

# Working to Standard Code of Conduct

for Healthcare Support workers  
at Great Ormond Street Hospital  
Foundation Trust



## Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	3
<b>2. Where does the code come from</b>	3
<b>3. Working 'to standard'</b>	4
<b>4. What this means for you</b>	9
<b>5. Your rights</b>	10
<b>6. References</b>	11

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 As a healthcare support worker (for example housekeepers, healthcare assistants and assistant practitioners), what you do is of vital importance to the quality of healthcare for the children and families that use our service. Areas where you play a vital role include:
- helping the Trust deliver its services
  - protecting patients and the public from harm
  - valuing all aspects of equality and diversity
- 1.2 This code of conduct is necessary because the work you do as a member of the healthcare team is very important. The code is a list of statements that set the standard for how you should work on a day-to-day basis.
- 1.3 The code is here to help you, your employer and the children and families you work with. It is based on the basic principle of protecting the public, and mirrors what is required of all 'regulated' healthcare professionals you may work alongside.
- 1.4 You can use the code to check that you are working to standard. Your employer can use it to help them understand what service they can expect from you and your colleagues.
- 1.5 The statements are based on existing good practice and are designed for all healthcare support workers in this Trust. This code of conduct will help to make sure that all patients and their families get the same high-quality, safe and effective service from healthcare support workers.

## 2. Where has the code come from?

- 2.1 This Code of Conduct is based on Codes of Conduct developed for Scotland and Wales. It describes the standards of conduct, behaviour and attitude required of all healthcare support workers working within Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust. It provides an assurance framework for your employer and public protection through guidance and support to healthcare support workers on their practice so that they understand what standards of conduct employers colleagues, service users and the public can expect of them.

### 3. Working 'to standard'

3.1 As a support worker, you are expected to work to a certain standard. You need to be able to do your job properly, behave properly and do the right thing at all times. This is essential to protect patients from harm. Patients and their families, your employer and your colleagues all expect this and you should expect this of yourself.

3.2 On a day-to-day basis this entails that in your work you should always be of 'good character'. This means that you should always display the characteristics outlined in paragraphs 3.4 and 3.5.

3.3 On-going work by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) on good health and good character has defined 'good character' as; 'someone who is capable of safe and effective practice at all times'. It is important that healthcare support workers can provide safe and effective care at all times.

**3.4 Accountability** – making sure that you can always 'answer' for your actions or omissions.

3.4.1 Make sure you are happy with the things you do (actions) and the things you do not do (omissions) in your daily work and that you can justify them to patients, families, your supervisor, your employer and others. You must carry out only the tasks agreed in your job description or specification that you have been trained and assessed competent to do and those mutually agreed upon.

3.4.2 How will I know if I am 'working to standard' on accountability?

When you are working to standard on accountability, you may be asked to explain anything that you do or do not do with, or for, the patient. So, you need good reasons for the way you have acted. Make sure that you record your actions in line with the Trust's policies and procedures. By taking part in ongoing monitoring of your performance using the individual performance review process, you are showing you are aware of your accountability.

**3.5 Awareness** – being honest with yourself and others about what you can do.

3.5.1 Know yourself, what you can do and what you can't do. The safety of your patients is your first priority. Always ask colleagues for help if you have any worries or concerns about your abilities.

3.5.2 How will I know if I am 'working to standard' on awareness?

When you are working to standard on awareness, you will know yourself well enough to know what you can do. If you feel you are being asked to do something you have not trained to do and that you do not have the skills to do it, you will speak up and say so.

**3.6 Integrity** – always do what is right to protect the patient and family for whom you provide a service.

3.6.1 Always do your best to make sure nothing you or anyone else does or does not do, will harm the person's mental or physical health or wellbeing or delay their recovery.

3.6.2 How will I know that I'm 'working to standard' on integrity?

When you are working to standard on integrity, you will be protecting patients and the public in every way you can, taking into account all aspects of equality and diversity. You should be prepared to report issues that cause you to worry.

