



Professional Relationships

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Professional Boundaries Policy

Introduction

The John Graham Centre (JGC) believes that staff need to observe professional boundaries in their relationships with students and their relatives, friends, visitors and representatives and that behaviour outside those boundaries could be regarded as abusive and a reason for disciplinary action. We recognise that it is often difficult to draw precise lines defining appropriate behaviour, so we encourage staff to be transparent in their dealings with students and others and to discuss with managers any ambiguities which arise. The starting point is that the needs of students should be at the centre of our care practice; any relationship which might threaten that objective should be questioned.

Aim

The aim of this policy is to lay down the principles and values underlying our approach to professional boundaries in relationships with students and their relatives, friends, visitors and representatives.

The Parties Involved

Staff:

This policy applies to all staff of The John Graham Centre, including temporary staff and volunteers, not only those who have regular contact with student in a support-giving capacity.

Students:

The term student is used in this policy to include current students, past students and anyone whose contact with the centre is concerned with their being or having been a user or potential user of services provided by the centre.

Policy

This policy includes relationships with people directly associated with students in a personal capacity — their relatives, friends, visitors and representatives. Professional Boundaries/ Professional relationships must be distinguished from personal relationships. Although we believe that staff can quite properly gain satisfaction from developing and sustaining relationships with students, the key consideration should always be the needs of the student rather than the personal or mutual satisfactions which characterise personal relationships.

Staff must therefore on occasions hold back from allowing a relationship to develop a dimension or to a degree which they personally would find satisfying, in the interests of ensuring that the needs of the student remain paramount.

Any member of staff who feels that a relationship is developing which might be judged inappropriate, should discuss the situation with their manager. The action to be taken may include varying the staff member's duties in order to limit contact with that person,

discussing the situation frankly with the person in order to re-establish appropriate boundaries, or in extreme circumstances controlling an individual's contacts with the centre.

Professional Codes of Practice

All staff should be familiar with and comply with the code of conduct and practice of the General Social Care Council (GSCC). Nursing and other professional staff should in addition comply with the standards of conduct and practice set by their own regulatory bodies.

Breaches of any of these codes by staff will be reported, and the centre will cooperate with any action taken by a regulatory body.

Action Outside the Work Situation

Although we do not in general seek to regulate the private behaviour of staff, we recognise that on occasions an individual's behaviour away from work may call into question their suitability to work in social care services. It is the responsibility of all staff therefore to behave, both at work and outside, in ways which uphold their own credibility and the centre's reputation.

Training

All staff will be encouraged to read this policy and related policies as part of their induction process and where necessary will be provided with training on professional boundaries.

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