

MINSTER CENTRE
CODE OF PRACTICE
FOR PRACTITIONERS

- 1.0 **Qualifications** - Practitioners are required to disclose their qualifications when requested and not claim, or imply, qualifications they do not have.
- 2.0 **Terms and Conditions and Methods of Practice** - Practitioners are required to disclose on request their terms, conditions and, where appropriate, methods or practice at the outset of any therapeutic relationship with a client.
- 3.0 **Confidentiality** - Practitioners are required to preserve confidentiality and to disclose, if requested, the limits of confidentiality and circumstances under which it might have to be broken to third parties.
 - 3.1 Exceptional circumstances may arise which give the practitioner good grounds for believing that the client will cause serious physical harm to others or themselves, or have harm caused to him/her. In such circumstances the client's consent to a change in the agreement about confidentiality should be sought whenever possible unless there are also good grounds for believing the client is no longer able to take responsibility for his/her own actions. Whenever possible, the decision to break confidentiality agreed between a practitioner and clients should be made only after consultation with a supervisor or an experienced practitioner. Clients are made aware of the legal limits of confidentiality at the outset of the working relationship.
 - 3.2 Practitioners' discussion of clients with professional colleagues should be purposeful and respectful and presented so that the client's identity is protected and details irrelevant to the discussion are omitted or substantially disguised. Confidentiality is maintained in the storage and disposal of records.
- 4.0 **Professional Relationships** - Practitioners should consider the client's best interest when making appropriate contact with the client's GP, psychiatric services or other relevant professionals with the client's knowledge.

Practitioners do not go beyond the limits of their competence, and refer clients to other professionals as may be appropriate.

- 5.0 **Relationships with Clients and Trainees** - Practitioners are required to maintain appropriate boundaries with their clients and trainees, and to take care to not exploit them in any way. It is unethical for practitioners to engage in sexual activity with current or past clients and trainees. Practitioners only make contact with third parties such as friends or relatives of the client or trainee with their express knowledge. Every effort is made to avoid dual relationships that could impair professional judgement, increase the risk of exploitation or otherwise confuse the therapeutic or training relationship. Where possible, care is taken to ensure that the client is well prepared for termination of the working relationship.
- 6.0 **Research** - Practitioners are required to clarify with clients the nature, purpose and conditions of any research in which the clients are to be involved and to ensure that informed and verifiable consent is given before commencement.
- 7.0 **Client Anonymity** - The anonymity of clients whose material is used for the purposes of publication, teaching and seminars is of paramount importance. When any form of publication of clinical material is being considered practitioners must obtain consent from clients whenever possible.
- 8.0 **Practitioner Competence** - Practitioners are required to maintain their ability to perform competently and to take necessary steps to do so. They should obtain supervision or consultation appropriate to their needs, monitor the limits of their competence and make appropriate referrals where necessary. Practitioners are in receipt of regular supervision appropriate to their experience, client load and field of work. The practitioner's work environment is appropriate to the services offered and conducive to the safety and privacy of the client.
- 9.0 **Indemnity Insurance** - Practitioners are required to ensure that their professional work is adequately covered by appropriate indemnity insurance.

10.0 **Detrimental Behaviour** - Practitioners are required to refrain from any behaviour that may be detrimental to the profession, to colleagues, to trainees or to their clients.

10.1 Practitioners are required to take appropriate action with regard to the behaviour of a colleague which may be detrimental to the profession, to colleagues, to trainees or to their clients. Where a practitioner is concerned that a colleague's conduct may be unprofessional the practitioner should normally speak of the concern to the individual concerned. If a satisfactory response is not received or the concern continues the matter should then be reported to any appropriate senior colleague of that practitioner, to that person's professional Ethics Committee or employer. Practitioners who have any such suspicions of serious professional misconduct should initiate the complaints procedure of the relevant member organisation. It is desirable to inform the colleague of the intent to report and of any action taken.

11.0 **Complaints Upheld and Convictions** - Practitioners are required to inform the Chair of the Minster Centre Ethics and Complaints Committee if any complaint is upheld against them in another professional organisation, if they are convicted or any criminal offence or if civil proceedings are brought against them in relation to their work as practitioners. Appropriate action will then be taken.