

# CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY



Effective from: 6<sup>th</sup> May 2019

## Statement of intent

To protect the service user at all times and to give all staff involved clear, unambiguous guidance as to their legal and professional roles and to ensure good practice throughout Butterfly Bloom which is understood by service users, families/carers/homes and staff.

## Objectives:

1. To provide consistent messages within Butterfly Bloom about handling information about service users once it has been received.
2. To foster an ethos of trust within Butterfly Bloom.
3. To ensure that staff, families/carers and service users are aware of Butterfly Bloom's confidentiality, policy and procedures.
4. To reassure service users that their best interests will be maintained.
5. To encourage service users to talk to their families/carers.
6. To ensure that service users and families/carers know that Butterfly Bloom staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality.
7. To ensure that there is equality of provision and access for all including rigorous monitoring of cultural, gender and special needs
8. To ensure that if there are service user protection issues then the correct procedure is followed.
9. To ensure that confidentiality is a whole issue and that during service ground rules are set for the protection of all.
10. To understand that health professionals are bound by a different code of conduct.
11. To ensure that families/carers have a right of access to any records Butterfly Bloom may hold on their service user but not to any other service user that they do not have responsibility for.

## Guidelines

1. All information about individual service users is private and should only be shared with those staff who have a need to know.
2. All social services, medical and personal information about a service user should be held in a safe and secure place which cannot be accessed by individuals other than Butterfly Bloom staff.
3. Butterfly Bloom continues to actively promote a positive ethos and respect for the individual:
  - a) The Service Manager receives regular training. The Chief Operations Officer has ultimate responsibility for service user protection.
  - b) There is clear guidance for procedures for the handling of service user protection incidents.  
All staff have regular training on service user protection issues.
  - c) There is clear guidance for procedures if a member of staff is accused of inappropriate conduct.
  - d) Staff are aware of the need to handle all issues about different types of families in a sensitive manner.
  - e) Any intolerance about gender, faith, race, culture or sexuality is unacceptable and should follow Butterfly Bloom's discipline policy.
  - f) Information collected for one purpose should not be used for another.
4. Carers/homes/families and service users need to be aware that Butterfly Bloom cannot guarantee total confidentiality and Butterfly Bloom has a duty to report service user protection issues.
5. Butterfly Bloom prides itself on good communication with carers/homes/families and staff are always available to talk to both service users and carers/homes/families about issues that are causing concern. Butterfly Bloom encourages service users to talk to carers/homes/families about issues causing them concern and may in some cases support the service users to talk to their carer/home/families. Butterfly Bloom would share with carers/homes/families any service user protection disclosure before going on to inform the correct authorities.
6. Carers/homes/families and service users should feel reassured that in exceptional circumstances confidentiality will be broken.
7. All service users have a right to the same level of confidentiality irrespective of gender, race, religion, medical concerns and special educational needs.
8. Butterfly Bloom has appointed a senior member of staff as service user Protection Officer. Service user protection procedures are understood by staff and training is undertaken every two years for all staff.

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10. Health professionals have their own code of practice dealing with confidentiality. Staff should be aware of service users with medical needs and the service user information sheet should be accessible to staff who need the information, but not on general view to other carers/homes/families and service users.
11. Photographs of service users should not be used without carers/homes/families permission especially in the press and on the internet.
12. Information about service users will be shared with carers/homes/families but only about the service user connected to them. Carers/homes/families should not have access to any other service user's information at any time. All personal information about service users, including social services records should be regarded as confidential. It should be clearly understood by those who have access to it, and whether those concerned have access to all, or only some of the information.

## Appendix

'Confidentiality' also refers to protecting the information we hold about the service users within Butterfly Bloom and their carers/homes/families. All staff will endeavor to maintain confidentiality when appropriate, for example by considering the conversations they have about service users and their cares/homes/families, the purpose of these conversations and where these take place. All service users and volunteers at Butterfly Bloom will be made aware of this through our Confidentiality Statement (see below).

### Confidentiality Statement:

Staff talk about their job constantly. Conversations are often about Butterfly Bloom, individual service users and their carers/homes/families.

We ask that such conversations are regarded as confidential.

Similarly, the work, progress and behaviour of individual service users is a matter of fact for the staff, the service user and the carer/home/family of the service user. Any comments made by a service user about another service user, or an incident at Butterfly Bloom may be misinterpreted and lead to misunderstandings.

Small incidents are dealt with within Butterfly Bloom and should end there. More serious incidents will be discussed, in confidence, with carers/homes/families. We feel sure you will understand the need for such confidentiality on Butterfly Bloom matters. As a service user / volunteer in Butterfly Bloom we ask that you respect confidentiality on such matters to avoid misunderstandings and upset.

## Record Keeping

Butterfly Bloom shall keep the following records:-

- Service User Referral Documents and Personal Information
- Personnel Records

Confidential reports (e.g. from Social Services, Psychological Reports etc.) must be kept separately from the above general information.

#### SERVICE USER REFERRAL DOCUMENTS

Butterfly Bloom shall keep admission records specifying any information required by Butterfly Bloom relating to service users. These shall be kept up-to-date and amended as and when service users join or leave Butterfly Bloom, providing that the keeping of such information does not contravene any law or statute in operation at the time.

#### PERSONNEL RECORDS

Butterfly Bloom shall maintain records of personnel relating to their qualifications, experience, length of service, salary levels.

Application forms of applicants (and references) for vacant posts will be kept securely in Butterfly Bloom's office until an appointment has been made. Following a successful interview the successful candidate's application and references shall be forwarded to the service manager and the others kept for no less than six months securely within Butterfly Bloom with access by the Chief Operations Officer only. Any copies of these applications shall be destroyed following a successful appointment.

References for staff within Butterfly Bloom for posts outside it shall be kept securely by the service manager and shall not be kept with the personnel records.

## Destruction of Documents

### 1.1

The attached document sets out the policy and principles which are to form the Butterfly Bloom Retention, Disposal and Destruction Guidelines.

### 1.2

Where records are archived electronically, the same retention periods apply as if they were paper based records.

### 1.3

Individual records may be retained longer.

### 1.4

Once case files are closed, they should be retained for up to 12 months within the area offices and then archived.

### 1.5

Before they are archived, all files should have a destruction date clearly marked on the front cover and contain a tracking sheet.

## Destruction of files

### 1.6

All records are to be destroyed by shredding when the retention period has expired.