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HPAC health practice associates council

Your duties as a registrant

Standards of conduct, performance and ethics

2018

HPAC Standards of conduct, performance and ethics

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1. Introduction

The Health Practice Associates Council (HPAC) registry is currently a voluntary regulator set up to protect the public and maintain the standards of the professions of which we register.

The HPAC keeps a register of professionals who meet our standards of education and competency for their professional skills, knowledge and behaviour.

Professions who are eligible for registration can be found on our website www.HPAC-uk.org and are referred to as registrants.

This document sets out the standards of conduct, performance and ethics we expect of our registrants.

Our registrants work in a range of settings, which include direct practice, management, education and research, working with a variety of different people, including patients, clients, carers and other professionals.

Service users, carers and the public

If you are receiving care, treatment or other services from one of our registrants, or you might do so in the future, the standards will help you to understand how our registrants should behave towards you.

On the rare occasions that something goes wrong, anyone can raise a concern through our fitness to practice process. The HPAC can take action when there are proven concerns about a registrants knowledge, skills or behaviour which is a breach of standards outlined by registration with the HPAC.

The HPAC use these values, standards and ethics to help us decide whether we need to take action to protect the public.

Registrants and applicants

If you are registered with us, you must make sure that you are familiar with the standards and that you continue to meet them. If you are applying to be registered, by agreeing to HPAC's terms and conditions you are declaring that you will keep to the standards once you are registered.

As a registrant, you are personally responsible for the way you behave. You will need to use your judgement so that you make informed and reasonable decisions and meet the standards. You must always be prepared to justify your decisions and actions. Your standard of behavior and conduct applies both when on and off duty.

Making informed and reasonable decisions might include getting advice and support from colleagues, education providers, employers, professional bodies, trade unions or other people. We recognise the valuable role professional bodies play in representing and promoting the interests of their members. This often includes providing guidance and advice about good practice, which can help you meet the standards.

Students

Students studying to become qualified to enter our register should at all times adhere to the standards of conduct, performance and ethics outlined in this document.

2. HPAC Values

- To preserve life, to remove suffering,
- To safeguard the vulnerable
- To behave ethically and morally
- To manage patients and service users equally and without prejudice
- To preserve dignity and respect the rights of individuals
- To represent the profession in a positive way
- To maintain competency and strive for excellence
- To accept responsibility and be accountable for actions
- To educate others
- To maintain trust and confidentiality
- To be knowledgeable in law and legislation as it relates to patient care and ethics

3. HPAC Standards and ethics

3.1 Service users

3.1.1 You must treat service users and carers as individuals, respecting their privacy and dignity and act conscientiously.
3.1.2 You must work in partnership with service users and carers, involving them, where appropriate, in decisions about the care, treatment or other services to be provided.
3.1.3 You must encourage and help service users, where appropriate, to maintain their own health and well-being, and support them so they can make informed decisions.
3.1.4 You must ensure that you have consent from service users or other appropriate authority before you provide care, treatment or other services.
3.1.5 You must not discriminate against service users, carers or colleagues by allowing your personal views to affect your professional relationships or the care, treatment or other services that you provide.
3.1.6 You must challenge colleagues if you think that they have discriminated against, or are discriminating against, service users, carers and colleagues.
3.1.7 You must keep your relationships with service users and carers professional.

3.2 Working with others

3.2.1 You must be polite and considerate
3.2.2 You must listen to service users and carers and take account of their needs and wishes.
3.2.3 You must give service users and carers with consent if appropriate the information they want or need, in a way they can understand.
3.2.4 You must make sure that, where possible, arrangements are made to meet service users' and carers' language and communication needs.
3.2.5 You must work in partnership with colleagues, sharing your skills, knowledge and experience where appropriate, for the benefit of service users and carers.
3.2.6 You must share relevant information, where appropriate, with colleagues involved in the care, treatment or other services provided to a service user.
3.2.7 You must use all forms of communication appropriately and responsibly, including social media and networking websites.

3.3 Scope of practice

3.3.1 You must keep within your scope of practice by only practicing in the areas you have appropriate knowledge, skills and experience for.
3.3.2 You must refer a service user to another practitioner if the care, treatment or other services they need are beyond your scope of practice.

3.3.3 You must keep your knowledge and skills up to date and relevant to your scope of practice through continuing professional development.
3.3.4 You must keep up to date with and follow the law, our guidance and other requirements relevant to your practice.
3.3.5 You must ask for feedback and use it to improve your practice.

3.4 Delegation and working with others

3.4.1 You must only delegate work to someone who has the knowledge, skills and experience needed to carry it out safely and effectively.
3.4.2 You must continue to provide appropriate supervision and support to those you delegate work to as appropriate to your scope of practice.

3.5 Patient/Service user information

3.5.1 You must treat information about service users as confidential.
3.5.2 You must only disclose confidential information relating to service users if:
- you have permission;
- the law allows this;
- it is in the service user's best interests; or
- it is in the public interest, such as if it is necessary to protect public safety or prevent harm to other people.

