

International Care Network

4. Confidentiality Policy & Procedure

1. Aims.

International Care Network (ICN) will ensure that all personal information regarding those under their care will be kept in strictest confidence.

All ICN staff members, including those working on a voluntary basis, will be briefed in confidentiality procedures, including data protection principles. Everyone under the care of ICN will also have the confidentiality procedure explained to them.

It is ICN's policy to promote the dignity and respect of all those under its care. As such, personal information held by ICN will only be shared with those who need to know about it and no one else. Each individual will be informed of what personal information is kept on record by ICN, who the information may be shared with and the circumstances under which such information can be passed on.

Any information, sensitive or otherwise, that is offered by a person under the care of ICN to an individual member of ICN staff will be confidential to the organisation, not the individual member of staff.

All personal records will be kept at ICN headquarters, or at a secure external site agreed by the management team.

The Operation Manager is responsible for maintaining all records in the ICN office. Any external access to confidential information must be gained with his/her prior knowledge only, or that of the relevant manager.

2. Recording Information.

Only information that is fact will be kept on record by ICN.

For all those under the care of ICN, we will keep a record of the following:

- The Short hold Tenancy Agreement with all the information contained therein.
- Details of Doctor and Dentist registration.
- Employment details.
- Details of Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit, Child Benefit and any other benefit that is being claimed by an individual.
- Details of how much an individual owes in rent and bills to ICN. In addition, some bill correspondence may be kept depending on the agreement between ICN and the individual.
- Details of an individual's asylum claim/decision in which ICN have helped.

- In the case of Asylum Seekers, a monthly report on each individual, recording health issues, education/employment and general well being, will be sent to the social worker responsible for the said Asylum Seeker.
- Any incident considered by ICN to be of a serious nature will be logged and recorded.

ICN may also keep staff records related to:

- Supervisions and appraisals
- Performance
- Grievances
- Disciplinary matters
- Other standard staff records, such as staff ID, bank details, DBS

Staff records of employment and pay will be kept indefinitely. Other staff records will be disposed of after a staff member leaves.

3. Storage of Information.

All adults for whom ICN stores data will be asked to sign a consent form, in compliance with current data protection legislation.

All personal client details will be kept on paper or electronic file at the ICN office for 3 years in the office and then bundled and stored away for at least a further 3 years. After that period they may be destroyed.

4. Service Users Rights and Consents.

All those under the care of ICN will have the confidentiality procedure explained to them. They will be informed of what information is kept on file about them and also what information will be shared and with whom. Written consent from everyone under the care of ICN for such disclosures will be kept on file. Verbal and written consent will be obtained in extraordinary cases of information disclosure.

Any personal information held on file at the ICN office can be accessed by an individual under the care of ICN. An appointment must be made with the office who will then find the relevant information and hand it over as requested.

ICN reserves the right to withhold from those under its care, information regarding its funding.

5. Disclosure.

What is opinion or what is hearsay will not be kept on record. ICN workers will also refrain from passing opinion resulting from factual information or hearsay, whatever the source, onto persons outside of the organisation. Any such opinion or hearsay will be dealt with responsibly by ICN and will not be used to inflame any situation or to elicit a desired response from anyone.

Those who do not work for ICN, and who do not have an agreed access to ICN records, wishing to access personal information, must first prove their identity and give a valid reason for wanting such information. In such extraordinary circumstances, if ICN believe the request to be reasonable, the individual to whom the information refers will be asked for permission to share the details requested.

Circumstances in which the individual will not be asked for permission for such access include:

- A request from the Police where crime is suspected.
- A request from the Council/Benefits Agencies where fraud is suspected.

6. Review.

The office manager will monitor the confidentiality procedure of ICN. He/She will also be responsible for keeping a check on current issues that relate to the confidentiality procedure at each staff meeting, which will be held at least every two weeks.