**3.7 Advocacy** – doing your best for patients, members of the public and their relatives.

3.7.1 This means being responsible for promoting and protecting the interests of patients, families and colleagues, many of whom may not be able to protect their own interests. This could involve speaking up for people to make sure that what is best for each individual is always taken into account.

3.7.2 How will I know if I'm 'working to standard' on advocacy?

When you are working to standard on advocacy, you will be putting patients' and members of the public's interests first at all times and making sure that you are meeting their wants and needs. All people are individuals with different likes and dislikes and you

must acknowledge their equality and diversity to make sure that you treat them equally and fairly.

**3.8 Sensitivity** – respecting the patient/member of the public

3.8.1 Every patient, family member and colleague is an individual with real feelings and emotions. When working with patients or members of the public, think about how they may be feeling and what the most appropriate response to their situation may be.

3.8.2 How will I know if I'm 'working to standard' on sensitivity?

When you are working to standard on sensitivity, you will be treating patients, members of the public and their relatives politely while being aware of the situation they are in and their reactions to it. For example, they may be feeling stressed, upset, angry or frustrated. It is important that you are sensitive to this and do not take their reactions personally.

**3.9 Objectivity** – treating all patients and members of the public fairly and without bias.

3.9.1 Access to high quality care should be fair and consistent. You should never discriminate against anyone because of their race, disability, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership status, maternity or pregnancy, or religion or belief. Personal feelings about patients or members of the public must not interfere with the standard of your work. You must provide all patients

with high-quality care which reflects their individual needs. This means that you owe patients a 'duty of care' and they can expect a 'reasonable' standard of care from all workers. In addition it is expected that you would treat all members of the public like this.

**3.9.2** It is also important to maintain clear boundaries when caring for patients or members of the public. This means that you should always have a 'professional' relationship with your patients and their families.

**3.9.3** How will I know if I'm 'working to standard' on objectivity?

When you are working to standard on objectivity, you will be working to the same high standard with every person you work with. It should not matter to you what the person is like as an individual or how they live their life. You will see all people in receipt of service as worthy of your respect and best efforts.

### **3.10 Consideration and respect** – making sure people are always treated with dignity.

**3.10.1** Consider and respect people's privacy to make sure that neither you nor they are ever placed in an embarrassing situation.

**3.10.2** How will I know if I'm 'working to standard' on consideration and respect?

When you are working to standard on consideration, you will always show thoughtfulness for people's feelings and needs. You will protect

patients and members of the public to make sure that they are never unnecessarily exposed to embarrassing situations whether in front of relatives, fellow patients or healthcare workers.

### **3.11 Consent** – telling patients and members of the public what you intend to do and listening carefully to what they say about it.

**3.11.1** Working in partnership with the patient and family at all times is a basic principle that you must keep to at all times. Always explain what you intend to do even when it is basic care or routine procedures and only continue when consent has been gained. You should report any concerns that the patient or family have to your supervisor.

**3.11.2** How will I know if I'm 'working to standard' on consent?

When you are working to standard on consent, you will be demonstrating that you will always make sure that the patient and family knows what you are planning to do and is happy with it. If the patient and family have not agreed to what you plan to do, you must not do it. Always check with a senior member of staff if you are in any doubt.

### **3.12 Confidentiality** – protecting the person's privacy.

**3.12.1** Confidentiality is essential to protect the interests of patients and members of the public. You must make sure that you do not give out personal information about patients or members of the public or about

their condition or treatment, to anyone other than colleagues in the team who need to know the information to help in the delivery of service to the person. You should not discuss those in receipt of services with anyone outside work.

**3.12.2** How will I know if I'm 'working to standard' on confidentiality?

When you are working to standard on confidentiality, you will maintain a professional attitude at all times when handling information relating to a patient or member of public and you won't 'gossip' to anyone at any time. When you do pass on information to a colleague as part of your job, you will take care to be accurate and clear in what you say or write.

### **3.13 Co-operation** – working effectively with your colleagues as part of a team.

**3.13.1** Value the part you play in the team and respect the part played by other members of the team.

**3.13.2** How will I know if I'm 'working to standard' on co-operation?

When you are working to standard on co-operation, the contribution you make to the team will be valued. You will be communicating effectively, sharing information and working to meet the team's shared goals in the best interests of the people you provide a service for.

