

Candidate
Handbook

CANDIDATE DECLARATION

This handbook contains important guidance for your time with us. Please sign below to show you accept its contents.

I have received and agreed to abide by the contents of the *Mediplacements* Candidate Handbook.

Print Name: _____

Profession: _____

Registration Number: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

I understand that any personal data held by *Mediplacements* is liable to be inspected by NHS Buying Solutions as part of audit procedures.

Signed _____

Date _____

**THE ABOVE DECLARATION IS TO BE DETACHED FROM
THE HANDBOOK AND STORED IN THE CANDIDATE'S
PERSONNEL FILE AT THE REGISTERING BRANCH**

Welcome to *Mediplacements*. We are pleased you have chosen to join us and look forward to offering you a wide range of positions.

We have designed this handbook to give you an idea of what to expect from your time with us. Please read it carefully - it includes a number of guidelines and standards required under the Framework Agreements we have with the NHS.

As a new Candidate of *Mediplacements* Temporary Staff Workforce we hope you have a successful and prosperous career with us. If you have any queries about the contents within this booklet, please direct these to your Consultant at the address below:

Mediplacements
Ability House
121 Brooker Road
Waltham Abbey
Essex
EN9 1JH

CONTENTS

BEFORE YOU START WORK

Induction.....	
Mandatory Training.....	
Risk Incident reporting.....	
Lone Worker Information.....	
Violence and Aggression.....	
Caldicott.....	
Complaint Handling.....	
Fitness to Practice.....	
Immunisation.....	
MRSA & C.Difficile.....	
AIDS/ HIV.....	
Medicals.....	
Criminal Convictions.....	

YOUR PAY

Timesheets.....	
Holiday Pay.....	

ASSIGNMENTS

Timekeeping.....	
Requirements for Assignments.....	
Uniforms.....	
ID Badges.....	
Arriving for Work.....	
Notice Period.....	
Evaluations of Service.....	

YOUR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Training.....	
Appraisals.....	

OUR POLICIES

Professional Standards.....	
Code of Conduct.....	
Medication Policy.....	
Equal Opportunities.....	
Health and Safety.....	
Record Keeping.....	
Fraud Awareness.....	
Confidentiality.....	
Data Protection.....	
Computer Use.....	
Consent.....	
Safeguarding Children.....	
Caring for Patients in their Own Homes.....	
Allegations of Abuse.....	
Making a Complaint.....	

BEFORE YOU START WORK

Induction

As well as briefing you on general issues and procedures, we will provide you with Induction Training including:

- Moving and Handling
- Health and Safety
- Fire Procedures
- Risk Incident Reporting
- Lone Worker Training
- The Caldicott Protocol
- COSHH
- Infection control
- POVA & POCA
- Complaint handling
- Handling Violence & aggression

You will also find a lot of useful reference information in this handbook.

Mandatory Training

All Candidates, appropriate to their profession must complete Moving and Handling, CPR and the training above on an annual basis. We regularly facilitate and provide subsidised courses, please contact your branch for details. Candidates can also attend courses run by the current assignment's Manual Handling and CPR training departments. Candidates can also source their own training courses.

Risk Incident Reporting

Under the Management of Health and Safety Regulations of 1992 you have a legal duty of care to report all accidents, incidents and near misses. These regulations impose a duty on employers to perform risk assessments on all work activities. If during the course of your work you identify a risk to the health, safety and welfare of your own personal safety, and/or that of your colleagues/patients/clients, you have a duty to report this. In the first instance it should be reported to the person in charge of the establishment to which you are assigned, and to your Mediplacements Recruitment Consultant. An incident report form must be completed at Mediplacements Head Office.

Lone Workers Information

Lone workers are those workers who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. Lone working is not governed by any specific legislation but a wide range of legislation may apply depending on the nature of the work involved. In all instances the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations of 1992 will apply. Generally, within the healthcare industry, lone workers can be regarded as those who work on a peripatetic basis such as community/district nurses, domiciliary homecare workers etc., or those personnel who work outside of normal hours e.g. Domestic, porters, security etc. In all cases where a worker is expected to work alone a risk assessment should be performed by the employer and steps taken to reduce risk to the lowest practicable level. The risk assessment should address:

- Whether the work can be performed safely by a single person
- What arrangements are required to ensure the lone worker is at no more risk than employees working together

If for any reason you consider yourself to be at risk working in a "lone worker" situation please contact your Recruitment Consultant immediately so that a further risk assessment can be performed and arrangements can be made to ensure safe systems of work and your personal safety.

