

Human Resources (HR) Policy (Additional)

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Business Ethics & Conduct

The practice's successful business operation and reputation are built upon our employees' principles of fair dealing and ethical conduct. Our reputation for integrity and excellence requires careful observance of the spirit, the letter of all applicable laws and regulations, and a scrupulous regard for the highest standards of conduct and personal integrity.

The practice's continued success depends upon our patients' trust, and we are dedicated to preserving that trust. Employees owe a duty to the practice and its patients to act in a way that will merit the continued trust and confidence of the public.

The practice will comply with all applicable laws and regulations and expects its directors, managers, and employees to conduct business by the letter, spirit, and intent of all relevant laws and to refrain from illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct.

In general, good judgment, based on high ethical principles, will guide you toward acceptable conduct. If it is difficult to determine the proper course of action, the matter should be discussed openly with the practice manager for advice and consultation.

Every employee is responsible for compliance with this policy of business ethics and conduct. Disregarding or failing to comply with this standard could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination of employment.

Staff, friends, and Family having Dental Treatment.

It is the policy of this practice that in the instance where a staff member requires dental treatment, the following protocols should be followed.

1. Annual leave, lunch breaks, or TOIL should be used to book appointments for treatment.
Where this is not possible, this must be discussed with the Practice Manager/Principal first.
2. Treatment costs will be **<free>, <Free except for lab bills> <Up to the clinician's discretion>, <Fully Payable>** – **DELETE AS NEEDED**
3. Protocols, including consent and clinical notes, are to be strictly followed.

Friends and Family

1. Friends and Family of staff members are welcome to register at the practice.
2. Appointment booking should take place via the usual route of contacting reception and will not take priority over other registered patients (Unless in emergency cases)
3. Out-of-hours treatments are at the discretion of the practice principal and must be discussed first.

Personal Relationships in the Workplace.

This practice must protect the interests of the patients it serves and our employees and act when close personal relationships have the potential to or do impact the business.

It is recognised that close personal relationships can and sometimes are formed between colleagues who work together. There may be situations where related persons or individuals with a close personal relationship are employed within the same team or work area.

In situations where a personal relationship has a negative impact or has the potential to impact the business, services or reputation, the practice reserves the right to take some action as outlined in this guidance.

There are several key reasons why this guidance and policy are required, as follows:

- To protect our patients.
- To protect the employee against potential claims of favouritism, where one has supervisory or managerial responsibility for the other.
- Avoid employees being in a potential conflict of interest situation or claiming unfair treatment.
- This policy is intended to prevent the development of situations in which other employees feel unable to speak openly and honestly in the presence of one partner in the relationship or where employees consider that the significant personal relationship is having an adverse impact on their employment.

- To protect employees who are in relationships with colleagues by providing a structure which supports them as employees.
- To protect the employees against favouritism within the working environment and ensure that all actions are open and transparent.
- To avoid the potential for claims of fraud, bribery, corruption, and collusion.

Guidance for all staff

Employees must declare to their Practice Manager or equivalent at the earliest opportunity any relationships that may give rise to an actual or perceived conflict of interest, breach of trust, and confidentiality. This allows for a discussion about the potential risks and conflict of interest to prevent colleagues from unfounded allegations of favouritism and to protect them from less favourable treatment.

Conflicts of Interest could include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Relationships with individuals within the same organisation.
- Relationships with individuals who have a role in partner organisations.
- Relationships with individuals who have a role in organisations where the practice could potentially do business.

If a close relationship is formed at work, managers can support staff in discussing the potential risks and conflicts of interest in decision-making or other matters.

Typically, the types of risk could occur in the following areas:

- Recruitment and selection for appointment or promotion.
- When assessing competence or skills.
- Selection for awards, allocation of training or development.
- Employee relations matters include disciplinary and grievance issues.
- Management of sickness /other absence.
- Supervise/manage staff, including management of performance and capability.
- Financial transactions, including approving invoices, expenses, overtime, and any other benefits/payments.
- Access to confidential information.

