



STAFF HANDBOOK

Introduction

Mind in Croydon was founded in 1967 and since that time has developed to be a significant provider of mental health services in the borough of Croydon. It is a registered charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee. It is part of the Mind network of charities. These independent charities include Mind, the national mental health charity, and approximately 200 local Mind associations. All of these associations are independent charities, which share common aims, but which are independently managed and financed. Mind in Croydon is controlled by a Board of Trustees who are also Directors of the Limited Company.

This handbook serves as an overview of Mind and gives details of how it is structured, and where policies and information can be found. It is not definitive, nor does it cover the full scope of the individual policies in force: in the event of a discrepancy between this handbook and any particular policy, the policy as adopted by the Board of Trustees will apply.

Performance Management, Supervision & Appraisal

The Charity will ensure that all employees:

- have a clear understanding of the management structure of the Charity and the lines of responsibility and accountability
- have a clear understanding of their role and how they are expected to fulfil it
- are supported by Trustees, management and other employees in carrying out their role
- receive regular supervision and performance appraisals
- are aware of disciplinary and complaints procedures and are aware of their legal rights

Employee and Volunteer Relations

Mind in Croydon recognises that good relations with its paid staff and volunteers are essential in providing high quality services. The Charity fosters an environment in which people:

- feel comfortable in their work
- have an equal role with management in agreeing clear targets and timescales for achieving them
- are able to communicate any concerns to management or Trustees without fear of blame or recrimination

- are given personal support by trustees, management and colleagues when faced with challenging and difficult situations
- are not subjected to unacceptable behaviour by any party
- understand their role within the Charity and how the Charity is governed. To this end Mind in Croydon issues each year an annual report detailing names of trustees, plans for future periods, details of committees, accounts, details on diversity, objectives and activities, a mission statement, a staff and volunteer directory, and an organisational structure diagram. The annual report is freely available at www.mindincroydon.org.uk
- Mind in Croydon operates an 'open door' policy and members of its management team are always happy to be contacted either by telephone, letter or by e-mail. They can be contacted by 'phone on 020 8668 2210 or by e-mail as follows richard@mindincroydon.org.uk (Chief Executive) john@mindincroydon.org.uk (Director of Client Services) cara@mindincroydon.org.uk (Human Resources Manager).

Whistleblowing

If a Trustee, employee, volunteer, service user or member of Mind in Croydon becomes aware that an activity, practice or policy carried out by the Charity is illegal, contrary to the Charity's policies or best practice or otherwise gives cause for concern, they may 'whistleblow' by informing the Charity's Chief Executive or Trustees. If it is felt that the Chief Executive or Trustees have not resolved these matters satisfactorily, the person can raise these matters with the appropriate regulatory body e.g. the police, social services or the Charity Commission.

The Board of Trustees of Mind in Croydon are responsible for all activities, policies, procedures and practices of the Charity and its paid employees and volunteers acting on its behalf. In the event that acts which might give cause for concern are being carried out, the Trustees will always act in compliance with the law, with guidance from the Charity Commission and other statutory bodies, with best practice and with the Charity's own policies and procedures.

It is hoped that any Trustee, employee, volunteer, service user or member of the Charity who discovers matters of concern will bring those matters to the attention of the Board of Trustees in the first place. No detriment will be suffered for bringing any such matter to the Trustees' attention.

No Trustee, employee, volunteer or member of the Charity will undertake any act which might obstruct any investigation, either internal or by an external statutory agency, into any of the Charity's activities.

The Trustees of Mind in Croydon are fully aware of their responsibility under the law and they will respect the legal protection afforded to a whistleblower

Recruitment and Retention

Mind in Croydon's recruitment & retention procedures will be based upon the principles of fairness, transparency and equality of opportunity.

