



The SUN Network Professional and Personal Boundaries Policy

Introduction

All staff, volunteers and Directors have a duty to ensure that our services are provided in a safe and effective manner. This policy provides a structure within which we are expected to operate when there is a personal interaction with a person with lived experience or carer and is written to protect the best interests of ourselves, persons with lived experience and carers. This policy must also be read in conjunction with the policy on the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults.

You must ensure that working relationships with current or previous persons with lived experience or carers do not become misunderstood as being friendship or other forms of personal relationship.

Failure to operate within this policy can be expected to lead to formal disciplinary action. If staff are in doubt about a relationship or require further guidance then they should consult with the Executive Director or Chair of Directors.

Scope

This policy covers all persons with lived experience and carers who have in the past or are currently engaged with or are in regular contact with The SUN Network.

Responsibility

It is the responsibility of each member of staff to read, understand and operate within this policy.

It is the responsibility of the Executive Director to ensure that staff are made aware of this policy through induction, supervision, and service review.

It is the responsibility of the Board of Directors to review the operation of this policy periodically.

Expectations

If a member of staff considers there is a risk of professional boundaries being broken this should immediately be brought to the attention of the Executive Director when they feel unsure or ambivalent.

If a member of staff considers there is a risk of professional boundaries being broken by a colleague this should immediately be brought to the attention of the Executive Director.

Unacceptable Practice

Unacceptable practices are those which put the professional/personal relationship in danger of being breached. Examples of unacceptable practice are set out below. These are not exhaustive and may vary dependent upon individual circumstances, and The SUN Network has the right to consider exceptional circumstances with reference to this Policy.

Sexual Contact

Staff should under no circumstances engage in:

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- sexual activity or sexual contact with current or former persons with lived experience, whether or not such contact is consensual.
- Physical contact that could be construed as sexually suggestive, innuendo or insinuation.
- Use of language or other communication that could be construed as sexually suggestive, innuendo or insinuation.
- Inappropriate dress. Please ensure that you are dressed appropriately for our work at all times.
- Inappropriate questions that are of no therapeutic benefit for the client.
- Inappropriate personal disclosure about oneself or a colleague
- Staff should not give persons with lived experience their personal details such as address, home telephone numbers (including personal mobiles), e-mail address etc.
- As above but about colleagues' personal details.
- Staff should not form personal relationships.
- Staff must not contact persons with lived experience via social networking websites e.g., Myspace, Bebo, Facebook, Instagram, TIK TOK etc unless this is in a professional remit through The SUN Network social media, and you are presenting as The SUN Network

Concealing information from colleagues about persons with lived experiences

You must not conceal:

- Information gleaned from a person with lived experience that is pertinent to the workstream being engaged with by The SUN Network or other agencies
- Danger of harm to self or others
- Reporting of violent or critical incidents
- Child Protection concerns
- Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults concerns
- Conflicts of interest whereby the person with lived experience is known to you outside of the service (e.g., family member or friend)
- Breaking the law e.g. burglary

Misuse of money and/or personal property/gift policy

Staff should not:

- Hold or keep client money, or permit any financial transaction that is not authorised by the Executive Director

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- Staff must not loan money or personal property to person with lived experiences
- Staff must not provide advice on personal finances such as Wills, gifts or legacies
- Staff should not accept a personal gift from persons with lived experience under any circumstances. If staff are offered a gift for the whole team at The SUN Network (e.g., box of chocolates at Easter/Christmas) it must be explicit to the person with lived experience that this is for the whole team-and must not exceed the value of £10.00. Any gifts received must be recorded in the gift register (attached to policy) and declared to the Executive Director
- Staff must not take or ask for loans from persons with lived experiences

Discrimination

Discrimination in any form is not acceptable. This includes making of disparaging remarks about persons with lived experiences to other colleagues, friends and other agencies. This is particularly so where remarks are unsubstantiated, gossip and subjective value judgements.

Care, Therapeutic Activity, and other services

Staff should not provide a service for which they are not authorised to provide. (i.e., a support service)

Services should be part of and contribute to The SUN Network workstreams

Staff must adhere to GDPR and Data Protection relating to the person with lived experience of The SUN Network.

Creating Dependence

Staff should not create situations that engender person with lived experience dependence on the service and in particular on a specific member of staff. Areas to avoid are:

- Visiting persons with lived experiences in their own homes except in a professional capacity
- Inviting persons of lived experience to the workers home
- Socialising outside of the professional/service relationship
- Using the person with lived experience to support the workers own emotional needs
- Contacting persons with lived experience outside of The SUN Network working hours – more specifically your personal working hours, or whilst on sick leave, annual leave or any other leave

This is not an exhaustive list and there may be a variety of other incidences where boundaries can be crossed. Therefore, it is always important to err on the side of caution and seek clarification from your line manager if you are unsure

Approved by The SUN Network Board of Directors

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Date: 19th July 2021

Next Review Date: July 2024

Responsible Officer Executive Director of The SUN Network.

Signed:

Jonathan Wells Chair of Directors

Date: 19th July 2021

Signed:

Lois Sidney Executive Director

Date: 19th July 2021

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Gift Register

Date:	Gift description and value:	Given by: Name and Role	Received by:

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