

Common Values Statement by the Chief Executives Group of the Health Care Regulators on professional values (as agreed by the Chief Executives of the Regulatory Bodies in 2006)

Values of Health Care Professionals

All health care professionals are personally accountable for their actions and must be able to explain and justify their decisions. Health care professionals work in many different types of practice. They all have a duty to protect and promote the needs of their patients and clients.

To do this they must:

1. Be open with patients and clients and show respect for their dignity, individuality and privacy:

- Listen to patients and clients;
- Keep information about patients and clients confidential;
- Make sure their beliefs and values do not prejudice their patients' or clients' care.

2. Respect patients' and clients' right to be involved in decisions about their treatment and health care:

- Provide information about patients' and clients' conditions and treatment options in a way they can understand;
- Obtain appropriate consent before investigating conditions and providing treatment;
- Ensure that patients have easy access to their health records.

3. Justify public trust and confidence by being honest and trustworthy:

- Act with integrity and never abuse their professional standing;
- Never ask for, nor accept any inducement, gift, hospitality or referral which may affect, or be seen to affect, their judgement;
- Recommend the use of particular products or services only on the basis of clinical judgement and not commercial gain;
- Declare any personal interests to those who may be affected.

4. Provide a good standard of practice and care:

- Recognise and work within the limits of their knowledge, skills and experience;
- Maintain and improve their professional knowledge, skills and performance;

- Make records promptly and include all relevant information in a clear and legible form.

5. Act quickly to protect patients, clients and colleagues from risk of harm:

- If either their own, or another health care worker's conduct, health or performance may place patients, clients or colleagues at risk;
- If there are risks of infection or other dangers in the environment.

6. Co-operate with colleagues from their own and other professions:

- Respect and encourage the skills and contributions which others bring to the care of patients and clients;
- Within their work environment, support professional colleagues in developing professional knowledge, skills and performance;
Not require colleagues to take on responsibilities that are beyond their level of knowledge, skills and experience.