The Charity will:

- Monitor its advertising policy to ensure that adverts are accessible to all sections of the community
- Ensure that those involved in assessing applications and interviewing candidates are appropriately trained and prepared
- Ensure that assessment and interview processes are fair and non-discriminatory
- Provide, upon request, feedback to unsuccessful applicants
- Develop policies and best practice to improve staff retention
- Provide a two-day staff induction
- Strive to retain the Investors in People standard
- Provide a confidential and private Employee Support and Advice Line open 24 hours, 365 days per year on 0800 281 012 which is independent of Mind in Croydon

Communication

Mind in Croydon recognises that accurate, detailed and up-to-date information on all aspects of operations is essential to the proper running of the Charity and the provision of high quality services. The Trustees will encourage effective communication between all parts of the Charity, including employees, volunteers, trustees, service users and members, through a variety of channels, including executive, general & staff meetings, service user meetings, monitoring reports, minutes of meetings, a regular newsletter, telephone and face to face conversations, email and letters. A system of Link Trustees exists to provide staff in each project with a Trustee dedicated to their area of work. Link Trustees are detailed in the 'Management Structure' diagram freely available at www.mindincroydon.org.uk

Pay, Benefits and Conditions

The Trustees recognise that the level of pay offered and the benefits and conditions of employment should reflect the level of experience and qualifications desirable for each paid position within the Charity. In order to be able to recruit and retain appropriately skilled staff, the Trustees will annually review and approve the pay scale.

In reviewing the pay scale, the Trustees will consider: The levels of pay offered for comparable posts within the statutory and voluntary sectors; the level of inflation; any local conditions affecting recruitment and retention of staff; the levels of performance expected and achieved by staff; and the resources available to the Charity.

The Trustees will also review annually the benefits and conditions of employment. In conducting this review, they will consider: their statutory duties as employers; their duty of care to paid and volunteer staff; their obligation to provide equal opportunities and non-discriminatory working conditions.

Expenses

Expenses for travel and other expenses necessarily incurred while on the Charity's business may be claimed by filling in an expense form, which is available from the office.

Car Insurance

Members of staff, Trustees and volunteers must contact their insurance company or broker to ensure that their insurance cover is valid for journeys made on the Charity's business. It is a condition of claiming expenses that the claimant has valid insurance, that their car is road-worthy, and that it is covered by a valid MOT certificate.

Annual Leave

Details are provided in each employee's contract of employment which are issued prior to employment, copies are available from the Human Resources Manager.

Standards of Behaviour at Work

Mind in Croydon has the right to expect that all members of staff will observe certain standards of behaviour while at work, and will not bring the Charity into disrepute. Examples of conduct that the Charity may, for the purposes of disciplinary action, regard as misconduct or gross misconduct are detailed in the Disciplinary Procedure freely available at www.mindincroydon.org.uk. Other acts not included in that procedure may be regarded as misconduct or gross misconduct. In addition, any breach of a policy adopted by the Charity may be regarded as misconduct or gross misconduct.

Disability Discrimination Act

Mind in Croydon recognises its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act with regard to employment and the reasonable adjustments it must make to ensure that people with disabilities are not discriminated against in recruitment or in the workplace. Mind in Croydon keeps all its policies under review to ensure that they do not discriminate against people with disabilities. In particular:

Recruitment will be made solely on the basis of the applicant's abilities

- Reasonable adjustments to the application procedures will be made as required to ensure that applicants are not disadvantaged because of disability.
- Mind will ensure that such reasonable adjustments are made as required to enable any employees with disabilities to work effectively.
- All employees have equal rights to training, promotion and other aspects of career development based purely on their abilities. Promotion and training will be made accessible to all employees by such adjustments as are reasonable.
- Employees with disabilities will have equal access to all benefits and facilities and reasonable adjustments will be made where necessary.
- All reasonable measures are taken to retain employees with disabilities in employment.
- Any employee who believes that he or she has been unfairly discriminated against for reasons related to their disability can use the grievance procedure.
- Harassment of employees with disabilities will be a disciplinary offence and may constitute gross misconduct. Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who is found to have committed an act of discrimination.
 - Serious breaches of policy will be taken as gross misconduct.

Policies

Mind in Croydon's policies constitute its full staff handbook. They are all freely available at www.mindincroydon.org.uk and include Health & Safety, Complaints, Confidentiality, Disciplinary, Harassment, Training and Development, Grievance, Equal opportunities, Safeguarding Adults Protection and all other policies which govern the work of Mind in Croydon.

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