

## Code of Conduct for Involvement

### Purpose of this document

This document sets out some clear expectations for PPI Volunteers and staff at the Institute of Mental Health, whilst recognising that human beings are fallible and we need to be generous and forgiving towards one another from time to time.

This is not intended to be a one-sided set of behavioural requirements written by staff obligating Public Contributors to conform, but rather is the foundation for a negotiated and equitable relationship between staff and Public Contributors.

### Status of this document

This is a working document that was approved for use by the Associate Director of the Institute of Mental Health from November 2017 and will be reviewed from time to time. It was drafted by the PPI Lead, utilising contributions from a variety of sources<sup>1</sup> and in the light of experience.

### Your entitlements

1. The expectations on you will be clear and every effort will be made to keep you informed of all relevant information. You will receive feedback on how your involvement has influenced the work of the organisation.
2. You will be offered training and support to carry out your role.
3. You will be entitled to utilise the payments and reimbursement of expenses policy. Your status in this role is that of a volunteer and so you are not entitled to any employment-related benefits in respect of your involvement, such as sick pay.
4. If you are involved on a regular basis, the organisation will provide you with a named person to be your primary point of contact.
5. You may refuse to undertake or take part in any activity that you are not comfortable with, without having to offer any explanation.
6. You may step down at any time, with no disadvantage to you whatsoever.

---

<sup>1</sup> Prof Andy Gibson shared a draft Code of Conduct from PenCLAHRC that formed the inspiration for this document. Some items also drawn from *Standards of Business Conduct* which is appendix 1 of Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust, Blackpool Borough Council, Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council and Lancashire County Council (2007) *Service users & carers involvement in staff recruitment and selection joint policy*. Much of the text has been amended and new items added in the light of experience and after comments from David WalDRAM and Sue Brown. Feedback from others is welcome to strengthen future versions of this document.

7. The organisation will confine its record of your involvement to information that is necessary for keeping in contact and supporting you to undertake your role. This information will remain confidential, being safeguarded and managed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. You will be able to see it.
8. You may receive support in connection with your physical and mental health. This means that the organisation will make reasonable adjustments to environments and ways of working to enable you to participate, in accordance with the Equalities Act 2010. If the team become concerned about your health or wellbeing, the named person will discuss this with you and, if necessary, exercise their duty of care by passing on information to your clinical team – keeping you in as much control as is possible and practical, while recognising that the organisation is not part of your personal health or social care support service.
9. To have access to a dispute resolution process that treats everyone with respect whilst prioritising the success of the project over individual needs. Wherever possible, breaches of this code of conduct will be addressed informally.

### **Your obligations**

1. To actively engage in the processes that you sign up to, to work towards the success of the project, and give apologies if you are unable to participate.
2. To treat others with respect and courtesy, such as by encouraging them to contribute and giving them opportunities to speak in meetings, recognising that people have a variety of opinions. To avoid interrupting others and making insulting or disparaging remarks of any kind, paying particular attention to the characteristics that are protected under the Equalities Act 2010.
3. To switch mobile phones off or to inform the group if it is necessary to keep the phone on silent mode, and then to leave the room to answer any calls.
4. To follow the guidance of the chairperson and make every effort to communicate honestly and plainly, avoiding jargon and acronyms so that everyone understands.
5. To respect the privacy and right to confidentiality of other people and of the organisation. Information shared in confidence will not be discussed outside the organisation without prior agreement from those concerned.
6. To disclose any interest, whether personal or on behalf of any other group, that may affect, influence or conflict with the interests of the organisation.
7. To prioritise community benefit and the success of the project rather than personal gain.
8. To refuse any enticement and avoid favouritism by being impartial, honest and supporting equality of opportunity.

9. Where group decisions are taken, to observe collective responsibility for those decisions.
10. To obtain permission from the organisation before speaking or writing about it in a public setting, and share any of these outputs with the organisation.
11. To use the organisation's complaints process, should a dispute or difficulty arise.
12. To avoid bringing the organisation into disrepute.
13. To inform your contact person if you wish to step down. To abide by the organisation's decision that you should stand down (either for a temporary 'rest and reflection' period or permanently) where this is required.
14. To abide by any other rules that may be agreed from time to time.

Thank you on behalf of the Institute of Mental Health.

We agree to abide by this Code of Conduct.

Print name of staff member:

Signed:

Print name of Public Contributor

Signed:

Date: