



Policy on Confidentiality

Date: Version 1 2018

Date: Version 2 September 2022

1. Guiding Principles

1.1 The Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of this Confidentiality Policy is to provide the Directors/ Trustees, staff, volunteers, service users and clients within the Centre with an understanding of:

- What confidentiality is;
- Clear guidelines regarding handling of confidential information;
- Prescribed limits of behaviour and assigned responsibilities in relation to confidentiality.

The Directors/ Trustees of Mohill Family Support Centre reserves the right to change the Policy and to expect adherence to the changed Policy.

Confidentiality is a central and an integral part of the Centre, it offers safety and privacy. Information given is held in strict confidence and in line with Data Protection Acts.

1.2 Confidentiality

The Directors/Trustees, employees and volunteers are required at all times to maintain absolute confidentiality in respect of matters which come to their knowledge in the course of their work. This includes matters internal to the Centre and matters in relation to users of the Centre (unless there is a breach of the law or a child protection issue). This does not apply to communications made by them in the normal conduct of work for the Centre or when specific consent to disclose information has been given by the Board of Directors/Trustees.

The following information outlines other situations where confidentiality would be essential:

- One to one conversations with service users of the Centre;
- Board meetings and sub-committee meetings;
- Support, supervision and appraisal discussions;

- Files which are deemed confidential by the Coordinator, Directors/Trustees, including personal information of volunteers, staff and service users;
- Meetings between staff;
- Discussions in relation to finances and contractual negotiations.

Employees and Directors/Trustees are also required and expected to maintain this standard of confidentiality when they leave the Centre.

1.3 Purpose of collecting Information/Data

Mohill Family Support Centre collects and uses personal information for the following purposes only.

- Meet insurance policy requirements;
- Provide personnel, payroll and pension administration services;
- Up-date databases within the Centre;
- Enhance or improve service users experience of services;
- Recruit and select staff and volunteers for available positions;
- Provide screening services, including Garda Vetting;
- Provide one to one support services;
- Comply with good employment practice;
- Make assessments and referrals;
- Deal with grievance and disciplinary issues.

1.4 Principles Governing Confidentiality

In addition to the duty of care regarding confidentiality outlined above, Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003 and General Data Protection Regulations 2018 imposes legal obligations on the Directors/Trustees, staff and volunteers of Mohill Family Support Centre.

The Centre takes seriously its responsibilities under the Data Protection Acts. The Centre is aware of and acts in accordance with the following eight Data Protection Principles regarding information:

- Obtain and process information fairly;
- Keep it only for one or more specified, explicit and lawful purposes;
- Use and disclose information only in ways compatible with these purposes;
- Keep it safe and secure;
- Keep it accurate, complete and up-to-date;
- Ensure it is adequate, relevant and not excessive;
- Retain for no longer than is necessary;
- Allow individual's access to their personal data, on request.

1.5 Limits to Confidentiality

In exceptional circumstances the Centre may need to break confidentiality if they believe there is a real intent of serious harm or danger to either their service user/ client or another individual. Such circumstances may pertain to issues relating to child protection, sexual abuse, rape, self-harm, suicidal ideation or criminal activity. In as far as is possible, in such cases, a full explanation will be given regarding the necessary procedures that may need to be taken.

1.6 Responsibilities

The Board of Directors/Trustees is responsible for ensuring that the Board, all staff and volunteers involved in dealing with confidential information and data receive appropriate training, supervision and support regarding the Policy and their legal responsibilities. All staff must sign a Confidentiality Agreement.

The Board of Director's/Trustees Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the Directors/Trustees to ensure that a Policy is in place and adhered to.

Co-ordinator's Responsibility

The Co-ordinator is responsible for ensuring that a copy of this document is available to all staff and volunteers and is available to users of the service. It is the responsibility of the Co-ordinator to ensure that individual staff members sign the agreement and have received training as necessary.

Individual's Responsibility

Individual Directors/Trustees, staff and volunteers are required to act in accordance with the Policy, failure to do so will be considered as an act of gross misconduct and will result in disciplinary action.

1.7 Wrongful Disclosure

Wrongful disclosure can occur in at least two ways. It can be by either act or omission. The first would be where confidential information is deliberately passed on to a third party. The second would be where confidential information is disclosed to a third party through negligence. Wrongful disclosure will be considered as an act of gross misconduct and will result in disciplinary action.

2. Policy Review

Constructive feedback on this Policy is always welcome. It must be given to the Co-ordinator of Mohill Family Support Centre who will ensure that this is relayed to the Board of Directors/Trustees who will consider changes to be made.

This Policy was discussed and ratified at a meeting of the Board of Directors/Trustees on:

Proposed by: _____

Position on the Board: _____

Seconded by: _____

Position on the Board: _____

Confidentiality Agreement

I have read and understand the content of Mohill Family Support Centre Confidentiality Policy.

I agree to act in accordance with the Confidentiality Policy.

I am aware that information

- a) Is or has been obtained during, or in the course involvement, or has otherwise been acquired in trust due to involvement with the Centre,
- b) Relates particularly to the business of the Centre, service users or that of other persons or bodies with whom we have dealings of any sort, and
- c) Has not been made public by, or with our authority;
- d) Is confidential, and (save in the course of our business or as required by law) a Director/Trustees / employee / volunteer / service user shall not at any time, whether before or after the end of their involvement, disclose such information in any form to any person without the written consent of the Board of Directors/Trustees.

I agree to exercise care to keep safe all documentary or other material containing confidential information, and at the time of end of my involvement with Mohill Family Support Centre or at any other time upon demand, return to the Centre any such material in my possession.

I agree not to disclose any information held by the Centre and not independently available to a third party without the individual's written consent and permission from the Board of Directors/Trustees.

I realise that a breach of confidentiality is considered an act of gross misconduct and is subject to disciplinary action.

Signed: _____

Role: _____

Dated: _____