In balancing the rights of employees and the responsibilities of the organisation in avoiding these potential risks, the following guidelines apply:

- Employees should not be involved in any aspect of the recruitment and selection process if they have a personal relationship with any candidate.
- Employees should not be involved in informal/formal procedures if they have a personal relationship with the individual concerned.
- Employees in a personal relationship should not work together in any circumstances whereby a conflict of interest, breach of confidentiality, or unfair advantage may be perceived to be gained from the overlap of a personal relationship, such as where a direct line management relationship exists.
- Where a close relationship exists or develops, employees should only typically work in the same location or team if they disclose this to the appropriate manager. Altering working arrangements may be optional. The line manager should undertake a risk assessment to mitigate risks.

Conflict of Interest

All staff, volunteers, and management committee members of this practice will strive to avoid any conflict of interest between the practice's interests on the one hand and personal, professional, and business interests on the other. This includes avoiding actual conflicts of interest and perceiving conflicts of interest.

This policy aims to protect the integrity of the practice's decision-making process, enable our stakeholders to have confidence in our integrity, and protect the integrity and reputation of volunteers and staff.

Examples of conflicts of interest include:

1. A staff member or director who is also a user must decide whether fees from users should be increased.
2. A staff member or director who is related to a staff member must decide on staff pay and conditions.
3. A staff member or director with shares in a business may be awarded a contract to do work or provide services for the organisation.

Staff members and directors should disclose any interests, such as relationships and posts, that could result in a conflict of interest.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

We have a responsibility to our patients, our employees, and contractors as well as the broader community in which we operate.

We are committed to taking responsibility for our actions and encouraging a positive contribution towards improving standards for our patients and employees, minimising our impact on the environment, and improving the quality of the local community.

By putting CSR into practice, we are committed, wherever possible, to:

- Conducting ourselves responsibly and in an ethical manner
- Creating a positive and supportive working environment
- Supporting local communities
- Improving service levels to patients
- Acting reasonably in our dealings with suppliers and other third parties
- Minimising the impact on our environment.

Communication

We provide our staff with training on our CSR strategy and this policy and seek to raise awareness of any negative impacts of our business and methods to reduce them.

Responsibility & Review

Hassan Bhojani has overall responsibility for our CSR strategy and for implementing this policy. They have a crucial role in ensuring that the systems and controls we have in place are effective.

All members of staff have a role to play in complying with our CSR objectives and are encouraged to make further suggestions in relation to initiatives we could undertake. If anyone has a suggestion, they should contact Hassan Bhojani.

We are fully committed to the highest possible standards of openness, honesty, and accountability. In line with that commitment, by our Whistleblowing Policy, we actively encourage all staff members who have serious concerns about any real or perceived departure from the high ethical standard that we set to voice those concerns openly. Our Whistleblowing Policy can be found in the Employee Handbook Policy.

We are committed to ensuring our policy remains effective. As part of our ongoing commitment, this policy is reviewed annually to verify its effective operation.

Our Conduct

We aim to adopt the highest professional standards and not to act to compromise our practice's integrity.

We actively promote respect among our staff members in their dealings with each other, patients, and other third parties.

Our Working Environment

We recognise that our staff are our most important resource. We actively seek to offer our staff a positive and healthy working environment and ensure they have rewarding careers and job satisfaction.

We maintain an Employee Handbook Policy, which sets out the rights and expectations of all staff members.

We seek to ensure that all staff have access to the training they need for their development and to enable them to deliver high-quality service. Our procedures regarding training and development are contained within our Employee Handbook Policy.

We consider all staff members to be equal, and we aim to create a working environment that is free of unlawful discrimination. In this regard, we maintain an Equality and Diversity Policy, which can be found in the Employee Handbook Policy.

Our Community

Considering our impact on the community, we have decided to sponsor or support local charities.

We may allow members of staff time off work to enable them to carry out work supporting their chosen charity and to encourage dialogue with local communities and groups for mutual benefit.

