



EQUALLY DIFFERENT
THERAPY

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Duty of Candour Policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Accessibility Policy
Bullying and Harassment Policy
Complaints Policy
Confidentiality Policy
Consent Policy
Dignity and Respect Policy
Significant/Critical Event Policy

Overview

Equally Different Therapy recognise that despite the best intentions of the Directors and all who work in association with them sometimes things can go wrong and/or mistakes can be made.

Equally Different Therapy promotes a culture that encourages candour, openness and honesty at all levels. We have policies and procedures in place to support this and all who work in association with Equally Different Therapy must be aware of these, have read them and agree to follow them (**associate checklist, induction checklist, associate contract**).

Equally Different Therapy Directors will take seriously any bullying and harassment in relation to duty of candour and will investigate any instances where one associate may have obstructed another in exercising their duty of candour. Where necessary this will be reported to professional registration bodies.

All who work in association with Equally Different Therapy must understand their responsibilities in relation to the duty of candour, be open and honest with clients and apologise when things go wrong. The Equally Different Therapy significant/critical event reporting process should be used in all situations so that there are clear records and the opportunity to reflect and learn across Equally Different Therapy.

Equally Different Therapy Directors will always take seriously any significant/critical event. Any Associates involved will be supported.

Communication

A significant/critical event includes anything that, in the reasonable opinion of anyone working in association with Equally Different Therapy, could result in, or appear to have resulted in, the death of the person using the service or severe harm, moderate harm, or prolonged psychological harm. Equally Different Therapy will include within this, events where the degree of harm is not yet clear but may fall into the above categories in future.

When any significant/critical event has occurred and been reported to them, Equally Different Therapy Directors or Managers will notify all the relevant people as soon as reasonably practicable

after the event has been identified. This will always be within 10 days. This will include those where the degree of harm is not yet clear.

All who work in Association with Equally Different Therapy are expected to report any 'near miss' event that has occurred through the significant/critical event processes to ensure that we all learn from the event. Equally Different Therapy Directors/Managers will not notify clients of a 'near miss' event where the incident has resulted in no harm or potential future harm to that person.

Where the client affected by an incident is under 16 years their parents/carers will be notified although the young person will always be involved where possible. Where the client is aged 16 and over but lacks the mental capacity to make a decision about their care or treatment, Equally Different Therapy will ensure that a person acting lawfully on their behalf is notified of any event. In all situations the content of the Equally Different Therapy **consent** and **confidentiality** policies must also be considered.

When explaining a significant/critical event to a client Equally Different Therapy Directors/Managers will adhere to the following:

- A step-by-step account of all relevant facts known about the incident will be given, in person, by an Equally Different Therapy Director or Manager +/- any associate involved.
- Include as much or as little information as the client wants to hear.
- Information will be 'jargon free' and any complicated terms explained.
- Accessibility policy will be referred to whilst being conscious of any potential breaches of confidentiality in doing so.
- Explain to the client what further enquires will be made.
- Ensure that a meaningful apology, in person, is given to the client. A meaningful apology is an expression of sorrow or regret.
- Give the client all reasonable support to help overcome any physical, psychological or emotional impact of the event. This might include access or signposting to any necessary treatment, practical advice and support, emotional support/counselling or impartial advocacy and support services.
- Provide a formal written account following the in person meeting. The outcomes or results of any further enquiries and investigations will also be provided in writing if they wish to receive them.
- Make every reasonable attempt to contact a client through all available means of communication. All attempts to contact them will be documented within their patient record on Pabau. If the client does not want to communicate Equally Different Therapy will respect their wishes and record this in their patient record.
- Keep a record of all written correspondence, along with any enquiries and investigations and the outcome or results of the enquiries or investigations.
- Always respond in an appropriate manner to any correspondence from the client relating to the event and a record of the communication will be kept.
- Ensure that the client is fully aware of the complaints policy.

Sarah Wellaway Published January 2024, to be reviewed January 2027

