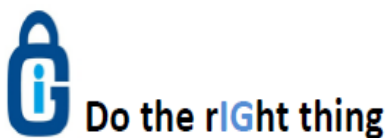


CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT FOR STAFF

Stockton Heath Medical Centre



CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

In the course of your employment or associated work with the Practice, you may have access to, see or hear, confidential information concerning the medical or personal affairs of patients, staff or associated healthcare professionals. Unless acting on the instructions of an authorised officer within the practice, on no account should such information be divulged or discussed except in the performance of your normal duties. Breach of confidence, including the improper passing of registered computer data, will result in disciplinary action, which may lead to your dismissal.

You should also be aware that regardless of any action taken by the Practice, a breach of confidence could result in a civil action against you for damages.

You must ensure that all records, including VDU screens and computer printouts of registered data, are never left in such a manner that unauthorised persons can obtain access to them. VDU screens must always be cleared when left unattended and you must ensure you log out of computer systems, removing your password. All computer passwords must be kept confidential.

No unauthorised use of the internet or email is allowed.

Information concerning patients or staff is strictly confidential and must not be disclosed to unauthorised persons. This obligation shall continue in perpetuity.

Disclosures of confidential information or disclosures of any data of a personal nature can result in prosecution for an offence under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA18) or an action for civil damages under the same Act in addition to any disciplinary action taken by Practice.

I have read, understand and agree to the terms and conditions set out above.

Signature.....

Name (printed).....

Date.....

Confidentiality is the cornerstone of health care and central to the work of everyone working in the Practice.

All information about patients is strictly confidential: from the most sensitive diagnosis to the fact of visiting the Medical Centre or being registered with the Practice.

The duty of confidentiality owed to a person under 16 is as great as the duty owed to any other patient.

All patients can expect that their personal information will not be disclosed without their permission except in the most exceptional of circumstances, when somebody is at grave risk of serious harm.

Responsibilities of All Health Professional Staff

All health professionals must follow their professional Codes of Practice and the law. This means that they must make every effort to protect confidentiality.

Nursing Staff

The NMC makes it clear that:

.....to trust another person with private and personal information about yourself is a significant matter. If the person to whom that information is given is a Nurse, Midwife or Health Visitor, the patient or client has a right to believe

that this information, given in confidence, will only be used for the purposes for which it was given and not be released to others without their permission.....

Confidentiality should only be broken in exceptional circumstance and should only occur after careful consideration that you can justify your action.....

Patients and clients have a right to know the standards of confidentiality maintained by those providing their care and these standards should be made known by the health professional at the first point of contact.....

Disclosure of information without the consent of the patient or client can only occur....

....when the disclosure is considered to be necessary in the public interest. The public interest means the interests of an individual, or groups of individuals or of society as a whole, and would, for example, cover matters such as serious crime, child abuse, drug trafficking or other activities which place others at serious risk.....In all cases where you deliberately release information in what you believe to be the best interests of the public, your decision must be justified. In such cases as accident and emergency admissions where the police are involved, it may be appropriate to involve senior staff if you do not feel that you are able to deal with the situation alone....

All health professionals are individually responsible for their own actions and must work together as a team to ensure that standards of confidentiality are upheld and that improper disclosures are avoided.

It is also considered good nursing practice that all patients, wherever possible, should be informed before confidentiality is broken, unless to do so would be dangerous for the patient and others.

Receptionists, Medical Secretaries, Practice Managers and Administrators

AMSPAR (the Association of Medical Secretaries, Practice Managers, Administrators and Receptionists) states that all staff should be bound by the following Code of Conduct with regards to confidentiality:

.....staff will strictly observe and uphold the principles of confidentiality. Anything learned from a patient, a medical practitioner patients' medical record or correspondence must never be disclosed to any unauthorised person.

Staff will establish and maintain professional relationships within the workplace, treating colleagues and employers with respect, refraining from gossip or public criticism of any person.

Staff will behave in a manner calculated to maintain the respect and confidence of patients, demonstrating a high standard of professional conduct.....

Other Staff, Contract Cleaners, Maintenance Staff, etc.

All other staff have a duty to maintain strict confidentiality and must not reveal to anyone outside the Practice personal information they learn in the course of

their work or due to their presence in the Practice without the patient's consent.

THE PRACTICE EXPECTS ALL STAFF TO ADHERE TO THE ABOVE CODES OF CONDUCT

Access to Health Records

The law regulates who may legitimately claim rights of access to health records and the Practice has named the Executive Lead as 'Caldicott Guardian' to look at and advise on the protection of patient confidentiality within the Practice.

Accidental Disclosure of Information

At times it may be that information is accidentally disclosed, for example:

If a conversation is overheard

If a computer screen can be seen displaying patient information

If patient records or correspondence are left where they can be seen by people visiting the Medical Centre

In these kind of situations steps must immediately be taken to minimise the risk of accidental disclosure and a Significant Event Form completed and handed to the Operations Manager/Executive Lead.

Then following discussion with the Doctors and taking into account the degree of disclosure. The event should be used as a learning and reflective exercise to alter the working of the Practice or revisit training. It may be necessary to take disciplinary action against the staff member responsible for the accidental disclosure.

Deliberate Disclosure of Information

Any member of staff who deliberately enters a patient's record when not required to do so in connection with their healthcare and/or discloses information about a patient without that patient's consent will face disciplinary action including dismissal from the Practice.

Reporting Breaches of Confidentiality - Whistleblowing

It must be accepted and clearly understood that every member of staff has a responsibility to take action if they are aware of a breach of confidentiality by approaching an appropriate member of the Practice Team such as the Operations Manager/Executive Lead or GP.

Staff Declaration below

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I have read, understand and agree to the terms and conditions set out above.

Signature.....

Name (printed).....

Date.....