

Maintain professional boundaries within the custodial environment

Overview

This standard is about maintaining professional boundaries within the custodial environment. It has been developed for staff who work closely with individuals and covers the importance of developing an appropriate relationship that does not run the risk of exploiting power or yielding inappropriate power to an individual.

It also covers mitigating the risk of manipulation, conditioning and corruption of staff by individuals in custody, for example when individual prisoners or a group of individuals try to persuade, coerce, threaten, intimidate, blackmail or form inappropriate relationships with members of staff for their own personal benefit or gain.

This standard applies to everyone who works in the custodial setting.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. communicate in ways that can be understood by the individuals, responding to their different needs, abilities and preferences
2. explain clearly to individuals in custody:
 - 2.1 your role and responsibilities
 - 2.2 how your role fits with the roles and responsibilities of other team members
 - 2.3 what confidentiality is and its limits
 - 2.4 the importance of professional boundaries
 - 2.5 the boundaries that come with developing a professional relationship with an individual
3. help individuals understand that the professional relationship is a joint pursuit, initiated and maintained by you, and how and when the individual can expect the professional relationship to terminate
4. be alert and respond appropriately to any form of manipulation, conditioning and corruption of yourself and others
5. avoid disclosure of personal information about yourself and others and when necessary explain why you are doing this
6. avoid disclosure of security procedures and information and when necessary explain why you are doing this
7. identify the nature and challenges of the professional relationships in your specific workplace
8. respond appropriately to individuals who are attempting to manipulate and condition you, and identify what impact this may have on yourself and others
9. carry out your working duties in accordance with legal and organisational requirements and procedures at all times
10. identify the structures are in place to provide supervision / support on a regular, on- going basis and make use of these
11. use your organisation's reporting mechanism to disclose potential vulnerabilities and conflicts of interest or when you believe that professional boundaries have been exceeded by yourself or others
12. debrief with your line manager or professional supervisor without delay if you think you might have behaved in a way that has exceeded professional boundaries, including manipulation and conditioning

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. current, relevant legislation, policies, procedures, codes of practice and practice advice for maintaining professional boundaries
2. current, relevant legislation and organisational requirements in relation to race, diversity and human rights
3. current, relevant legislation and organisational requirements in relation to health and safety
4. current policy and codes of practice in relation to professional conduct
5. methods of communication and how to communicate clearly and effectively
6. your role and responsibilities, and how they fit with the roles and responsibilities of other team members
7. the importance of confidentiality, what it is and its limitations
8. the information that may be given, and to whom
9. the importance of understanding the boundaries that come with developing a professional relationship with an individual
10. the importance of being aware of professional boundaries being exceeded at any time and why this occurs
11. the importance of being alert and how to respond appropriately to any form of manipulation, conditioning and corruption of yourself and others
12. the different forms of manipulation, conditioning and corruption and the timescales these can happen over
13. the personal information about yourself and others that should not be disclosed and why
14. the security procedures and information that should not be disclosed and why
15. how to manage your own emotions, and how to identify what impact these emotions may have on yourself and others
16. the importance of carrying out your working duties in accordance with legal and organisational requirements and procedures at all times and what the consequences are if you fail to do so
17. the structures available which provide supervision/support on a regular, on-going basis
18. how to identify when professional boundaries have been exceeded and the potential consequences
19. the importance of reporting vulnerabilities and conflict of interest in line with your organisation's requirements
20. how information obtained from individuals should be recorded and stored
21. how to record information when professional boundaries have been

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- exceeded
- 22. the importance of having a debrief with your line manager or professional supervisor if you think you might have behaved in a way that exceeded professional boundaries
- 23. the types of documentation which must be completed and how to complete it in line with organisational requirements

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