



2.07 Confidentiality

Policy Statement:

All staff, volunteers, students, and board members will maintain complete confidentiality regarding all information related to Hospice West Parry Sound (HWPS) clients, caregivers, staff and volunteers.

HWPS personnel are entrusted with sensitive information (written and verbal), related to many different aspects of clients, caregivers, and colleagues' lives. Respect of that trust is expected in every aspect of involvement with HWPS.

Purpose:

To protect the right to confidentiality of all clients/families, caregivers, staff, students and volunteers that are involved with the services of HWPS.

To safeguard HWPS from negative repercussions that could damage the agency's clients, caregivers, staff, volunteers, and students.

Documentation :

Confidentiality Agreement
Incident Form

Procedure:

All staff, volunteers, students and board members shall keep confidential any and all information they acquire during the course of their tenure that would reasonably be considered to be personal or confidential. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Personal information concerning clients and families;
- Personal information concerning all members of the Board of Directors;
- Confidential information obtained from third parties;
- Confidential information concerning the business or operations of HWPS.

Subject to legislation and regulations, any personal or confidential information shall be released only as required in the necessary course of employment and only by those persons authorised to release such information. Information covered by this policy shall include information that is written or unwritten or stored electronically.

Employees, volunteers and students shall make his or her best efforts to ascertain whether or not release of information is authorised, and if uncertain shall direct the inquiry to the Executive Director.



The Board of Directors and Executive Director shall together:

- Develop procedures to collect, store and allow access to personal and confidential information in keeping with the requirements of appropriate legislation;
- Provide employees, volunteers and students with direction concerning the appropriate release of information that they may encounter during the course of their employment.

All volunteers who may have access to confidential or personal information shall be provided with a copy of this policy and required to adhere to its requirements as a condition of being a volunteer.

All students who may have access to confidential or personal information shall be provided with a copy of this policy and required to adhere to its requirements as a condition of their contract.

The Executive Director shall ensure that all employees, volunteers and students covered by this policy shall be provided with a copy of this policy prior to commencing employment or duties with HWPS and shall sign a Confidentiality Agreement form yearly indicating s/he understands and agrees with the confidentiality policy.

Limitations of confidentiality

HWPS is legally obligated to disclose information about clients to the appropriate authorities, with or without client consent, in the following circumstances:

- There are reasonable grounds to believe that the individual is likely to harm his/herself or another person;
- There are reasonable grounds to believe that a child under the age of 16 years is at risk of being abused or neglected;
- There are reasonable grounds to believe that an elderly or disabled person has been or may be abused, neglected, or subject to financial exploitation;
- Client records have been subpoenaed by a court of law;
- Client disclosure that he or she has been sexually abused by a regulated health professional.

Breach in confidentiality

An employee's obligation with respect to confidentiality survives the termination of their employment with HWPS.

Any person who knowingly, recklessly, or negligently releases personal or confidential information without appropriate authority may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of the employment contract.

If a staff member or volunteer has concerns about a colleague regarding privacy and confidentiality of information, the matter should be raised with the Executive Director as soon as possible, either verbally or in writing using an Incident Form.



If service recipient (i.e. client, caregiver) is dissatisfied with the conduct of one or more of our staff members regarding privacy and confidentiality of information, the participant is encouraged to have their concern addressed following the process outlined in HWPS's complaint policy

Should the individual not be satisfied with the complaint management, they can report their concern to the Board of Directors.

Board Approval Date: May 2003

REVISED: February 28, 2006; July 22, 2009; January 24, 2017