

Title: Code of Conduct for Employees

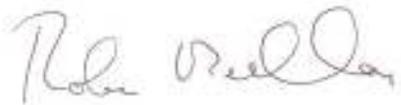
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1.0 Policy Statement

The Code of Conduct is an important element of the overall framework within which all employees are expected to work. It sets out the standards of conduct required of employees in the discharge of their duties. These standards of conduct and values will support a high quality service, based on high levels of personal performance and responsibility.

Peamount Healthcare expects all staff to contribute to an environment that encourages effective communication, co-operation and support and to treat each other with dignity, courtesy, and with sensitivity whilst valuing the skills, contribution and expertise of staff and colleagues at all levels.

2.0 Purpose

- ❖ The purpose of this policy is to set out the standards of conduct required from all employees of Peamount Healthcare in order to ensure good working relationships with colleagues, service users, families, relatives and third parties.
- ❖ This policy will outline how in the performance of their duties, employees are expected to observe appropriate attitude, behaviour and communication at work, maintain high standards in service delivery, maintain the highest standards of moral principles and support and be loyal to Peamount Healthcare.

3.0 Scope

- ❖ The provisions of the Code of Conduct relate to employees directly employed, whether in a permanent or temporary capacity, by Peamount Healthcare and those engaged in any capacity to provide services or advice to, or on behalf of Peamount Healthcare to also meet the standards set out for employees.
- ❖ The Code of Conduct forms part of the terms of employment of all employees.

4.0 Legislation/ Other Related Policies

- ❖ Section 25(3) of the Health Act 2004
- ❖ Ethics in public Office Acts 1995 to 2001
- ❖ HSE Framework for the Corporate & Financial Governance of the Health Service Executive, Codes of Standards & Behaviour, Document 2.1, Version 3, June 2009

- ❖ National Healthcare Charter – You and Your Health Service
- ❖ Profession Specific Code(s) of Conduct
- ❖ Complaints Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the suite of Human Resource policies available on the internal policies online drive at policies on ‘ph-fileserver\GroupsDirs’ or alternatively on request directly from the Human Resource Department as follows:

Annual Leave Policy, Dignity at Work Policy, Disciplinary Policy, Grievance Policy, Social Media Policy, Trust in Care Policy, Whistleblowers Policy

5.0 Definitions

Attitude: the readiness of employees to act or respond in a certain way that is acceptable to all.

Behaviour: the way in which one acts or conducts oneself especially towards others including service users, relatives and colleagues.

Communication: two way process of reaching mutual understanding, in which employees not only exchange information, news, ideas and feelings but also create and share meaning. In general communication is a means of connecting with people and it is a key function of management supporting communication between levels, departments, employees and service users.

Moral Principles: The principles of right and wrong that are acceptable by individual service users of Peamount Healthcare, employees and the Board.

6.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Chief Executive Officer

- ❖ To approve this Code (and its updates)
- ❖ To review the operation of this Code as part of Peamount Healthcare’s overall governance review and regular operational reviews.

Senior Management Team

- ❖ It is the responsibility of the Senior Management Team to ensure that all managers and heads of department are aware of their responsibilities in the implementation of this Code of Conduct.

Line Managers

- ❖ To lead by example and to seek advice from the HR Department when considering or making decisions regarding this code or if an employee wishes to appeal against the decision made by the line manager.
- ❖ It is the responsibility of all line managers to ensure that all staff are aware of this policy, to ensure staff know how to access this policy and have signed the acknowledgement sheet.
- ❖ It is the responsibility of all line managers to monitor staff adherence to this policy and that the appropriate training is made available to staff to comply with this policy.

Human Resources

- ❖ To ensure that all employees are made aware of this Code and are given appropriate guidance
- ❖ To act responsibly upon any reported breaches and to support line managers in dealing with breaches of the Code.
- ❖ To ensure all staff attend Induction training in consultation with line managers

All Employees

- ❖ All staff including line managers are required to comply with the standards outlined within the Code of Conduct.
- ❖ To read and understand the Code of Conduct and sign the policy acknowledgement sheet.
- ❖ Staff have a responsibility to report any breaches of the Code of Conduct to their line manager, or a designated manager if appropriate.
- ❖ Attend induction training

7.0 Procedure/Protocol/Guidelines

7.1 Service users should be treated courteously, with dignity, respect and sensitivity, irrespective of their age, ethnic origin, religious belief, race, gender, sexuality or disability and to have their right to make informed choices about their care and treatment respected at all times.

