

Wellbeing and Performance in health services

Code of Conduct for Healthcare Management

Purpose of a Code

A Code has the purpose of being the central guide and reference for users in day to day decision making. The Code is meant to reflect the organisation's purpose, mission, values and principles, and linking these to the standards of professional conduct. The conduct of individuals, therefore, should clearly reflect what the organisation 'stands for' and how the organisation wishes to see itself projected to the outside world.

Purpose of the Code of Conduct for Healthcare Management

This Code has the purpose of building and sustaining a management culture in health services based on wellbeing and performance. The manager responsibility is to achieve the purpose and aims of the organisation in the most effective and productive manner possible. This requires managers to eliminate the risk of under-performance due to diminished workforce engagement, and to build and sustain commitment and trust through effective personal behaviour.

The better people feel at work the greater their contribution, the higher their personal performance, the performance of their organisation, and the increased value of each pound spent.

The worse people feel at work, the greater the risk of errors, under- and counter - productivity, tribunals, sickness and absence and staff turnover, and higher wasted expenditure.

The Code contains three interlocking elements – the context within which managers are expected to behave, the behaviours they are expected to exhibit and the actions they are expected to take.

Approach

Generally people behave according to their understanding of the situation and context in which they are placed. If this context conflicts with their personal values, or in other ways causes physical and psychological distress, the 'ripple effect' can cause significant disruption and cost to services, staff and patients. A purpose of the Code is to prevent the risk of such situations arising.

The approach has been to adopt the findings of research into performance, commitment, trust, staff engagement, the psychological contract, leadership and quality, and adaptive leadership.

The main thrust of the Code is to promote managerial behaviours that build commitment, trust and engagement between people. This has been shown to have a significant impact on preventing the risks of psychological distress at work, and the greatest impact on improving

performance, in combination with terms and conditions of employment. The key elements that build trust and commitment are included here; they include the contextual as well as the behaviour elements. An essential aspect is the focus on enabling individuals to apply their skills, knowledge and experience to their work in an engaged, motivated and enthusiastic manner.

The Code is designed to apply to all managers in healthcare, regardless of level or professional interests.

The Code

Creating the context for wellbeing and performance

Leaders and managers are expected to demonstrate:

Clarity of purpose

- Clarity of purpose of the organisation and its sub divisions in ways that are simply expressed, that staff and the public can understand and relate to.

The structures

- Structures of their organisations that enable staff to be engaged in decisions about themselves and their work.

The 'rules'

Recruitment

- Recruitment of managers based on the convergence of clear and unambiguous expectations of the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the job and those of the applicant, together with the personal characteristics set out in appendix 1

Training and development

- Training and development (the acquisition of skills, knowledge and experience) of all staff based on meeting the needs of the organisation and those of the trainee; that training is based on sound learning principles, and that the training is applied in practice.

Challenge

- That staff are stimulated with personal challenges in their work.

Teams

- Building and sustaining teams with people who are sufficiently trusting of each other that they can critique each other's work without fear of humiliation or retribution, and in the knowledge that lessons can be learnt and applied.

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Communication

- Excellent communication – the process of interpreting messages, conveying them intelligibly, seeking responses, and reacting to them positively.

Involvement

- Engagement of all staff, other organisations and the relevant sections of the public in the processes and critical decisions that affect them.

Performance appraisal

- Regular and routine performance appraisal of staff as part of the bloodstream of management, together with providing appropriate supporting resources to raise performance where needed.

Career development

- Nurturing and development of staff by providing opportunities to gain wider skills, knowledge and experience, and to use these in practice in career development.

Security

- Continuation of already started activities to enable staff to complete tasks, projects and assignments.

Encouragement

- Encouragement of staff in their work, and encouragement of calculated risks in their contribution to the work of the organisation.

Worklife balance

- Responsiveness to employee domestic crisis.

Openness

- Building and sustaining openness (transparency) in the management of the organisation.

