

## ICAS CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

### Statement

Brighton and Hove Impetus Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS) is committed to providing confidential services to clients. We understand that confidentiality is essential to protect the interests of our clients and to safeguard the integrity of our service.

This confidentiality policy is to assure ICAS clients that confidential information about themselves will not be passed to others without their knowledge or consent.

‘Confidential’ means no information regarding a client shall be given directly or indirectly to any third party, external to ICAS staff and management, without the client’s prior consent to disclose such information.

Clients will be made aware of our confidentiality policy at the earliest opportunity possible. ICAS will ensure our statement about confidentiality is included in service literature and explained to clients at the start of our work with them.

### Confidentiality Statement

‘We offer a confidential service and we will not share anything you tell us with any other organisation or individual outside of Brighton & Hove ICAS without your permission. Exceptions to this are circumstances when we think that you or someone else maybe in serious danger. In these circumstances, you will be told, where possible, what information will be disclosed, who will be told and why they are to be told.’

### Breaching Confidentiality

Confidentiality can only be breached if

- There is serious danger to the employee or volunteer, for example, they are being abused or their life is at risk
- There is serious danger to another person
- An infringement of the law is involved

In these circumstances, the person must be told what information will be disclosed, who will be told and why they are to be told.

Where it is decided that information must be passed on to another individual or organisation this must be limited to those who need to know the information.

A record of the breach of information will be made on client’s records giving details of the circumstances.

Brighton and Hove ICAS will comply with local authority Child Protection and Protection of Vulnerable Adults Procedures.

### General Principles

- All clients should be able to access the ICAS service in confidence
- Confidentiality relates to information not only given deliberately by the person concerned or by other people about the person, but also information acquired accidentally or through observation or via a third party
- Staff and volunteers will obtain a client's permission to record any personal information about them and before contacting a third party on behalf of the client by completing the ICAS Consent Form with the client
- Where it is thought necessary to pass on information to another individual or organisation this will be on a strictly 'need to know' basis
- The consent of the person will be sought if at all possible, and that person will be informed that the information has been passed on and to whom it has been passed
- All case records will be kept in locked filing cabinets
- Clients will be given access to their records on request
- Clients can have a copy of this confidentiality policy on request

### **Keeping Records and Data Protection**

Brighton and Hove ICAS keeps written records of all client work. These records are stored in locked places and destroyed after seven years. This information is recorded for the benefit of the client, staff and service to provide a record of the work undertaken and to help ICAS monitor our services.

Clients have a right and are welcome to see any records and information held about them. No other third party or agency can have access to the notes without the individual's prior permission. The only exception to this is situations where we are legally required to provide access.