

Confidentiality Policy

Freedom for all works on the principle that it has a duty of confidentiality to its service users. The charity regards this as being of the utmost importance and a key part in building a trusting and safe environment that service users can confide in in the knowledge that their confidences will be kept and where information about them will be protected safely. It is the charity's policy that all the information we receive about or from anyone is confidential and that only those who need to know the information will have access to it. The charity seeks to always ask permission before any information that has been given is shared with anyone else.

Freedom for all complies with the current guidance issued by the Care Quality Commission on confidentiality issues, which relates to the degree that the registered manager of a service ensures that service users know that information about them is handled appropriately, and that their confidences are kept.

Procedures-

To comply with this policy staff must:

- Ensure that all files or written information of a confidential nature are stored in a secure manner in a locked filing cabinet and are only accessed by staff who have a need and a right to access them (see also the policy on Record Keeping)
- Wherever practical or reasonable fill in all records and service users notes in the presence of and co-operation of the service user concerned.
- Ensure that all records and services users notes are signed and dated.
- Rare situations may arise which give rise to expectations to this duty where confidential information may relate to harm to other service users or harm to the person sharing the confidence. In such circumstances the service reserves the right for staff to break their duty of confidentiality and to take the information to a senior member of staff

In such rare circumstances:

- The relevant service user will be informed of the services position and full details will be discussed with the service user.
- Appropriate notes will be made in the service users notes and these notes will be open to inspection by the service user.
- The information will only be given to those who absolutely need to know and wider issues of confidentiality of that information will still apply.

- The service user will be free to make a complaint through the services complaints procedure if he or she considers that the information held about them has not been treated in the confidential manner they should expect.

Initial Assessment Policy

New service users and prospective service users are shown a copy of this confidentiality policy on initial assessment or the policy is explained to them and their representatives so that they can understand it as fully as possible.

Every effort is made by staff to ensure that service users fully understand the implications of the policy. The member of staff performing the assessment is expected to ensure that the new service user understands and has read the following statement.

To help us make an assessment of your needs, we will need to ask you for personal information about your circumstances and to record this information. We will not share this information with anyone, including friends and relatives, without your agreement (unless they have legal authority as Guardian or Attorney) and it will be kept in a confidential file which will be kept in a locked filing cabinet.

Only management with permission to see the file will be able to access it. Management will record information as and when required and passed on to the relevant staff when needed.

You may have access to your notes at any time to see what is being recorded. It is the charity's policy that all information we receive about or from service users is confidential and that only those who need to know the information will have access to it.

The charity will always ask your permission before sharing any information that you have provided. In certain circumstances, however, we may need to share some information in your best interests and may do so to fulfil our duty of care to you to keep you safe from risk of harm by following the procedures that are set out in the services safeguarding policy.

Request for Information

The service will not provide information to relatives, spouses, friends or advocates without the consent of the individual concerned. If the person is unable to give

consent a decision will be taken in line with "best interests" procedures set by the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

All enquiries for information, even if they are from close relatives, should be referred back to the service user or the user's permission sought before disclosure. If the relative or person who wants access to the information objects to the decision they will be asked to make a formal complaint, which will then be addressed through the services complaint procedure.

Freedom for all is often asked for reports by insurance companies, solicitors, employers, ect. Before providing these reports we shall require written consent from the service user concerned and will never divulge information without consent unless obliged to by law.

Record Keeping

We keep files on all of our service users but only keep relevant information to ensure that the support we offer as an organisation is of the highest quality. The files are only available to staff who need to use them. We keep very personal letters or notes in a secure place.

This service believes in the following:

Records required for the protection of service users and for the effective and efficient running of the service are maintained, up to date and accurate.

Service users have access to their records and information about them held by the service, as well as opportunities to help them maintain their personal records.

Individual records and service records are kept in a secure fashion, are up to date and in good order, and are constructed, maintained and used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and other statutory requirements.

The service adheres fully to the current standards on record keeping set by the Care Quality Commission.

Freedom for all believes that access to information and security and privacy of data is an absolute right of every service user and that service users are entitled to see a copy of all personal information held about them and to correct any error or omission in it.

Under the Data Protection Act 1998 the service should have a nominated data user/data controller.

The data user/data controller for this service is Sadie Watts Charity Director.

Training

All new staff are required to read and understand the policies on data protection and confidentiality as part of their induction process and to achieve Common Induction Standard 3.4 "understand principles and practices relating to confidentiality."

Existing staff are offered training to national occupational standards covering basic information about confidentiality, data protection and access to records.

Training in the correct method for entering information in the service users records is given to all staff.

The nominated data user/data controller for the service is trained appropriately in the Data Protection Act 1998.

All staff who use the computer system are thoroughly trained in its use.