are responsible for their actions to:
- the public and their representatives by explaining and justifying the use of resources and performance;
 - service users, relatives and carers by answering questions and complaints in an open honest and well researched way and in a manner which provides a full explanation of what has happened, and of what will be done to deal with any poor performance, making sure that patients are safe and improvements to service delivery will be made, and where appropriate giving an apology; and
 - HPSS staff and partners in other agencies by explaining and justifying decisions on the use of resources and responding in an open way to suggestions for improving performance, the use of resources and service delivery.
5. I will support the Accountable Officer of my organisation in his or her responsibility to answer to Parliament/the Assembly, Minister and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety by explaining and

justifying the use of resources and the performance of the organisation in putting Government policy into practice and delivering targets.

6. I will show my commitment to team working by working constructively with all my colleagues in the HPSS and in the wider community, contributing to the creation of an environment in which:

- teams of staff are able to work together in the best interests of service users;
- leadership is encouraged and developed at all levels and in all staff groups; and
- the HPSS plays its full part in wider community development.

7. I will take responsibility for my own learning and development. I will:

- participate in the relevant performance management or appraisal scheme;
- take full advantage of the opportunities provided by the HPSS for my personal managerial and professional development;
- keep up to date with best practice;
- be able to provide evidence of continuous development; and
- share my learning and development with others.

THE NOLAN PRINCIPLES

The Nolan Principles of Conduct Underpinning Public Life

Selflessness

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other materials benefits for themselves, their family, or other friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.