The ethics and behaviours that produce wellbeing and performance

Status

Leaders and managers are expected to show:

Competence as a person and a leader

- Emotional intelligence
- Intellectual flexibility

Attentiveness in every interaction

- Non-prejudicial, and non- discriminatory attentiveness
- Attentiveness to diverse interests and people

Honesty and trustworthiness

- Transparency in all actions
- Application of soundness, integrity and reliability in judgments

Selfless

- Humility

Staff and the public

Leaders and managers are expected to demonstrate behaviours that show:

Attentiveness

- Genuine attentiveness to the contents of an interaction by demonstrating listening, responsiveness and reaction.

Politeness

- Politeness in any interaction

Courtesy

- Placing the other person (people) at the forefront of an interaction

Personal communication

- Personal communication wherever possible; understanding the limitations of electronic communication.

The Use of Body language

- The use of body movements and expressions to show attentiveness.

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Addressing needs

- Positive responsiveness to individual needs, even in circumstances when the needs cannot be met, given all the circumstances.

Empathy

- An understanding of the other person's issues, ideas, thoughts and experiences

Intellectual flexibility

- Being able to think on ones feet and respond with credible choices, alternatives and ideas

Emotional intelligence

- Being self aware, self regulating, motivated, showing empathy and being socially adept

Negotiation

- Being able to negotiate a successful outcome in an interaction.

Sharing

- Sharing with others one's own thoughts and ideas

Reliability

- Doing what one says

Honesty

- Being open in an interaction

Clarity

- Being clearly understood in an interaction

Fairness

- Being fair to anyone in an interaction, taking account of all the circumstances, and to explain clearly the position that is taken and the reasons

Humility

- Acknowledging mistakes, misunderstandings, errors and faults, and to apologise where necessary.

Resolving conflicts

- Being able to confront a conflict at the time of conflict and to try and resolve any dispute at the time of the dispute.

Encouraging contribution

- Being able to motivate and encourage others in interactions.

Service

Leaders and managers are expected to be effective managers by demonstrating:

Appropriate interventions

- The appropriateness of interventions in meeting individual need.

Intervention effectiveness

- The effectiveness of interventions in producing positive outcomes.

Value and efficiency

- The guaranteed efficient delivery of services within the prescribed resources that represent genuine 'value'.

Patient satisfaction

- The satisfaction of patients (and their relatives and friends) receiving healthcare services they need and have been prescribed.

Society

Leaders and managers are expected to demonstrate their engagement with, and responsiveness to, society at large, by:

Impact on society

- Being aware of, and, where necessary, moderating the impact on society of healthcare organisations and the services they deliver

Promotion of health and wellbeing

- Participating with others in promoting health and wellbeing activities

Preventing harm

- Taking appropriate actions to prevent or limit the risks of harm in society arising from any healthcare activity
- Making judgements about the use of sensitive and confidential information in the public and society interest

The actions that produce wellbeing and effective performance

Leaders and managers are expected to demonstrate:

Decision making

- Justification for decisions based on appropriateness, evidence, experience, timeliness and feasibility.

Direction

- Providing direction based on analysis and with committed ambition

Co-ordination

- Integration of the mosaic of available resources to achieve a declared aim.

Control

- Reaching an agreed goal within agreed boundaries of time and resources.
- Keeping resources at his/her disposal within agreed boundaries.

Appendix 1

The profile of a **leader and manager** includes:

- The ability of the **ethical person** to shine through to leadership
- The ability to demonstrate the **skills, knowledge and experience** to undertake the tasks expected from him/her, both in terms of the job that is required to be completed, but with respect to his/her contribution the wider organisation.
- The adoption of a leadership style that lends itself to ethical considerations, for example **transformational and adaptive styles** – both of which engage followers in the decision making processes.
- The motivation to **prevent harm** to anyone.
- The motivation to ensure a **safe place** of work for staff and patients.
- The **respect** for the law and regulations
- The motivation to maintain and **develop skills**, knowledge and experience in oneself and others
- The motivation to be **objective, fair and reasonable**
- Taking **responsibility** for own as well as others actions
- The motivation to act with **conviction**
- The motivation to provide a **clear direction**
- The motivation to **communicate** effectively
- The discharge of a **Duty of Care** to patients, relatives and staff.