

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT – STAGE 1

EIA Ref	C/12/54	
Lead Officer	Name	Louise Wilson
	Position	Lead Officer People and Communities
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SECTION 1 –Context & Background

1.1 What is the title of the policy/practice?

Professional Boundaries Guidance, 2012

1.2 What is the current status of the policy/practice?

Existing ☒

Changed ☐

New ☐

1.3 What are the principal aims and intended outcomes of the policy/practice?

The Professional Boundaries Supplementary Guidance has been designed to reduce the risk of allegations and complaints, that could be avoided by giving staff and volunteers some practical guidance on how to establish and maintain professional relationships, with the vulnerable people who they have contact with during the course of their work. This guidance will raise awareness of illegal, inappropriate and inadvisable practices and help staff and volunteers to work in a way that can best protect both the service user and themselves.

1.4 Who has primary responsibility for delivering the policy/practice?

The primary responsibility for delivering this guidance is by the staff members and their line managers.

1.5 Who are the main stakeholders?

This supplementary guidance has been written for all operational teams, who have regular contact with service users during the course of their work.

1.6 Who is the policy/practice intended to affect?

Residents ☐

Staff ☒

Specific Group(s) ☐

(add details below)

Staff – Staff members who are responsible for providing care and support to service users will already work to a Professional Code of Practice. The Professional Boundaries Supplementary Guidance can be used in addition to the Professional Code of Practice. It emphasises the importance that a professional relationship should be maintained at all times between other staff members and service users. In addition, it highlights the working practices

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expected of Halton Borough Council employees. The policy has been written to ensure staff members stay safe whilst at work and are protected from allegations which could have been prevented if professional boundaries had been in place and maintained.

Service Users – By ensuring that staff members are working towards a professional code of practice and are encouraged to maintain professional boundaries at all times, this ensure that both staff members and service users are not placed in a vulnerable situation.

1.7 Are there any other related policies/practices?

Safeguarding Adults in Halton Inter-Agency Policy, Procedure and Guidance, 2010

Employee Handbook 2009

Halton Borough Council's Confidential Reporting Code (Whistle-Blowing Policy)

Intimate Relationships and Sexual Health Needs for Adults Policy, Procedure and Practice, 2012

Safer Handling Policy, 2010

Restrictive Physical Interventions Policy, Procedure and Practice

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SECTION 2 – Consideration of Impact

2.1 Relevance: – the Public Sector Equality Duty

Does this policy / practice / service have due regard to the need to: -

- (a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conflict that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between two persons who share a relevant protected characteristic
- (c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

Yes (✓) No ()

State reasons below

(Relevance to service users/staff)

Reduces risk of inequalities in service provision for staff and service users

2.2 Has data and information been used in determining the impact of the policy/procedure under review?

(for example research, surveys, complaints, consultation, , monitoring data)

Equality Group(s)	The supplementary guidance has been viewed as having a neutral impact on the specified equality groups. This is due to the policy being produced in order to protect and safeguard service users and staff members. The guidance should be used in conjunction with professional codes of practice, but does not supersede any professional code that staff should work to. By providing supplementary guidance to protect both staff members and service users, this will ensure that professional relationships are maintained. If the guidance is adhered to, any risk of discrimination or poor professional practice should be eliminated.
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Baseline data and information

The Equality Impact Assessment completed following the creation of the Professional Boundaries Handbook, identified no negative impacts on the various equality groups identified. Once the guidance has been implemented by the various operational teams, if they were to identify any negative impact on a service user(s), the policy would be reviewed with immediate effect, in order to resolve any such negative impact from continuing.

The Professional Boundaries Supplementary Guidance will ensure that both service users and staff members are protected by Professional Codes of Practice, which have been supplemented by this guidance. The guidance services to not only inform staff members of their rights and responsibilities, but it also reduces the risk of service users being subjected to abuse

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2.3 On the basis of evidence, has the actual/potential impact of the policy/practice been judged to be positive (+), neutral (=) or negative (-) for each of the equality groups and in what way? Is the level of impact judged to be high (H), medium ((M), or low (L)?

Protected Characteristic	Impact type +, =, -	Level H, M, L, -	Nature of impact
Age	=	/	
Disability	=	/	
Gender	=	/	
Race/ethnicity	=	/	
Religion / belief	=	/	
Sexual Orientation	=	/	
Transgender	=	/	
Marital status/ Civil Partnerships	=	/	
Pregnancy/Maternity	=	/	
In Halton two further vulnerable groups have been identified: -			
Carers	=	/	
Socio – economic disadvantage	=	/	

2.4 Does the policy/practice have any potential impact on safeguarding vulnerable people?

Safeguarding vulnerable people is everyone's business and all organisations should take steps to prevent abuse from happening and ensure an appropriate response when abuse happens or is suspected. Triggers that suggest an organisation has an impact on Safeguarding Adults can be found on the audit toolkit at

<http://intranet/documents/safeguardingvuladults/audittoolpolicyss52?a=5441>

2.5 How will the impact of the policy/practice be monitored?

The Professional Boundaries Supplementary Guidance document will be reviewed in 12 months' time. All policies produced by the People and Communities Policy Team are reviewed 12 months after development. The relevant Operational Directors, Divisional Managers, Principal Managers and Practice Managers are contacted in order to establish whether any amendments are required to the body of the report, or if there have been any issues regarding the implementation of the policy.

2.6 Who will be responsible for monitoring?

The 12 month review of the Professional Boundaries Supplementary Guidance will be undertaken by a Policy Officer within the People and Communities Policy Team. The reviewed policy will be presented to SMT upon completion, along with an updated CIRA.

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- 2.7** If any negative impacts, or potential negative impacts, have been identified what mitigating actions will be put in place, thereby eliminating the need for a further Stage 2 assessment
Where none have been identified insert 'no further action required' in the first column

Action & purpose / outcome	Priority	Timeframe	Lead Officer
No further action	(H, M, L)		

2.8 Summary of stakeholders involved in this review

Name / Job Title	Organisation/representative of
Katy Rushworth, Policy Officer	People and Communities Policy Team, Halton Borough Council
Louise Wilson, Lead Officer	People and Communities Policy Team, Halton Borough Council

2.9 Completion Statement

As the identified Lead Officer of this review I confirm that:-
No negative impact has been identified for one or more equality groups and that a Stage 2 Assessment is not required ☒

Signed: Louise Wilson	Date: 21.03.2012
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Completed EIAs should be sent to Les Unsworth, Corporate and Organisational Policy, to be given a unique reference number and for inclusion on the central register.

Appendix 1

Public Sector Equality Duty – EIA Checklist

The Equality Act s149 (the Public Sector Equality Duty) requires is that HBC has due regard to the need to:-

- (a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

These are matters that we must show we have taken into the reckoning in making decisions about the Council's functions. We therefore need evidence of the following:

1. We know about the duty
2. We have reflected on the duty
3. We have consulted those affected or likely to be affected
4. We have used relevant information already in the council's possession (surveys etc.)
5. We have allowed adequate time for consultation with those affected and/or those who speak for those affected

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6. We have allowed adequate time for earnest and genuine consideration of the information and views received
7. We have identified any adverse effects
8. We have sought to mitigate any adverse effects of decisions
9. We have identified principal options
10. Decision makers have not made up their mind in advance
11. We have considered all material considerations including our own financial situation, policy and strategy documents alongside along views received from consultees but have not applied those policies etc. In a rigid or unthinking way.