3.6 Reducing the risk of harm

3.6.1 You must take all reasonable steps to reduce the risk of harm to service users, carers and colleagues as far as possible.
3.6.2 You must not do anything, or allow someone else to do anything, which could put the health or safety of a service user, carer or colleague at unacceptable risk.
3.6.3 You must make changes to how you practice, or stop practicing, if your physical or mental health may affect your performance or judgement or put others at risk for any other reason.

3.7 Safety and well being

3.7.1 You must report any concerns about the safety or well-being of service users promptly and appropriately.
3.7.2 You must support and encourage others to report concerns and not prevent anyone from raising concerns.
3.7.3 You must take appropriate action if you have concerns about the safety or well-being of children or vulnerable adults.
3.7.4 You must make sure that the safety and well-being of service users always comes before any professional or other loyalties.
3.7.5 You must follow up concerns you have reported and, if necessary, escalate them.
3.7.6 You must acknowledge and act on concerns raised to you, investigating, escalating or dealing with those concerns where it is appropriate for you to do so.

3.8 Acting responsibly

3.8.1 You must be open and honest when something has gone wrong with the care, treatment or other services that you provide by:
- informing service users or, where appropriate, their carers, that something has gone wrong;
- apologising;
- taking action to put matters right if possible; and
- making sure that service users or, where appropriate, their carers, receive a full and prompt explanation of what has happened and any likely effects.

3.8.2 You must support service users and carers who want to raise concerns about the care, treatment or other services they have received.
3.8.3 You must give a helpful and honest response to anyone who complains about the care, treatment or other services they have received.

3.9 Acting professionally

3.9.1 You must make sure that your conduct justifies the public's trust and confidence in you and your profession.
3.9.2 You must be honest about your experience, qualifications and skills.
3.9.3 You must make sure that any promotional activities you are involved in are accurate and are not likely to mislead.
3.9.4 You must declare issues that might create conflicts of interest and make sure that they do not influence your judgement.
3.9.5 You must integrate good teamworking into your clinical practice
3.9.6 You must ensure that you maintain confidentiality, apply high standards of information governance, both on and off duty, using social media responsibly

3.10 Self-reporting

3.10.1 You must tell us as soon as possible if:
- you accept a caution from the police or you have been charged with, or found guilty of, a criminal offence;
- another organisation responsible for regulating a health or social-care profession has taken action or made a finding against you; or
- you have had any restriction placed on your practice, or been suspended or dismissed by an employer, client or contractor, because of concerns about your conduct or competence.

3.10.2 You must co-operate with any investigation into your conduct or competence, the conduct or competence of others, or the care, treatment or other services provided to service users.

3.11 Maintaining accurate records

3.11.1 You must keep full, clear, and accurate records for everyone you care for, treat, or provide other services to in accordance with employer's policy.
3.11.2 You must complete all records promptly and as soon as possible after providing care, treatment or other services.
3.11.3 You must keep records secure by protecting them from loss, damage or inappropriate access.

4. Fitness to practice

Fitness to practice is that the registrant has the skills, knowledge, character and health they need to practice their profession safely and effectively.

We can consider concerns which members of the public, employers, professionals, the police and other people raise about a registrant's fitness to practice.

When we are deciding whether we need to take any action against a registrant to protect the public, we look at whether the registrant has met the standards set by HPAC.

You can find out more information about our fitness to practice process on our website.

5. HPAC Core Competencies

The "core competencies" are the educational standards that we expect from registrants of varying grades. Whilst registrants may be trained in a variety of skills and have knowledge on a range of different subject we expect these core subjects to be maintained and updated regularly.

Failure to maintain the core knowledge base would be failure to meet our essential core standards. The core competencies and skills matrix can be downloaded from the HPAC website.

6. Glossary

Apologising - Making it clear that you are sorry about what has happened.
The HPAC as with other regulators does not regard an apology in itself as an admission of liability or wrongdoing.

Carer - Anyone who looks after, or provides support to, a family member, partner or friend.

Care, treatment or other services - A general term to describe the different work that our registrants carry out.

Colleague - Other health and care professionals, students and trainees, support workers, professional carers and others involved in providing care, treatment or other services to service users.

Conduct - A health and care professional's behaviour.

Consent - Permission for a registrant to provide care, treatment or other services, given by a service user, or someone acting on their behalf, after receiving all the information they reasonably need to make that decision.

Delegate - To ask someone else to carry out a task on your behalf.

Disclose - In these standards, this refers to making a formal decision to share information about a service user with others, such as the police.

Discriminate - To unfairly treat a person or group of people differently from other people or groups of people. This includes treating others differently because of your views about their lifestyle, culture or their social or economic status, as well as the characteristics protected by law – age, disability, gender reassignment, race, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Escalate - To pass on a concern about a service user's safety or well-being to someone who is better able to act on it, for example, a more senior colleague, a manager or a regulator.

Ethics - The values that guide a person's behaviour or judgement.

Practitioner - A healthcare professional who is currently practicing in their profession.

Refer - To ask someone else to provide care, treatment or other services which are beyond your scope of practice or, where relevant, because the service user has asked for a second opinion.

Scope of practice - The areas in which a registrant has the knowledge, skills and experience necessary to practice safely and effectively.

Service user - Anyone who uses or is affected by the services of registrants, for example, patients or clients.

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