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Code of Conduct for Western Care Employees

Mission Statement

Western Care Association exists to empower people with a wide range of learning and associated disabilities in Co. Mayo to live full and satisfied lives as equal citizens. We achieve this through the provision of a comprehensive range of innovative services and supports. We are a voluntary organisation, made up of parents/family members, service users, staff, supporters and volunteers, and, in keeping with our pioneering traditions, we believe in:

- Supporting service users in making choices
- Community-based services
- Partnership with families and service users
- The essential value of the voluntary organisation
- The vital input of volunteers and friends.
- The principle of accountability.
- The unique contribution of all our staff
- Partnership, unity of purpose and mutual respect in the achievement of our aims
- Service through partnership and co-ordination with local and national organisations
- Continually learning to improve the quality of the way we do things
- The pursuit of equality of access and full service for all

Introduction

In our work with people and families, we endeavour to deliver our supports in a person and family-centred way. All those who work for and on behalf of Western Care Association, and those who use services provided by Western Care Association, have a right to be treated with dignity, courtesy and respect at all times.

As Western Care employees, all staff are expected to conform to high standards of behavior and conduct whilst carrying out their duties.

The purpose of this code is to set out the conduct that is expected from employees of Western Care and to inform people who use services of conduct that they can expect.

This code of conduct applies to all employees of Western Care Association. In addition, employees are subject to the following codes:

- Staff must comply with the Code of Behaviour as set out in Western Care's ***Child Protection Procedure***.
- Employees must also be aware of and comply with the *Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies*
- Employees who are required to register with the Health and Social Care Professional Council (CORU) must comply with the relevant *Code of Professional Conduct & Ethics* for their individual discipline as a condition of their registration.

Code of Conduct

Employees must:

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

1. You must protect the rights and promote the interests of people using services and their families

This includes:

- a) Treating each person as an individual
- b) Respecting and, where appropriate, promoting the individual views and wishes of both people using services and their families
- c) Supporting peoples' rights to control their lives and make informed choices about the services they receive
- d) Respecting and maintaining the dignity and privacy of people who use services
- e) Promoting equal opportunities for people who use services and their families
- f) Respecting diversity and different cultures and values.

2. You must strive to establish and maintain the trust and confidence of people using services and their families

This includes:

- a) Being honest and trustworthy
- b) All employees are expected to dress neatly and appropriately, consistent with maintaining a public confidence in the service we provide. Appropriate footwear should be worn, that is safe and suitable for the duties undertaken.
- c) Communicating in an appropriate, open, accurate and straightforward way in a manner in which people and families clearly understand
- d) Respecting confidential information and clearly explaining agency policies about confidentiality to people using services and their families
- e) Being reliable and dependable
- f) Honouring work commitments, agreements and arrangements and, when it is not possible to do so, explaining why to people using services and their families, in line with agreed communication practices in each case
- g) Declaring issues that might create conflicts of interest and making sure that they do not influence your judgement or practice
- h) Staff must not accept personal gifts, hospitality or services which would or might appear to place them under obligation.

3. You must promote each person's independence while protecting them as far as possible from danger or harm

This includes:

- a) Promoting the independence of people and assisting them to understand and exercise their rights
- b) Using established processes and procedures to identify and report dangerous, abusive, discriminatory or exploitative behaviour and practice
- c) Following practice and procedures designed to keep you and other people safe from dangerous, abusive, discriminatory or exploitative behaviour and practice at work
- d) Bringing to the attention of your employer resource or operational difficulties that might get in the way of the delivery of safe care
- e) Informing your employer where the practice of colleagues may be unsafe or adversely affecting standards of care
- f) Not working under the influence of alcohol/unprescribed /illegal drugs or have same on the premises at any time when this would impede your ability to do your job

- g) Helping people and their families to make complaints, taking complaints seriously and responding to them or passing them to the appropriate person
- h) Recognising and using responsibly the power that comes from your work with people and their families.

4. You must respect the rights of people while seeking to ensure that their behaviour does not harm themselves or others

This includes:

- a) Recognising that people using services have the right to take risks and helping them to identify and manage potential and actual risks to themselves and others
- b) Following risk assessment policies and procedures to assess whether the behaviour of people using services presents a risk of harm to themselves or others
- c) Taking necessary steps to minimise the risks of people from doing actual or potential harm to themselves or others
- d) Ensuring that relevant colleagues are informed about the results and implications of risk assessments.

5. You must uphold public trust and confidence in Western Care Association

In particular you must not:

- a) Abuse, neglect or harm people using services, their families or colleagues
- b) Exploit people using services, their families or colleagues in any way
- c) Abuse the trust of people using services and their families or the access you have to personal information about them or to their property, home or workplace
- d) Form inappropriate personal relationships with people using services and their families which would or might appear to place you under obligation
- e) Discriminate unlawfully or unjustifiably against people using services, their families or colleagues
- f) Condone any unlawful or unjustifiable discrimination by people using services, their families or colleagues
- g) Put yourself or other people at unnecessary risk
- h) Behave in a way which would bring Western Care Association into disrepute.

6. You must be accountable for the quality of your work and take responsibility for maintaining and improving your knowledge and skills

This includes:

- a) Adhering to all Association policies, procedures and guidelines
- b) Meeting relevant standards of practice and working in a lawful, safe and effective way
- c) Maintaining clear and accurate records as required by procedures established for your work
- d) Informing your employer about any personal difficulties that might affect your ability to do your job competently and safely
- e) Seeking assistance from your employer if you do not feel able or adequately prepared to carry out any aspect of your work, or you are not sure about how to proceed in a work matter
- f) Working openly and co-operatively with all colleagues and treating them with respect
- g) Recognising that you remain responsible for the work that you have delegated to other colleagues. Line managers are available to support staff address any issues that arise with work delegation and completion
- h) Recognising and respecting the roles and expertise of colleagues and working in partnership with them
- i) Undertaking and utilizing relevant training to maintain and improve your knowledge and skills and contributing to the learning and development of others.

Policy and Procedure Feedback Form

A Policy and Procedure Feedback Form is available on the Western Care Association Intranet (under Procedures) which will provide an opportunity to comment on any policy/procedure.

Your comments will be forwarded to the person who has the lead for the on-going development of the policy/procedure.

All comments will be collated by the person responsible and will inform the three-yearly review cycle for updating procedures.