

COMMUNICATION POLICY & GUIDELINES

1. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this Policy is to describe DRH's approach to communication within the organisation. This is to enable communication to be used effectively and consistently, so that all staff know what is expected of them and are aware of the important issues which are influencing the environment in which they work and the people they work with.

DRH exists to provide high quality, responsive services that meet the needs of individual service users and to enhance their quality of life. Our success is dependent on effective and efficient lines of communication internally and externally. Successful communication will help to ensure that our staff feel valued, that our service user's needs are fully met and that we secure the confidence of everyone who requires our services.

2. COMMUNICATION STANDARDS

- All communication will be respectful and consistent with building and maintaining a positive emotional climate
- Communication will be accurate, reliable and consistent
- Communication will be appropriate to both recipient and content
- All communications will reflect both our duty of confidentiality and duty of care
- Communication processes will support vertical, horizontal and external communication

3. DRH VALUES

DRH believe in the importance of communicating both what we are doing and how we intend to do it, to all staff, in an open and honest way.

This value is applicable at organisational and team levels - effective communication is **everyone's responsibility**. All staff must adhere to DRH Communication Policy.

We believe that with clarity about what is expected of us, we will be able to perform more effectively, contributing our own ideas about how to become more successful at realising our aims especially those that will improve the lives of the people we support.

4. STRUCTURES & STRATEGIES

4.1 Board of Directors

The board consists of a number of voluntary directors.

Board meetings are held monthly at Connaught House.

The board has two sub-committees meeting quarterly:

- **Finance and audit** : this committee receives reports on audits which have been carried out in the Homes and will make recommendations for improved financial management to the Board and/or Chief Executive.
- **Care Audit** : this sub-committee receives reports from the Chief Executive of any critical incidents or clinical development issues.
Directors will present reports of periodic visits to the Homes.

Key decisions will be notified to staff through:-

- Home Managers Meetings
- DRH website
- Direct contact with staff concerned

4.2 Home Managers Meetings

These are held monthly at Connaught House. Agenda items can be notified prior to the meeting or added to the agenda at the meeting. All Homes are expected to provide a representative. Staff other than Home Managers may suggest an item for discussion via their Home Manager or directly to the Chief Executive. Notes of these meetings are circulated to Homes for the attention of all staff and are the key medium for internal communication. Meeting notes will include brief summaries of issues discussed and decisions taken. The Chief Executive welcomes feedback from staff on any issue raised in these notes.

4.3 Team Meetings

All Home Managers are expected to hold staff meetings on a monthly basis. These will normally be chaired by the Home Manager and are

an important forum for communicating/agreeing developments within the Home. Home meetings will also provide an opportunity for the Home Manager to provide clarification of communications received by the Home, including notes of the Home Managers Meetings and any new policies, procedures and guidelines.

Home Managers should identify agenda items in advance wherever possible, and should seek to identify any issues which members of the staff team would wish to discuss.

The Home Development Plan should be reviewed at each meeting giving staff the opportunity to suggest additions and to note objectives which have been achieved.

Accurate notes should be kept of each meeting. Meeting notes should include brief summaries of issues discussed, together with any decisions, allocation of responsibility for further action and agreed timescales.

Meeting notes should be filed for future reference and made available to all members of the staff team.

4.4 Staff/Management Consultative/Negotiating Arrangements

Representatives of UNISON and the RCN meet with the Chief Executive on an ad hoc basis. Key decisions would normally be notified to staff via their Trade Union Representatives, or through the Notes of Home Manager's meetings.

4.5 Health, Safety and Welfare Committee

Representatives from each home meet with the DRH Health and Safety Officer quarterly. Agenda items should be sent to the Health & Safety Officer at least 3 weeks prior to the meeting or items can be discussed at the meeting under 'Any other business' at the end of the meeting. Minutes of the meeting are distributed to all Home Managers, Safety Representatives and are available to all staff for information..

