Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Code of Conduct
for Healthcare Support Workers in Wales

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Introduction

This national Code of Conduct for NHS Wales will help to ensure service users and the public receive a consistent, high-quality, safe and effective service from Healthcare Support Workers.

Healthcare Support Workers make a valuable and important contribution to the delivery of high quality healthcare. This Code of Conduct describes the standards of conduct, behaviour and attitude required of all Healthcare Support Workers employed within NHS Wales.

Health Care Support Workers are responsible, and have a duty of care, to ensure their conduct does not fall below the standards detailed in the Code and that no act or omission on their part harms the safety and well being of service users and the public, whilst in their care.

Purpose

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to provide an assurance framework for 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.
- Development of this key workforce.

Scope

The Code applies to all Healthcare Support Workers employed in clinical and non-clinical environments within the NHS and will be referenced in job descriptions.

What will this Code mean for Healthcare Support Workers?

- This will provide a set of standards, so Healthcare Support Workers can be sure what standards they are expected to meet.
- Healthcare Support Workers should use the Code to assure themselves they are working to the standard and if not to change the way they are working.
- Healthcare Support Workers can use the Code to identify areas for personal development and improvement.
- The Code will support Healthcare Support Workers to fulfil the requirements of their role, behave correctly and do the right thing at all times. This is essential to protect service users, public and others from harm.

How will this Code help Managers?

- The Code will help employers to understand what standards they can expect of Healthcare Support Workers.

- Employers have a Code of Practice that outlines how they should treat and support Healthcare Support Workers to achieve the standards within this Code.

How will this Code help the Public?

- The Code is based on the basic principle of **protecting the public**, and provides an assurance framework so that the public can understand what standards they can expect of Healthcare Support Workers.

- NHS Wales has a legal duty and responsibility to protect the interests and wellbeing of its service users.

Definition of Healthcare Support Worker

The Flexible and Sustainable Workforce Strategy (2008) provided a definition for Healthcare Support Workers responsible for providing direct services to patients. However, this Code of Conduct applies to all Healthcare Support Workers, whether they deliver direct or indirect care,

And who is engaged in any of the following:

– in a direct clinical role, under the supervision of a health care professional;
– in an indirect clinical role, under the supervision of a health care professional;
– in a direct service provision role, with access to patients and members of the public;
– dealing with personal identifiable patient data;
– having responsibility for maintaining premises or equipment used by patients; or
– involved in the preparation/delivery of goods or services directly for/to service users.

But who is not:

– a health care professional or
– an unpaid volunteer or
– a worker who is in a contract with a third party. This includes workers in a contract or other arrangement with persons who provide primary medical services, general dental services, general ophthalmic services or pharmaceutical services

Healthcare Support Workers must:

1. Be accountable by making sure you can always answer for your actions or omissions.

2. Promote and uphold the privacy, dignity, rights and wellbeing of service users and their carers at all times.

3. Work in collaboration with your colleagues as part of a team to ensure the delivery of high quality safe care to service users and their families.

4. Communicate in an open, transparent and effective way to promote the wellbeing of service users and carers.

5. Respect a person's right to confidentiality, protecting and upholding their privacy.

6. Improve the quality of care to service users by updating your knowledge, skills and experience through personal and professional development.

7. To promote equality all service users, colleagues and members of the public are entitled to be treated fairly and without bias.

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Be accountable by making sure you can always answer for your actions or omissions.

Guidance Statements

As a Healthcare Support Worker in Wales you must:

1. Be honest with yourself and others about what you can do, recognise the limitations of your competence and only carry out those tasks agreed in your job description and in which you have gained and maintained competence.

2. Behave in a professional manner which would not call into question your suitability to work in a health care environment.

3. Make sure you can justify and are accountable for your actions or your omissions to service users, your employer, members of the public, your supervisor, and others.

4. Always seek guidance from your supervisor if you do not feel able or adequately prepared to carry out any aspect of your work, or you are unsure how to effectively deliver a given task.

5. Inform your supervisor about any difficulties that might affect your ability to do your job competently and safely. If you do not feel competent to undertake an activity, you must report this to your supervisor.

6. Establish and maintain clear and appropriate professional boundaries in your relationships with service users, their carers and colleagues at all times.

7. Refuse to accept any offers of loans, gifts, benefits or hospitality from anyone in your care or anyone close to them which may be seen to compromise your position.

8. Comply with your employers policies and procedures.

9. Report any actions or omissions by yourself or colleagues that you feel may compromise the safety or care of service users.

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Promote and uphold the privacy, dignity, rights and wellbeing of service users and their carers at all times.

Guidance Statements

As a Healthcare Support Worker in Wales you must:

1. Treat each person as an individual, promote independence and self care and assist service users to exercise their rights and make informed choices about care.