Violence and Aggression

It has been recognised for some time that workers in a hospital setting work within an environment where there is potential for threat, aggression or violence. Violence and aggression can be defined as including the following circumstances:

- Minor assaults including situations where physical contact and/or injuries occur which require first aid treatment
- Threats with an offensive weapon without physical injury
- Aggravated assault resulting in injury requiring medical assistance
- Threatening behaviour which could include verbal abuse or threats, and fear arising from damage to the physical environment
- Assault resulting in serious injury and/or death

Any violent, abusive or threatening behaviour is unacceptable

You must report any incident immediately to the person in charge and also to your Mediplacements Recruitment Consultant. The establishment where you are working the assignment will have policies for dealing with such incidents, and an incident report form should be completed both at the place of work and at Mediplacements Head Office. All staff and candidates have an obligation under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to have regard for their own health, safety and welfare at work, and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

The Caldicott Protocols

The Caldicott review was commissioned due to the development of information technology and its capacity to disseminate information about patients/service users both rapidly and extensively.

An essential component of the clinical consultation in the provision of health care is confidentiality. All healthcare workers have stringent requirements with regard to confidentiality of patients within their care. However information given about patients underpins the efficient operation of the NHS, and it is important that confidentiality does not impede upon the provision of effective patient care. Therefore the Caldicott review devised protocols and recommendations, which assume the appointment of a Caldicott Guardian who is created to safeguard and govern the users of patient information within NHS organisations. Caldicott guardians are senior health professionals.

Local policies

All Mediplacements personnel are required to familiarise themselves with the local policy on confidentiality within the establishment/NHS Trust where they are working.

Complaint Handling

During the course of your work with Mediplacements you may come across complaints from patients/clients. It is the policy of Mediplacements to deal with any expression of dissatisfaction in a professional and precise manner. If you are on an assignment within an establishment, please report any complaints to a senior person and document all details of the complaint. You **must** also report the Complaint to your Mediplacements Recruitment Consultant or their Manager. All complaints must be investigated within a specified time limit and resolved as soon as possible and this is the responsibility of a Mediplacements Manager. You may however, be requested to put details of the complaint in writing on a complaint record form and/or attend an interview to investigate details further.

If you personally are the subject of a complaint you will also be asked to record details as part of an investigation and in some circumstances it may be necessary to suspend you from duty whilst the investigation is in process. Any complaints of misconduct against individuals will be reported to the HPC or other relevant Registration Body.

If you have any complaints about any aspects of your work at Mediplacements please do not hesitate to contact us.

Any complaints from individuals will be dealt with in a professional and confidential manner and *Mediplacements* has a "Whistleblowing" policy; please refer to page 19 of this book.

Fitness to Practice

It is important for your own health and of those in your care that you are fit to practice whenever you attend an assignment. You must declare your fitness to practice or otherwise when you accept an assignment. You **MUST** also let us know if you are or have become pregnant, have acquired an illness or injury before or during an assignment including the occurrence of vomiting diarrhoea or rashes. It may be necessary to inform the client of a change in your health so that the necessary precautions can be taken. If you are concerned that your assignment involves unnecessary risks to your health or fitness, or that of your unborn child, please contact us. **If you are pregnant we are required to perform a health and risk assessment for all expectant mothers.**

Should our Occupational Health service declare you unfit for work then your placement will be terminated until declared otherwise.

You are required to supply Mediplacements with an update of your occupational health questionnaire on an annual basis, as this is a contractual requirement with the NHS. We will contact you with the new forms when required.

Immunisation

Please keep the following immunisations up to date:

- Hepatitis B
- Varicella (Chicken Pox)
- Rubella (German Measles)
- Mumps
- Measles
- Tuberculosis
- Hepatitis C (if undertaking exposure prone procedures)
- HIV (if undertaking exposure prone procedures)

Any boosters or new vaccinations should be recorded on your Immunisation Record. You need to disclose details on your application form and fax or post proof of vaccination to us. Documented proof is required for **all immunity status** with the exception of varicella which can be self declared.

Without proof of immunisation we will be unable to offer you assignments.

MRSA and C. Difficile

Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) is the name given to a range of strains of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. MRSA exists on the hands or in the nose of around one third of the healthy population and is usually harmless. It can however prove fatal if it enters the bloodstream of an already weakened patient.

Clostridium Difficile is a bacteria which naturally occurs in two thirds of children and 3% of adults. It does not cause a problem in healthy individuals. When the balance is upset by antibiotics used for other conditions, it produces toxins and causes illness.

MRSA is usually transmitted by touch. The single most effective measure for preventing MRSA and C. Difficile contamination is washing hands before and after every patient contact.

In addition, please:

- Use liquid soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub when washing hands – make sure it comes into contact with all areas
- Remove wrist and preferably hand jewellery at the beginning of each shift where you will be regularly decontaminating your hands
- Wear disposable gloves and aprons when attending to dressings or dealing with blood and body fluids (sterile gloves should only be worn when performing aseptic techniques)
- Dispose of gloves and aprons after use
- Cover cuts or breaks in your skin or those of patients/clients with waterproof dressings

If you come into contact with a patient who is later found to be contaminated with MRSA, it may be necessary to attend screening sessions at the hospital's Occupational Health Department. During this time and before you have been declared clear from MRSA, we may be restricted in the assignments we can offer you due to the risks of infection.

AIDS/ HIV

Candidates should be aware of and abide by the requirements of HSC 1998/ 226 "Guidance on the Management of AIDS/ HIV Infected Health Care Workers and Patient Notification"

- If you believe you may have been exposed to HIV infection in any way you should seek medical advice from your GP or Occupational Health Department and, where appropriate, undergo diagnostic HIV antibody testing.
- If you are found to be infected, you must again seek guidance from your GP or Occupational Health Department
- If you are found to be HIV positive and perform or assist with invasive surgical procedures you must stop this immediately and seek advice from your GP or Occupational Health Department regarding what action, if any, should be taken
- Please be aware that it is the obligation of all health workers to notify their employer and, where appropriate, the relevant professional regulatory body, if they are aware of HIV positive individuals who have not heeded advice to modify their working practice.

Please note the above guidance does not supersede current Department of Health Guidelines (in particular HSC 1998/226) or local practices and procedures.

Medicals

Because of the importance of your fitness to practice, Mediplacements reserves the right to request a certificate of fitness to practice from your GP or an Occupational Health Service. Our clients may also ask that you undergo a medical examination before commencing work for them. In these cases, future placements may be dependent upon your compliance with this request and its outcome, providing it was made with good reason.

Criminal Convictions

Legislation requires Agencies to obtain a Criminal Record Disclosure (CRB) or a Disclosure Scotland (DS) for all our Candidates. Disclosures from previous employers are not acceptable. Please be aware that our clients may insist we inform them in writing of any criminal convictions you may have before accepting you for an assignment – we will only provide this information with your consent. Mediplacements cannot be held responsible should clients decline your services following refusal to comply with this request or disclosure of a criminal conviction. Our own response to criminal record information will depend upon its nature and seriousness.

You are required to inform of us of any criminal convictions which may appear on any future CRB disclosures.

We also ask you to complete, sign and date a "Criminal Convictions" declaration as part of your application form.

YOUR PAY

Timesheets

Timesheets run from Monday to Sunday. Please submit your timesheet to us by Midday Monday in order to be paid by the following Friday. Deadlines may change around Bank Holidays- we will inform all Candidates in advance if this is the case. Payments are made directly into your bank/ building society/ Limited Company accounts by BACS (Please make sure we have the correct details). It is your responsibility to ensure your timesheet is legible, completed correctly and has been authorised and signed by your manager- payment may be delayed if this is not the case.

In particular, please ensure:

- You complete the correct week ending date timesheet
- The date and times you worked, excluding any breaks taken are correct
- The total hours and basic pay columns are correct
- There is the dated signature of the line manager at your assignment.
- You have signed the timesheet

If you have any problems with timesheets or payment, please contact your Recruitment Consultant.

Holiday Pay (PAYE Candidates)

As a PAYE Candidate you start accruing holiday pay as soon as you begin work through us and can request this from your Consultant at any time. Holiday entitlement is 4 weeks per annum for full time workers (37 and a half hours per week), apportioned *pro rata* for part time workers.

There are two financial/ tax options available to you for the period in which Mediplacements finds you Locum assignments.

- a. **DIRECT EMPLOYEE OPTION** – Simpler for you to administer but significantly less disposable income to spend than Contractor Company option below.

With this direct employee option Mediplacements becomes your employer for tax purposes and is responsible for the deduction of Income Tax (PAYE) and National Insurance from your gross weekly pay, following receipt of your signed timesheet.

- b. **UMBRELLA COMPANY OPTION** – Being paid through this option normally means that your weekly disposable income is significantly more than option a. above. Charges for services vary and you may wish to consider operators, either directly sourced by you or recommended to you.

On a weekly basis your timesheet should be faxed through to us, preferably on a Friday.

Prevention of Excessive Working

If excessive working hours are noted on a time sheet, an agreement is sent to that employee to sign confirming that they may on occasions be required to work such number of hours per week as shall be necessary for the proper performance of his/her duties under his/her contract of employment.

ASSIGNMENTS

Timekeeping

Please make every effort to ensure you arrive at and leave all bookings at the agreed time, confirmed in your booking letter. If, for any reason, you are unable to attend a booking you should contact your Recruitment Consultant, and if possible your line manager, as soon as possible.