### **3.14 Protection** – making sure you do not put patients, members of the public and colleagues at risk of harm.

**3.14.1** Make sure patients, members of the public and colleagues are protected from dangers and risks and that nothing you do, or do not do, results in harm or risk to others.

**3.14.2** How will I know if I'm 'working to standard' on protection?

When you are working to standard on protection, you will know the dangers patients, members of the public and colleagues face at work and will do what you can to reduce risks of accidents or harm. You will also make sure that you report any concerns you have to a supervisor to reduce risks in the future.

### **3.15 Development** – trying to increase your own knowledge and skills by talking to patients, members of the public and colleagues and looking for opportunities to learn.

**3.15.1** If you are interested in your work and feel comfortable using the knowledge you need to carry out your job, you will be able to offer a better service to patients and members of the public and you should feel more motivated as a result.

**3.15.2** How will I know if I'm 'working to standard' on development?

When you are working to standard on development, you will be taking every precaution necessary to protect patient safety and public safety by improving the way you work. This could be done by attending training courses, shadowing a colleague or listening to feedback from patients or

members of the public. You will continually monitor, evaluate and reflect on what you do at work and try to do it to the best of your ability.

### 3.16 Alertness – observing any changes that could affect a patient's or member of the public's needs or progress.

3.16.1 Always try to notice when a patient or member of the public is not doing what you expect of them and report your observations to an appropriate person.

3.16.2 How will I know if I'm 'working to standard' on alertness?

When you are working to standard on alertness, you will notice when patients or members of the public are 'just not right'. Accordingly you will pay heed to when a patient is not behaving as they normally do. Furthermore you will also notice when things in the workplace are not as they should be, relating for example to aspects of service delivery. Reporting these observations will be in the best interests of the people in receipt of your services.

## 4. What this means for you

- 4.1 The code of conduct means that as a healthcare support worker, you have a responsibility to work to standard.
- 4.2 Only do what your job description or specification allows you to do. Let your manager know if you feel you are being asked to do something you do not know how to, or something that you know is not in your job description.
- 4.3 It is within the code of conduct of all healthcare professionals not to delegate tasks unless they are sure that the person they are delegating to has the skills and is happy to perform the task. The person who delegates will remain professionally accountable for delegating the task. However, if you accept the task, you will be accountable for how well you perform it.
- 4.4 Make sure that you always follow the Trust's policies and procedures for carrying out tasks and duties.
- 4.5 Make sure that you obtain consent before doing anything to a patient or member of the public.
- 4.6 Follow the rules on 'duty of care' (see paragraph 3.9.1).
- 4.7 Making notes and keeping patients records up to date is an essential part of your service. You should only write down information relevant to the service you have given to patients, and get an appropriate person to sign the record in line with the Trust policy.
- 4.8 Raise issues you are concerned about with your line manager where these relate to:
  - How care or service is delivered
  - The personal health, safety and security of patients, members of the public; or
  - Harm and abuse of patients or members of the public

## 5. Your rights

### 5.1 You have a right to:

- be valued and respected for the vital contribution that you make to patient care
- work to a job description
- be heard as an equal member of the team
- personal development and feedback on your role
- annual appraisal
- access personal and professional training to progress and develop your knowledge
- confidentially raise concerns about the workplace using Raising Concerns in the Workplace policy, for instance the quality of patient care
- an induction programme
- a mentor to help guide and support you
- be treated equitably and fairly.

## 6. References

### **The Scottish Government ( 2009). Code of Conduct for Healthcare Support Workers.**

[www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/10/220092702/0](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/10/220092702/0)

### **NHS Wales ( 2011). Code of Conduct for Healthcare Support Workers in Wales.**

[www.wales.nhs.uk/documents/Code\\_of\\_Conduct\\_for\\_Healthcare\\_Support\\_Workers\\_in\\_Wales.pdf](http://www.wales.nhs.uk/documents/Code_of_Conduct_for_Healthcare_Support_Workers_in_Wales.pdf)

