

Personal Relationships at Work Policy

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Consultation	HR Policy Group	Applicable to:	All staff All Sites
Equality, Diversity And Human Right Statement	The Trust is committed to an environment that promotes equality and embraces diversity in its performance both as a service provider and employer. It will adhere to legal and performance requirements and will mainstream Equality, Diversity and Human Rights principles through its policies, procedures, service development and engagement processes. This procedure should be implemented with due regard to this commitment.		
To be read In conjunction with / Associated Documents:	Grievance Policy Equality and Diversity Policy	Information Classification Label	<input type="checkbox"/> Unclassified
Access to Information	To access this document in another language or format please contact the policy author.		

Document Change History (changes from previous issues of policy (if appropriate):

Version number	Page	Changes made with rationale and impact on practice	Date
2	3	Additional statement added in point 1.2	

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1. Purpose

1.1 This policy aims to provide guidance regarding the management of personal relationships at work.

1.2 The Trust will not interfere unduly in employees' private lives but will take legitimate action when close personal relationships at work have an actual or potential impact on Trust services.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the Trust, including Fixed Term, Temporary, Staff Bank and Seconded staff.

3. Policy Content

3.1 Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, a 'personal relationship' can be defined as:

- Family relationships such as: parental (including in-laws and step parents), children (including in-laws and step children), siblings and extended family (including grandparent, grandchildren, aunts, uncle and cousins).
- Romantic or sexual relationships, including spouses and partners.
- A business, commercial or financial relationship.

The above definitions are examples of personal relationships, however personal relationships are not restricted to these examples.

A relationship can be with an existing or prospective employee; a contractor; a Non-Executive Director (NED), or a child/young person or vulnerable adult, whom an employee meets as a result of their employment.

3.2 General Guidance

The Trust does not prevent staff, or prospective staff, with personal relationships from working together whilst employed. However, the existence of such a relationship should either be declared at the time of appointment, or change in role.

If the relationship develops during employment, colleagues should discuss this with their line manager or Business HR if more appropriate.

It is not the intention of the Trust to interfere with the private lives of its employees, however there are underpinning principles which will help to avoid conflict or compromise.

3.3 Personal Relationships with Colleagues

To prevent any issues or conflict of interest and to protect colleagues, those who have personal relationships should not work in a direct reporting relationship or within the same management chain, without making a disclosure to the appropriate manager.

Where a personal relationship exists or develops between colleagues who are in a line management or supervisory relationship at work, they must not be involved in recruitment, selection, appraisal, promotion or other management activity or process involving the other party. Alternative management arrangements will also be put in place.

Colleagues may continue to work together in the same team or department where this is appropriate, providing there is no conflict of interest or no line management relationship. Where this happens, the Directorate or appropriate Senior Manager responsible should give serious consideration to restructuring the duties of those concerned, in order to prevent the risk of a conflict of interest. This must be done with the involvement and agreement of all parties and it is important that no detriment (i.e. pay, grade, hours of work etc.) is suffered as a result of such changes.

3.4 Relationships between Employees and External Organisations

Where employees deal with external organisations where purchasing or financial decisions are taken, then any potential conflict of interest due to a personal relationship it is expected that they must follow the Trust policies and Codes of Practice.

The Trust expects that colleagues will take personal responsibility and not put themselves into a situation where their relationship may cause themselves or the Trust problems, as described in this policy.

Concerns regarding inappropriate behaviour may be addressed in line with the Trust's Disciplinary Policy.

3.5 Break down of Relationships

If a personal relationship breaks down or is in difficulty, this must not interfere with or influence the working relationship. Where any colleagues feels this may potentially be the case it must be brought to the attention of their Line Manager if appropriate and/or Business HR.

Any details of decisions taken regarding the matter, including addressing the matter through another appropriate Trust Policy, will be strictly confidential.

3.6 Relationships between Employees and Patients

Employees must not have, or allow to develop, a personal relationship with a patient in their care. This could lead to the actions and responsibilities of the employee being compromised and potentially professional misconduct. It may also affect the reputation and credibility of other colleagues and the Trust itself.

If an employee finds themselves in a position where they have a personal relationship with someone they are required to treat in the formal capacity of a patient, then responsibility for the care and treatment of that patient must be transferred to an alternative care giver or appropriate colleague. In the case of an emergency, this transfer of responsibility should take place only when it is possible to do so without any risk to the health, safety or welfare of the patient.

It is expected that employees must immediately report any such incidence to their respective manager.

Concerns regarding inappropriate behaviour may be addressed in line with the Trust's Disciplinary Policy.

4. Exceptions

No exceptions

5. Training

The Business HR Team can provide advice and guidance to all employees and managers across the Trust in relation to the application this policy.

6. Monitoring of compliance

Minimum requirement to be monitored	Process for monitoring e.g. audit/ review of incidents/ performance management	Job title of individual(s) responsible for monitoring and developing action plan	Minimum frequency of monitoring	Name of committee responsible for review of results and action plan	Job title of individual/ committee responsible for monitoring implementation of action plan

7. Relevant regulations, standards and references

- LUHFT Disciplinary Policy

8. Equality, diversity and human right statement

The Trust is committed to an environment that promotes equality and embraces diversity in its performance both as a service provider and employer. It will adhere to legal and performance requirements and will mainstream Equality, Diversity and Human Rights principles through its policies, procedures, service development and engagement processes. This SOP should be implemented with due regard to this commitment.