Our Patients

We are committed to delivering a high level of service to all our patients. We understand that our business exists in a very competitive market, and to retain our patients, we need to deliver professional and courteous service.

Wherever possible, we promote equal opportunity in relation to access to the legal services we provide. We take account of the diversity of the communities we serve to ensure that, subject to funding constraints, our services are accessible to all patients.

Environment

We are committed to behaving responsibly and minimising our environmental impact. We aim to minimise our impact on the environment by:

- Minimising waste and adopting sensible recycling policies concerning our paper and food consumption
- Providing safe and comfortable working conditions
- Encouraging staff to walk or cycle to work
- Ensuring that electrical equipment and lights are off when not in use
- Ensuring that heating is turned off or down outside office hours

Menopause

Under the Equality Act 2010, workers are protected from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the basis of protected characteristics, including disability, age and sex.

If menopause symptoms have a long-term and substantial impact on a woman's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, these symptoms could be considered a disability. If menopause symptoms amount to a disability, an employer will be under a legal obligation to make reasonable adjustments. They will also be under a legal obligation to not directly or indirectly discriminate because of the disability or subject the woman to discrimination arising from disability.

Equality and Human Rights Commission

Section 2 of the Health and Safety Work Act 1974 requires employers to ensure 'the health and safety and welfare at work' of all employees.

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 place an overriding duty on employers to make workplaces suitable for the individuals who work in them.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require the employer to undertake a suitable and sufficient assessment of risks and take action to prevent exposure to risks.

Appropriate information/support will be provided to all staff about menopause.

Work conditions will be reviewed to take account of the difficulties that some women experience during the menopause.

Reasonable adjustments will be considered where necessary.

We have policies that allow work adjustments, such as flexible working, and sickness absence procedures that allow time off if needed for health appointments or more breaks to help them during this temporary menopausal transition.

Increased awareness ensures that women and men feel supported and comfortable discussing menopause in the workplace.

Risk assessments are carried out for staff members during menopause. These assessments consider the specific needs of menopausal women and ensure the working environment will not make their symptoms worse. The assessments address welfare issues, such as toilet facilities, access to cold drinking water, temperature, and ventilation.

Further guidance and advice <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng23>

Stress

Employees should look after their own health and well-being at work. If they are experiencing stress, they should talk to the manager as soon as they can. Managers should also look out for any signs of stress among their employees.

The practice will provide confidential counselling for staff affected by stress caused by either work or external factors. The practice will provide adequate resources to enable managers to implement the company's agreed stress management strategy.

Managers Responsibilities

- Conduct an annual assessment of the risks to employees' health, both mental and physical, based on data collected from staff at work, including absence data, staff turnover, grievance cases, accidents and exit interviews.
- Always listen to any concerns that employees may have. If employees believe that their work is putting their mental health or well-being at risk, they should speak to their line manager. All such concerns will be treated with respect and dignity, and employees will be provided with the necessary information to make informed decisions.
- Make referrals to the occupational health team, if appropriate.
- The company recognises that stress and other mental health issues may require periods of sick leave of absence to recover from stress.
- Where necessary, the company will facilitate employees' managed return to work if they are absent due to stress.
- All cases will be dealt with in accordance with the company's policy on equality and diversity, details of which are available in the Employee handbook.
- All discussions, requests for help and advice will be kept strictly confidential, and the Company's Data Protection Policy will hold the information gathered.

Well-being & Mental Health

Businesses function better when staff are healthy and motivated. Therefore, if an employer can provide support to staff suffering from mental health issues, it can help them recover. It also helps to make employees feel comfortable knowing that they will be supported rather than disciplined if they have issues.

There are several signs which may suggest a person is struggling with a mental health problem. However, it's always wise not to jump to conclusions until the staff member has spoken with you.

If you are concerned, discussing your concerns with staff as early as possible is essential. It doesn't have to be in a formal setting, but letting them know that you, as a manager, are there to help and support them may help them address their issues before they escalate.

