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UKPHR Code of Conduct

About this document

This document sets out the principles you must follow as a UKPHR registrant. It is the basis of all other guidance we issue. It is your professional responsibility to be prepared to justify any departure from the principles. Serious or persistent failure to follow this code will put your registration at risk.

This code complements *Good Public Health Practice* ([http://www.fph.org.uk/uploads/Good%20Public%20Health%20Practice%20-%20\(Jan12\)%20-%20DRAFT.pdf](http://www.fph.org.uk/uploads/Good%20Public%20Health%20Practice%20-%20(Jan12)%20-%20DRAFT.pdf)), which is endorsed by UKPHR

The seven principles

These key principles will guide and support you in the work you do and the decisions you make. They should influence all areas and stages of your professional education and practice. You should apply them to any work you are involved in, making appropriate judgements about how they apply to you.

As a UKPHR registrant you must:

1. Make the health and protection of the public your prime concern
2. Maintain high standards of professional and personal conduct
3. Be honest and trustworthy
4. Protect confidentiality
5. Respect the dignity of individuals and treat everyone fairly
6. Know the limits of your competence and act within them
7. Cooperate with the teams with which you work and interact

1. Make the health and protection of the public your prime concern

- 1.1 The interests of the public are paramount: put them before your own interests and those of any colleague or organisation
- 1.2 Provide prompt, clear and accurate information and advice to the public, employers and colleagues, exercising leadership in the promotion of public health

- 1.3 Take swift action and speak with candour if you become aware that your health, behaviour or professional performance, or those of a colleague, or the policy or practice of an organisation, may pose a risk to the health of the public, or of particular individuals or groups
- 1.4 If you are unsure how to act in a particular situation, seek advice and assistance from an experienced and appropriately qualified colleagues or a professional organisation
- 1.5 If, in a situation you are facing, you perceive a conflict between two or more principles in this Code, or between them and any other code or guidance that applies to you, take the course of action that you judge most likely to protect the public and promote public health

2. Maintain high standards of professional and personal conduct

- 2.1 Maintain proper standards of work and keep accurate records
- 2.2 Never abuse your professional position
- 2.3 Do not allow your professional independence to be compromised and never act under duress or undue influence: you should refuse offers of gifts and hospitality that may affect, or be perceived as affecting, your judgement
- 2.4 Avoid conflicts of interest that may arise between your professional work and the health of the public
- 2.5 Ensure that all your financial arrangements are transparent and would stand up to scrutiny if subject to public challenge
- 2.6 In all walks of life, avoid conduct that could affect or undermine the confidence placed in you and your profession
- 2.7 To show and maintain a personal, public and professional level of competence, you must engage and successfully complete all relevant revalidation processes

3. Be honest and trustworthy

- 3.1 Be honest and fair in all your dealings
- 3.2 Keep your promises
- 3.3 Maintain your integrity and justify the trust the public, employers and colleagues have in you and your profession
- 3.4 Do not knowingly mislead anyone
- 3.5 Be scrupulous in all financial matters
- 3.6 Apply best evidence honestly and impartially

4. Protect confidentiality

- 4.1 Information you learn about individuals in the course of your work must remain confidential unless there are lawful and justifiable reasons for disclosing it
- 4.2 Disclose information only to those entitled to receive it or to whom you are required or authorised to disclose it, and take effective steps to prevent accidental disclosure

- 4.3 Use information only for its intended purpose unless there are good, justifiable grounds for using it in another way
- 4.4 Ensure the safety of electronic and paper documents in your possession: store and transmit them securely; disclosed them only to those entitled to see them

5. Respect the dignity of individuals and treat everyone fairly

- 5.1 Treat everyone politely and with respect, recognising their dignity as individuals and their right to make choices and be involved in decisions which affect them
- 5.2 Treat everyone equally regardless of their age, gender, disability, race, appearance, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, marital or family circumstances, religion, beliefs, communication difficulties or perceived social status
- 5.3 Recognise the differences between individuals and groups; avoid stereotyping and treat everyone fairly and with compassion, paying particular attention to the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable people
- 5.4 Listen to individuals, groups and communities and give them all necessary and relevant information in a way they can use
- 5.5 Maintain appropriate professional boundaries in your dealings with colleagues and others, and do not abuse professional relationships.

6 Know the limits of your competence and act within them

- 6.1 Develop and update your professional knowledge and skills throughout your working life, undertaking relevant training and learning about best practice
- 6.2 Keep your knowledge, skills and professional performance under continuous review, reflecting on them systematically to identify strengths and weaknesses and complying with all requirements for continuing professional development
- 6.3 Take part in reflective quality assurance and audit activities
- 6.4 If you have responsibilities for learning and teaching, or training and mentoring, develop and maintain the skills, attitudes and practices such activities require
- 6.5 Find out about, understand and comply with, laws and regulations which affect your work
- 6.6 If you lack the knowledge, skills, experience or authority to undertake a piece of work, seek advice and assistance and, where indicated, refer the matter on to an appropriately qualified and experienced colleague
- 6.7 Do not hold yourself out as having a qualification or experience that you do not.

7 Cooperate with the teams with which you work and interact

- 7.1 Work collaboratively and do not undermine the work of others
- 7.2 Understand and respect the role each team member plays
- 7.3 Communicate effectively and share your knowledge, skills and experience with colleagues, employers and others in the interests of the public

- 7.4 Be flexible and adapt your working methods to match the needs of the teams and communities with whom you work
- 7.5 Provide proper supervision of tasks you have delegated to others, recognising that you remain accountable for work you have delegated
- 7.6 Be honest and impartial in assessing someone's suitability for employment or the performance of someone you have trained or supervised
- 7.7 Ensure you, or if employed, your employing organisation has arrangements in place to provide appropriate compensation for any who may suffer as a result of deficiencies in your work or that of your team
- 7.8 Make sure there is an effective complaints procedure where you work and follow it at all times
- 7.9 Act promptly and be open, truthful and transparent if something goes wrong; cooperate fully with those investigating or adjudicating upon a complaint
- 7.10 Make readily available to service users and the public served information about the complaint processes of UKPHR.

Review and ongoing relevance

This Code of Conduct is intended to be a living document which will need to be constantly monitored to ensure its ongoing relevance to public health practice. Such review will inevitably lead to its updating from time to time in the future. It is the UKPHR's responsibility to ensure that any updating is timely, effective and relevant. It is each registrant's responsibility to check for updates and to adjust practice in accordance with them.