9. Legal requirements

This document meets legal and statutory requirements of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (EU 2016/679) and all subsequent and prevailing legislation. It is consistent with the requirements of the NHS Executive set out in Information Security Management: NHS Code of Practice (2007) and builds upon the general requirements published by NHS Digital/Connecting for Health (CfH).

10. Appendices

Appendix 1: Equality Impact Assessment

Title	Personal Relationships at Work Policy
Strategy/Policy/Standard Operating Procedure	Policy
Service change (Inc. organisational change/QEP/Business case/project)	
Completed by	
Date Completed	

Description *(provide a short overview of the principle aims/objectives of what is being proposed/changed/introduced and the impact of this to the organisation)*

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Who will be affected *(Staff, patients, visitors, wider community including numbers?)*

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The Equality Analysis template should be completed in the following circumstances:

- **Considering developing a new policy, strategy, function/service, or project (Inc. organisational change/Business case/ QEP Scheme).**
- **Reviewing or changing an existing policy, strategy, function/service, or project (Inc. organisational change/Business case/ QEP Scheme):**
 - If no or minor changes are made to any of the above and an EIA has already been completed then a further EIA is not required, and the EIA review date should be set at the date for the next policy review.
 - If no or minor changes are made to any of the above and an EIA has NOT previously been completed then a new EIA is required.
 - Where significant changes have been made that do affect the implementation or process then a new EIA is required.

Please note the results of this Equality Analysis will be published on the Trust website in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 duties for public sector organisations.

Section 1 should be completed to analyse whether any aspect of your paper/policy has any impact (positive, negative, or neutral) on groups from any of the protected characteristics listed below.

When considering any potential impact, you should use available data to inform your analysis such as PALS/Complaints data, Patient or Staff satisfaction surveys, staff

numbers and demographics, local consultations, or direct engagement activity. You should also consult available published research to support your analysis.

Section 1- Initial analysis

Equality Group	Any potential impact? Positive, negative or neutral	Evidence <i>(For any positive or negative impact please provide a short commentary on how you have reached this conclusion)</i>
Age <i>(Consider any benefits or opportunities to advance equality as well as barriers across age ranges. This can include safeguarding consent, care of the elderly and child welfare)</i>		
Disability <i>(Consider any benefits or opportunities to advance equality as well as impact on attitudinal, physical, and social barriers)</i>		
Gender Reassignment <i>(Consider any benefits or opportunities to advance equality as well as any impact on transgender or transsexual people. This can include issues relating to privacy of data)</i>		
Marriage & Civil Partnership <i>(Consider any benefits or opportunities to advance equality as well as any barriers impacting on same sex couples)</i>		
Pregnancy & Maternity <i>(Consider any benefits or opportunities to advance equality as well as impact on working arrangements, part time or flexible working)</i>		
Race <i>(Consider any benefits or opportunities to advance equality as well as any barriers impacting on ethnic groups including language)</i>		
Religion or belief <i>(Consider any benefits or opportunities to advance equality as well as any barriers effecting people of different religions, belief, or no belief)</i>		
Sex <i>(Consider any benefits or opportunities to advance equality as well as any</i>		

<i>barriers relating to men and women e.g.: same sex accommodation)</i>		
Sexual Orientation <i>(Consider any benefits or opportunities to advance equality as well as barriers affecting heterosexual people as well as Lesbian, Gay, or Bisexual)</i>		

If you have identified any **positive** or **neutral** impact then no further action is required, you should submit this document with your paper/policy in accordance with the governance structure.

You should also send a copy of this document to the equality impact assessment email address.

If you have identified any **negative** impact you should consider whether you can make any changes immediately to minimise any risk. This should be clearly documented on your paper cover sheet/Project Initiation Documents/Business case/policy document detailing what the negative impact is and what changes have been or can be made.

If you have identified any negative impact that has a high risk of adversely affecting any groups defined as having a protected characteristic then please continue to section 2.

Section 2 – Full analysis

If you have identified that there are potentially detrimental effects on certain protected groups, you need to consult with staff, representative bodies, local interest groups and customers that belong to these groups to analyse the effect of this impact and how it can be negated or minimised. There may also be published information available which will help with your analysis.

	Y/N
Is what you are proposing subject to the requirements of the Trust’s Workforce Change Policy?	Y/N
Who and how have you engaged to gather evidence to complete your full analysis? (List)	
What are the main outcomes of your engagement activity?	
What is your overall analysis based on your engagement activity?	

Section 3 – Action Plan

You should detail any actions arising from your full analysis in the following table: all actions should be added to the Risk Register for monitoring.

Action required	Lead name	Target date for completion	How will you measure outcomes

Following completion of the full analysis you should submit this document with your paper/policy in accordance with the governance structure.

You should also send a copy of this document to the equality impact assessment email address.

Section 4 – Organisation Sign Off

Name and Designation	Signature	Date
Individual who reviewed the Analysis		
Chair of Board/Group approving/rejecting proposal		
Individual recording EA on central record		