Mental well-being can be discussed during an annual appraisal using the mental health questionnaire as a base for discussion, and it will be considered in back-to-work interviews following periods of sickness.

For further guidance, please speak to Hassan Bhojani, or visit mind.org.uk/work.

Advice for Scotland Practices

Scotland's Mental Health Strategy takes a health-promoting and preventative approach. Its guiding ambition is to prevent and treat mental health problems with the same commitment, passion, and drive as we do with physical health problems.

We are acutely aware of the growing impact the Coronavirus pandemic is having on our professional and personal lives. From the point of view of dentistry, the Chief Dental Officer recognises the importance of supporting mental health and well-being for clinical dentists and all members of the dental teams.

This compilation – developed jointly by BDA Scotland and the Scottish Government – highlights guidance and support resources available to draw on for help as and when you need it.

Scottish Government / NHS Scotland services

Scottish Government National Well-being Hub

The national digital well-being hub enables staff, carers, and volunteers working in Health and Social Care and their families to access relevant support when they need it and provides a range of self-care and well-being resources designed to aid resilience as the whole workforce responds to the impact of coronavirus (COVID-19): <https://www.promis.scot/>.

You can also call the National Well-being Helpline on 0800 111 4191.

NHS Inform

NHS Inform is Scotland's national health information service. It is a good source of information on general health, including mental health problems and disorders. The website offers advice, self-help guidance, and support.

NHS24 Living Life

The Living Life service supports people in Scotland through guided self-help and cognitive behavioural therapy. You can access the service by referring yourself for an assessment by phoning 0800 328 9655 or visiting NHS 24—Living Life.

NHS Board Occupational Health Services:

In June 2018, the Scottish Government issued a letter advising NHS Boards of the introduction of an NHS Occupational Health and Guidance service for GPs, members of the dental team, and other practice staff. The BDA/Scottish Dental Practice Committee had campaigned to have this service introduced.

The service is delivered through NHS Boards in conjunction with SALUS, an NHS-based provider of Occupational Health, Safety, and return-to-work services across the public and private sectors. As these services are very busy, triage and prioritisation of referrals are needed in some areas.

Individual NHS Boards may have other local well-being services and online resources, which may be accessed.

NHS Education for Scotland (NES)

Project Lift is a Scottish Government / NES leadership initiative to support anyone engaged with the health and social care landscape, including community, voluntary and partnership organisations. Following the digital coaching pilot, which dentists accessed, they have developed 'Coaching for Well-being', a free, digitally delivered offer of two hours of coaching to anyone looking for a confidential space with a qualified coach to help them look after themselves in this situation. Your coach will guide you through a process that will start by helping you make sense of what is happening to you right now and clarify what you want to focus on and the difference you intend to make through coaching. Due to the positive feedback from individuals across locations, roles and leadership stages, this has been extended into 2021. The coaching takes place at times that fit your situation and over a platform agreed upon between you and your coach ie Zoom, Skype, or FaceTime. <https://www.knowyoumore.com/wellbeingcoaching/>

Dental Teams may also access NES Mental Health and Well-being Support through TURAS Learn. TURAS Learn offers free online resources to support staff members' mental health and well-being, including sections on managing stress, coping, and resilience.

Project Lift runs free Community Events for anyone in the broader health and social care landscape who wants to connect in a safe, enjoyable, and supported environment. Past events have included Change, Influence, and Collaboration, and future events will run regularly. All are welcome.

Another resource that could be considered relates to mental health improvement and prevention of self-harm and suicide. It contains some helpful learning points:
<https://learn.nes.scot/33738/mental-health-improvement-and-prevention-of-self-harm-and-suicide/skilled-level-resource>

Advice for Wales practices

The information below provides links to valuable resources that will help you support your mental health and well-being and the mental health and well-being of the people you work with and support. These resources have been identified by the Community Well-being Information Group (CWIG), which was convened by the Mental Health & Learning Disabilities Division in response to the well-being challenges arising because of COVID-19.