7.2 All staff are expected to observe appropriate attitude, behaviour and communication at work by:

- ❖ Demonstrating a considerate and respectful attitude. This includes:
 - ❖ Treating others as you wish to be treated yourself
 - ❖ Being welcoming, friendly, approachable and willing to help
 - ❖ Being prepared to see things from the other person's point of view

- ❖ Being aware of how well you are communicating
- ❖ Not being prejudiced by pre-conceived ideas about other people
- ❖ Valuing change as a way to improve service user care
- ❖ Being open minded towards new and better ways of working

7.3 Behaving in a professional and caring manner. This includes:

- ❖ Being polite, courteous and using good manners even when faced with rudeness or extra demands
- ❖ Not becoming angry or defensive if your opinion is challenged
- ❖ Respecting others personal space
- ❖ Gaining consent before physically touching another person
- ❖ Respecting privacy and dignity
- ❖ Maintaining service user confidentiality
- ❖ Ensuring noise is kept to a minimum in the working environment
- ❖ Being sensitive to the service user's environment, for example with regard to noise at night

7.4 Communicating effectively and appropriately, both verbally and non-verbally. This includes:

- ❖ Listening attentively without interruption as appropriate and showing genuine interest
- ❖ Considering any sensory or communication impairment of the person to whom you are speaking
- ❖ Giving correct and clear information, avoiding use of jargon
- ❖ Directing information to the person concerned
- ❖ Being aware of the messages conveyed by body language and facial expressions
- ❖ Checking the other person's understanding of what you are saying
- ❖ Providing an appropriate place for discussing sensitive issues in private
- ❖ Checking the understanding of the other person by use of paraphrasing etc
- ❖ Being respectful of service users, colleagues & families by conversing in the English language while at work

(NB. The examples provided under 8.2, 8.3 & 8.4 above are not intended to be an exhaustive list and should be read as a guide to staff) For examples of unacceptable attitude, behaviour and communication see Appendix 1.

7.5 All staff must maintain high standards in service delivery as follows:

- ❖ Employees must respect the constraints of the law.
- ❖ Employees must maintain high standards of service in all of their dealings with the public. Employees have a duty to deal with members of the public with the utmost courtesy, impartiality and honesty. In dealing with the public and in effectively performing their duties, employees must unfailingly observe the requirement of courtesy,

consideration and promptness and will at all times give their names.

- ❖ The majority of Peamount Healthcare’s employees wear a uniform while at work. All employees are expected to dress neatly and appropriately, consistent with maintaining public confidence in the services we provide. Employees should refer to the Dress code policy for further guidance.
- ❖ All employees who are issued with identity cards are required to attach the identity card to their clothes/uniform in such a fashion that they will be visible to fellow employees and members of the public. Employees must also take care of their identity cards. Lost or stolen cards must be reported to the HR Department immediately.

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- ❖ Employees who are convicted of criminal offences, or given the benefit of the Probation Act when tried for a criminal offence, must report that fact to Peamount Healthcare. The employee must make such a report to his/her supervisor (who, in turn, will advise the Director of Human Resources) or directly to the Director of Human Resources.

- ❖ Employees must attend at work as required and comply with the terms of sick leave regulations.

- ❖ Employees must not improperly disclose, during or following termination of employment, information gained in the course of their work.

- Employees may have access to or hear information concerning the medical or personal affairs of service users and/or employees, or other health service business. Such records and information are strictly confidential and can only be divulged or discussed in the performance of normal duty. Disclosure of records or information under various statutory provisions (e.g. Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003; Data Protection Acts 2001 and 2003; the Health Acts 1947 to 2007) will be made in accordance with HSE/Peamount policies, procedures and protocols.

- In addition, records must never be left in such a manner that unauthorized persons can obtain access to them and records must be kept in safe custody when no longer required.

- ❖ All employees are required to do their best to prevent waste of resources or improper use of Peamount’s stores or other property. Employees are expected to have due regard for Peamount Healthcare resources to ensure proper, effective and efficient use of public money.

7.6 All staff must maintain the highest standards of moral principles as follows:

- ❖ Employees must be impartial in the performance of their duties.

- Peamount Healthcare does not discriminate against employees on the basis of

political beliefs or opinions. However, it is each employee's responsibility to carry out his/her duties in a party political neutral manner. Public political activities should not, under any circumstances, be undertaken in paid Peamount Healthcare hours by any employee.

- Employees should ensure that views expressed by them or actions taken related to their public political activities are not presented or interpreted as official comment on behalf of Peamount Healthcare, but that they are their own or those of the political organisation they are representing. Neither should such views or actions compromise their duty of loyalty to Peamount Healthcare.
- An employee may, in his/her role as a trade union representative, make a statement in that capacity, but will ensure that such a statement is not presented as official comment on behalf of Peamount Healthcare.
- ❖ Employees have a responsibility to speak up if something is wrong. Peamount Healthcare is committed to encouraging employees to report concerns where they have a reasonable belief that inappropriate, unethical or illegal behaviour has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur. Peamount Healthcare's Protected Disclosure Policy (also referred to as Whistleblower's Policy) provides a mechanism for workers to disclose, without fear of adverse consequence, information which they become aware of in connection with their employment which in their reasonable belief tends to show that inappropriate, unethical or illegal behaviour has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur.
- ❖ The use of their official positions by employees to benefit themselves or others with whom they have personal or business ties is not allowed. Employees are also forbidden to seek to influence decisions on matters pertaining to their official positions other than through established procedures.
- ❖ Employees should not receive benefits of any kind from a third party which might reasonably be seen to compromise their personal judgement or integrity. Any benefits received should be of nominal value. All gifts and benefits received must be disclosed to the employee's line manager.
- ❖ Employees should not accept hospitality of any kind from a third party which might reasonably be seen to compromise their personal judgement or integrity. Within the general framework of guidelines set out in the Code, every care must be taken to ensure that:
- ❖ Any acceptance of hospitality does not influence, or is seen to influence, the discharging of official functions and
- ❖ That there are clear and appropriate standards in place which have been notified to all employees in relation to payment for work on behalf of outside bodies. Any hospitality received should be of nominal value. All hospitality received must be disclosed to the employee's line manager.

- ❖ Employees must not seek contracts with government departments or offices
 - for supply of goods or services whether for their own benefit or for the benefit of any company with which they may have an involvement in a private capacity, unless specifically sanctioned by the CEO.
- ❖ Employees are duty bound to disclose any interest, financial or otherwise, which is likely, or would if publicly known, be perceived as being likely to influence the exercise of that individual's independent judgement.
- ❖ Unauthorised workplace collections, gambling, betting, money lending and distribution of literature or goods is not allowed.

7.7 All staff must support and be loyal to Peamount Healthcare as follows:

- ❖ Employees may not engage in outside business or activity which would in any way conflict with the interests of Peamount Healthcare. Employees shall not accept an appointment, or particular consultancy project, where the employees concerned believe that the nature and terms of such appointment could lead to a conflict of interest or the perception of such, without first obtaining the approval of the Human Resources Department.
- ❖ Employees may not engage in matters unconnected with their work during work hours, unless it is provided for in your employment contract.
- ❖ Involvement in other occupations during time off should not impair performance or energy on duty, be inconsistent with employment in Peamount Healthcare or be outside the limits set under the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997.
- ❖ Employees are expected to comply with the Code at all times. Breaches of the Code will constitute a breach of the terms of employment and may result in disciplinary action being pursued in accordance with agreed procedures.
- ❖ Existing employees and each new employee will receive a copy or be given access to the Code of Conduct.
- ❖ An employee can obtain clarification on any aspect of the Code from the HR Department and induction courses will include instructions on the provisions of the Code.

8.0 Revision & Audit

- ❖ The code of conduct for employees will be kept under review by the Human Resource Department and the Senior Management Team will approve any amendments as required.
- ❖ All heads of departments will monitor the implementation of this policy.
- ❖ This policy will be reviewed and audited every 3 years.

9.0 References

- ❖ HSE Code of Standards and Behaviour
- ❖ Croydon Health Services NHS, Attitude, Behaviour, Communication Standards Policy

Appendix 1

Examples of Unacceptable Attitude, Behaviour and Communication

Peamount Healthcare regards the examples of attitude, behaviour and communication identified below as unacceptable and unprofessional. They will be dealt with in the same way as any other performance / conduct issue and may lead to disciplinary action. This is NOT an exhaustive list.

- a) Making inappropriate or discriminatory comments about / to a service user, relative or colleague
- b) Conducting non work related conversations with colleagues, or excluding the service user from any conversation when you are delivering care
- c) Use of mobile phones for non related work activities while on duty
- d) Failing to respond to a service user, relative or colleague's request for help, and failure to provide a reasonable explanation
- e) Willfully ignoring the presence of a visitor or colleague in your work area.
- f) Excluding others from a conversation through the use of language not common to all parties
- g) Swearing and/or making rude signs / gestures in front of service user's, relatives or colleagues
- h) Giving the service user or relative the impression that they are an inconvenience
- i) Failure to maintain confidentiality
- j) Refusal to comply with a reasonable management request e.g., refusal to work in a similar specialty ward / clinical area when required
- k) Refusing to cooperate with appropriate policy on appearance and dress code.

Appendix 2

Policy Acknowledgement sheet

Code/Name of policy: ____ Code of Conduct for Employees _____

Ward/Dept _____

No	Date	Name	Signature	Initials
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