2. Always gain consent before you begin any treatment or care and support people's rights to accept or decline any treatment or care.

3. Consider, respect and protect the privacy and dignity of service users, carers and colleagues.

4. Contribute to a safe health care environment that is fit for practice.

5. Always make sure your actions or omissions will not harm the person's health or wellbeing or delay their recovery. Do not abuse, neglect, harm or exploit service users, carers or colleagues.

6. Challenge and report dangerous, abusive, discriminatory or exploitative behaviour or practice.

7. Always take complaints seriously, respond to them in line with the organisations policy and inform a senior member of staff.

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Work in collaboration with your colleagues as part of a team to ensure the delivery of high quality safe care to service users and their families.

Guidance Statements

As a Healthcare Support Worker in Wales you must:

1. Value and understand the part you play in the team, recognise and respect the roles and expertise of colleagues in the team and from other agencies and disciplines and work in partnership with them.

2. Work openly and co-operatively with service users and their families and treat them with respect.

3. Work openly and co-operatively with colleagues including those from other disciplines and agencies, and treat them with respect

4. Honour work commitments, agreements and arrangements and be reliable and dependable.

5. Promote and maintain the delivery of high quality care to service users.

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Communicate in an open, transparent and effective way to promote the wellbeing of service users and carers.

Guidance Statements

As a Healthcare Support Worker in Wales you must:

1. Communicate respectfully with service users and carers in an open, accurate, effective and straightforward way ensuring confidentiality.

2. Communicate effectively and consult with colleagues as appropriate.

3. Always explain and discuss the care or procedure you intend to carry out with the service user and only continue if they give informed consent.

4. Document and maintain clear and accurate records of your care and report any changes or concerns in the condition of individuals immediately to a senior member of staff.

5. Recognise the limits of you role, knowledge and competence when communicating with service users, carers and colleagues.

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Respect a person's right to confidentiality, protecting and upholding their privacy.

Guidance Statements

As a Healthcare Support Worker in Wales you must:

1. Regard all service user and carer information as confidential

2. Only discuss or disclose relevant information about service users to members of the team or other professionals who need information to help plan care or services.

3. Always seek guidance from a senior member of staff regarding any information or issues that you are concerned about.

4. Always discuss issues of disclosure with a senior member of staff.

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Improve the quality of care to service users by updating your knowledge, skills and experience through personal and professional development.

Guidance Statements

As a Healthcare Support Worker in Wales you must:

1. In agreement with your supervisor ensure up to date compliance with all statutory/mandatory training.

2. Participate in and take responsibility for the personal development process and KSF to support achievement of the competence required for your role.

3. Undertake competence based training and education in line with local review processes accessing effective mentorship and supervision to improve the quality and safety of care to service users.

4. Maintain an up to date record of training and development.

5. Contribute to the learning and development of others where appropriate.

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To promote equality all service users, colleagues and members of the public are entitled to be treated fairly and without bias.

Guidance Statements

As a Healthcare Support Worker in Wales you must:

1. Respect the individuality and diversity of service users, carers and colleagues and not discriminate or condone discrimination against them in any way.

2. Promote equal opportunities for service users and carers.

3. Report concerns to a senior member of staff as soon as possible.

Code of Conduct Glossary

1. **Accountability** – To be responsible and answerable for actions
2. **Promote** – To support or actively encourage
3. **Uphold** – To maintain (a custom or practice)
4. **Service User** – A person who uses services
5. **Collaboration** – The action of working with someone
6. **Transparent** – To be open to public scrutiny
7. **Effective** – To be successful in producing a desired or intended result
8. **Professional** – A person competent or skilled in a particular activity
9. **Omission** – To leave out or excluded
10. **Supervise** – The active process of directing, guiding and influencing the outcome of an individuals performance of a task
11. **Competent** – Having the necessary ability, knowledge, or skill to do something successfully.
12. **Respect** – To have due regard for someone's feelings, wishes, or rights
13. **Mentor** – An experienced person who trains and counsels employees or students
14. **Dependable** – Worthy of trust; reliable
15. **Procedures** – An established or official way of doing something
16. **Skill** – The ability to do something well; expertise.
17. **Disclose** – To make (secret or new information) known
18. **Capability** – The power or ability to do something.
19. **Competence** – The knowledge, skills, attitudes and ability to practise safely and effectively without the need for direct supervision.
20. **Competencies** – Specific knowledge, skills, judgment, and personal attributes required to practice safely.
21. **Consent** – Permission for something to happen or agreement to do something.
22. **Responsible** – Morally accountable for one's behaviour and having an obligation to do something, as part of one's job or role.

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