If you are an employee of the Health Board, you will find more information on the Employee Well-being Service Intranet page.

Looking after your own mental health and well-being

Please visit the Melo Mental Health and Well-being website for advice, information, and resources on promoting and protecting your mental health and well-being, including bereavement and crisis support.

Advice for Northern Ireland Practices

A new framework has been developed and produced in partnership with the Trusts, PHA, HSCB, Department of Health and the Health Trade Unions. It guides leaders and managers of services to respond positively to the demands placed on their staff. The framework captures the significant initiatives that are already being taken by Trusts and other service providers and builds on them. The content on this website also provides leaders, managers, and staff with the best health and well-being resources and ideas.

As we travel this journey together, let us help each other stay true to our HSC values with compassionate care at the forefront of everything we do. Stay safe, look out for each other, and look after your health. This is temporary - there are brighter days ahead.

[Click here for more information.](#)

Violence & Aggression Policy

This policy is intended to protect everyone who works at Pav Dental from possible harm from violent or aggressive behaviour. It also helps to fulfil the practice's obligations to provide a safe workplace.

Our philosophy is that violence is unacceptable in whatever form and for whatever reason. Every member of the practice is responsible for taking reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and of other persons who might be affected by their acts and omissions at work.

This policy covers everyone engaged in the practice, including self-employed contractors (associates) and temporary and casual workers. The operation of this policy is the responsibility of Hassan Bhojani.

We define violence and aggression as:

- Actual or threatened physical assaults on staff.
- psychological abuse of staff
- verbal abuse, which includes shouting, swearing and gestures
- threats against practice personnel which occur in the workplace.

The workplace is defined as the practice premises and all other premises where work is undertaken as part of the person's official duties. Travelling to and from the workplace other than practice premises is also included within the definition.

To comply with this policy, we will:

- Undertake a risk assessment.
- Ensure that the practice premises are secure.
- Provide regular training in dealing with complex/aggressive patients.
- Provide personnel who are required to stay on the premises after 9 pm, where necessary, with the cost of a taxi home

- aim to operate an effective appointment system and make the reception area as relaxing as possible to minimise delays and tension.
- Operate a protocol for dealing with out-of-hours emergencies, including call logging.

All incidents (however trivial) must be reported immediately to Hassan Bhojani and a recording form completed. In the event of any actual or threatened violence, the police will be called. Injuries will be recorded in the accident book.

The practice will undertake to provide support, assistance, and, if necessary, counselling to members who are victims of violence and aggression in the course of their work. A discretionary period of full-pay sick leave may be granted in appropriate cases.

Document Control

Title:	Human Resources Policy – Non-Mandatory Topics
Author/s:	DCME Team

Owner:	DCME Team
Approver:	DCME Team
Date Original Approved:	11/08/23
Next Review Date:	15/02/24
Next Review Date:	11/03/25

Change History

Version	Status	Date	Author / Editor	Details of Change (Brief detailed summary of all updates/changes)
0.1	Final	25.7.22	PG	Human Resources Policy – Non-Mandatory Topics
0.2	Final	25.3.23	PG	Document review, minimal changes made, no guidance updates or legislation changes
0.3	Final	11.8.23	PG	Additional links added for each region on mental health and well-being resources
0.4	Final	05.10.23	HD	Added violence and aggression policy
0.5	Final	05.10.23	PG	Added information on personal relationships
0.6	Final	15.2.24	PG	Added information on personal relationships
0.7	Final	22.2.24	PG	Added new updated guidance on handling Menopause from Equality and Human Rights Commission - Highlighted
0.8	Final	11.3.24	PG	Updated policy launched on the portal – Full Grammar check completed and new areas of policy highlighted for easy reference in yellow - Stress and Menopause

The latest approved version of this document supersedes all other versions, upon receipt of the latest approved version all other versions should be destroyed, unless specifically stated that previous version(s) are to remain extant. If in any doubt, please contact the document Author.

Approved By: Hassan Bhojani, Waleed Javed
 Date Published: 19/09/2024