



Code of Conduct

Introduction

The Board of Management at Benalla Health is committed to building a positive workplace culture.

The 'Code of Conduct' prescribes the behaviours expected of all Board Members and employees and is essential in our relationship with colleagues, patients, clients and members of the community.

The Code of Conduct assists with building a positive workplace culture based on Benalla Health's values of compassion, empathy, accountability, respect and excellence.

The intent of the Code is to provide a framework to promote ethical day-to-day conduct and decision making. It does not and cannot cover every situation that can arise in the workplace. The Code does not replace the need for common sense in how we conduct ourselves.

The Code is designed to help you understand your responsibilities and obligations and is tailored to support the application of the Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees, 2007.

I ask everyone working at Benalla Health to make themselves aware of the Code, and to implement and adhere to the Code's provisions.

Board Chairman

Why have a code of conduct?

The reason we have a Code of Conduct is so there can be no doubts about the standards of ethical and professional conduct that are required of everyone working at Benalla Health, the outcomes we are committed to, and the behaviours which are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

The intent of the Code is to provide a framework to promote ethical day-to-day conduct and decision making. If staff are in doubt as to what conduct is appropriate in any particular situation, or how the Code should be applied, they should seek advice and direction from their manager or a more senior member of staff.

Managers have a key role in ensuring staff understand the Code and in enforcing the standards it sets, consistently and fairly. However, the most important responsibility of managers, and their most valuable contribution to ensuring that the standards set out by the Code are implemented, is to lead by example.

Who does the Code apply to?

This Code applies to:

- All Board Members
- All persons who are employed by Benalla Health whether on a permanent, casual or temporary basis; and
- Visiting practitioners, agency staff and volunteers working at Benalla Health

Responsibilities under the Code

All staff are responsible for applying and complying with the Code.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that the staff whom they supervise are aware of and understand their responsibilities under the Code.

The Code of Conduct

The Code requires staff to adhere to the standards set out below and the Benalla Health values.

- Act ethically, with honesty and integrity, in the best interests of Benalla Health at all times;
- Contribute to a harmonious, safe and productive culture through professional workplace relationships;
- Disclose any personal or business interests which may give rise to actual or perceived conflicts of interest;
- Refrain from any form of conduct, in relation to other staff or the public, likely to cause any person offence or embarrassment;
- Treat patients and members of the public with courtesy and respect and with due sensitivity to the needs of people with different backgrounds and cultures;
- Treat all other members of staff (irrespective of whether they are at the same level of seniority, or more senior or junior) in a way that promotes harmonious and productive working relationships, and a collaborative teamwork approach;
- Do not bully or harass other staff, patients or members of the public, or discriminate against them;
- Keep confidential all personal information and records;
- Do not use or release official information without proper authority;
- Do not take an unfair advantage of, or exploit any relationship with, patients or clients in any way;
- Do not commence a sexual relationship with a patient or client when a professional relationship is current;
- Comply with all applicable Benalla Health policies and procedures;

Benalla Health's Values

Benalla Health has developed Our Values booklet as a framework to help guide staff in their relationships with members of our community; patients, clients, residents, their families and friends, other visitors to the organisation and our own staff.

The Values that have been developed and endorsed at Benalla Health are:

- COMPASSION
- EMPATHY
- ACCOUNTABILITY
- RESPECT
- EXCELLENCE

What happens if there is a breach of the Code?

There is a range of consequences for breaches of this Code depending on the nature and seriousness of the matter.

Managers have a responsibility to address alleged breaches of the Code promptly, and in a fair and reasonable manner. They need to assess the seriousness of any alleged breaches, and how they should be dealt with.

Possible outcomes for a staff member who has breached the Code may be:

- counselling;
- performance improvement plans;
- formal disciplinary action;
- referral to the relevant registration board when the staff member is a registered health practitioner;
- referral to the police in cases of suspected criminal activity;
- termination of employment.

What to do if you are concerned about a breach of the Code

Staff members should report any breach or concerns about a breach of the Code to their manager. If they are not comfortable about reporting to their manager, they should report the matter to a more senior staff member.

Benalla Health is committed to protecting any person who raises concerns about a breach of the Code from retaliation or reprisals. Any attempt to take detrimental action against a person who raises a legitimate breach of the Code will be treated seriously and may lead to disciplinary action.

Code of Conduct

I have read and understood the Benalla Health Code of Conduct. Where necessary, I have sought explanation from my manager on any items that were unclear.

In signing this Code of Conduct, I agree to abide by the provisions set out in the document.

I understand that this "sign off" sheet will be held in my personnel file.

Employee Name:
(please print)

Position:
(please print)

Signature:

Date:

Manager:
(please print)

Signature:

Date:

On completion, a copy of this sheet and the Code of Conduct is to be given to the above named employee.