4.5 Training Committee

The Training Committee meets quarterly and information is available to all staff via the minutes, committee members &, Home Managers. Occasionally full Training Committee meetings will be replaced with meetings of specific project working groups (e.g. communications; Human Givens Approach)

5 FORMAL DOCUMENTATION AVAILABLE

5.1 Organisational

- Company strategy
- Policy and Procedure Manual
- Health & Safety Manual
- Recruitment and Selection manual
- Staff Handbook
- Role, Purpose and Function (all homes)
- Discussion Papers
- Induction Programme
- Monthly monitoring reports
- Regulatory body – monitoring reports
- Investors in People reports
- Quarterly Health & Safety report
- Annual accounts
- Cost per placement
- Respite (short-term placement) activity
- Environmental monitoring programmes
- Monthly Budget Statements
- Monthly pay and attendance records
- Notes of Monthly Home meetings
- Board Papers (Homes & Business updates; Minutes)

5.2 In the Homes

- Organisational Policies & procedures
- Home communication book (i.e.daily occurrences/handover book)
- Daily Diary
- Home Policies and procedures
- Service user personal profiles
- Support planning documentation
- Information Notice Board
- Home Development Plan

All employees have a duty to ensure that they are aware of the content of Team meeting minutes, monthly Home Managers meeting minutes, location of the Information Notice Board within their environment and have appropriate knowledge of any formal documentation.

6.0 HEAD OFFICE STAFF

FINANCE

Jo Johnston	Company Accountant
Tim Miller	Senior Finance Assistants
Sandy Brock	Senior Finance Assistant
Mark Cleaver	Finance Assistant
Deborah Budd	Finance Assistant

Information Invoice Payments and Queries
Salaries
Pensions
Budgets
Homes Bank Balances Reconciliation

RISK MANAGEMENT

Justin O'Beirne

Untoward Incident monitoring
Manual Handling & Risk Assessment training
Crisis Prevention training

Information Untoward Incident reports & statistics

ADMINISTRATION

Pat MacGregor	General Administrator
Zoe Sams	Secretary
Louise Hickey	Admin Assistant

Information General Day to Day queries, messages etc.
Transport Administration
Mental Health Act Administration
Training administration
Investors in People Administration

LIAISON OFFICERS

Deborah Strange
Jill Robbins
Charlotte Keith

Assistance with management and maintenance of premises
Supply of resources into the Home

Support with recruitment and selection
Personnel administration
Quality monitoring
Monitoring/control of non-staff budgets
Liaison with external organisation

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Jill Mildon

NVQ/LDAF coordinator

CHIEF EXECUTIVE & DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE

Sean Gray
Gillian Northcote

clinical Governance
Clinical management systems
Organisational and strategic planning
Personnel management
Contract monitoring
Continuous improvement management

24 Hour EMERGENCY ON CALL

Gillian Northcote

Sean Gray

7. COMMUNICATION WITH M.P'S, PRESS OR MEDIA

All communication with elected politicians, press/media will be conducted by the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive or Chairman.

COMMUNICATION STANDARDS MONITORING

**The following indicators will be monitored
as part of DRH's monitoring arrangements:**

- All Homes will be provided with DRH Policy and Procedure Manuals
- DRH Policies will be available via the DRH website www.drh-uk.org
- All DRH Policies and Procedures will be circulated in draft form to staff for comment prior to final implementation.
- All staff will sign to confirm that they have read each policy.
- All staff will be able to confirm that they have had the opportunity to comment on draft policies
- All staff will be able to describe their own role in relation to the goals of their work team and DRH as a whole
- All staff will be able to confirm that they have had the opportunity to influence the contents of the Home Development Plan
- All staff have access to a document containing the organisations aims and objectives
- All staff will have access to Home Managers Meeting's minutes.
- All staff will have the opportunity to make suggestions and raise questions regarding the functioning and direction of their work team and DRH as a whole
- DRH will make every reasonable effort to communicate effectively its role and function to appropriate external agencies and individuals
- Sample monitoring will confirm satisfaction with the standard of communication maintained by all DRH staff.

March 2001
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