Requirements for Assignments

Please attend all bookings with your current Mediplacements ID badge as well as your statutory registration certificate (where appropriate) and CRB disclosure form. Mobile phones, unless working in the Community, should be switched off for the duration of your assignment.

Uniforms

The uniform requirements of some our clients differ and will be stated prior to the assignment.

If you are on an assignment where a hospital uniform is not required or have any queries regarding dress, please do not hesitate to contact your Consultant.

ID Badges

ID Badges will be issued in line with your Professional Registration and must be worn at all times whilst on the clients' premises. When we are advised of your registration or re-registration, Mediplacements will generate new badges and send them to you. Badges must be handed back to us on termination of employment with Mediplacements.

Arriving for Work

On arrival at a new booking, please take the opportunity to familiarise yourself with the local policies and procedures. In particular, please be aware of the following, where relevant:

- Crash Call Procedure
- Hot Spot Mechanisms
- Violent Episode and Lone worker Policy
- Procedure for Alerting Security Staff
- Policy for Administration & Assistance with Drugs
- Complaints handling

Where possible, we encourage Candidates to visit their potential workplace prior to starting work. If you have any queries regarding correct local procedures, or are uncomfortable carrying out any of the duties you have been asked to perform, please raise these issues with your line manager in the first instance.

Completing an Assignment

Notice Period

When possible, Candidates should let Mediplacements know when their assignment is coming to an end, allowing us time to organise your next assignment if necessary. Candidates and Clients, according to our Terms of Business, are asked to give at least 1 week's notice (except in exceptional circumstances when each case will be looked at individually) and subsequently inform Mediplacements of the end date.

Candidate Performance Reports

At the end of every assignment Mediplacements provide a Candidate Performance Report to the Client for completion. Clients are asked to supply feedback on the service they have received from Mediplacements and also to provide a reference on the Candidate.

Candidates are asked to give feedback on the service they have received from Mediplacements and also feedback on the assignment. This information can then be used to advise future locums. Both positive and negative feedback is actively encouraged so Mediplacements can act upon it to improve its quality of service.

YOUR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Training

Please keep up to date with all relevant clinical guidance as well as attending to your CPD requirements. In particular, you must have annual training and refreshers in the training which you were required to undertake at registration.

Please ensure your Training Record is kept up to date at all times by bringing it into or sending to our office, together with proof of training completed, after any new course. We will review training completed at appraisals (see below). Mediplacements facilitates a number of training courses for Candidates. For further details of these and training subsidies available please contact your Consultant.

Appraisals

Appraisals give us an opportunity to consider with you your performance at work. They are also an opportunity for you to raise any concerns or issues you may have.

Appraisals are carried out based on feedback received from clients and cover the following areas:

- General levels of service including punctuality, attitude and ability to carry out practical tasks
- Clinical performance
- Training needs
- CPD
- Any other issues, including progress since the last appraisal

OUR POLICIES

Professional Standards

Whilst this booklet outlines our own policies and standards, these do not supersede the national guidelines of the HPC and other professional Candidatship bodies such as the RCCP, COR, RCSLT and BDA.

Further information is available from:

Health Professionals Council
Park House
184 Kennington Park Road
London
SE11 4BU

Tel: 0207 582 0866
Website: www.hpc-uk.org

Royal Pharmaceutical
Society of GB
1, Lambeth High Street,
London.
SE1 7JN.

Tel: 0207 735 9141
Website: www.rpsgb.org

General Medical Council
350 Euston Road,
London.
NW1 3JN.

Tel: 0161 923 6602
Website: www.gmc-uk.org

Code of Conduct

Mediplacements expects all Candidates to act in a professional manner at all times. We particularly ask you to pay special attention to:

- Punctuality
- Standards of Dress and Courtesy
- Quality of Care and Clinical Procedures
- Consideration and Respect for patients, colleagues and managers
- Confidentiality and Integrity

You are responsible for your own actions when completing assignments, co- operating with colleagues and managers for the care of patients and clients.

You should comply with all reasonable requests, using your professional judgement at all times.

If you have any questions about your work, please try to resolve these locally at first or seek advice from your Consultant.

You should not smoke at work or attend work under the influence of alcohol or any illicit substances. Smoking may be allowed in specific areas where the Authority expressly permits you to do so.

Medication Policy

AHP & HSS Temporary Locums are not allowed to administer medication without the authority of a senior permanent NHS manager. It is the policy of Mediplacements that **NO TEMPORARY AHP & HSS WORKER IS AUTHORISED TO ADMINISTER MEDICATION.**

Equal Opportunities

Mediplacements seeks to offer equality to all our Candidates and will treat any allegations of discrimination with the utmost seriousness. In accordance with these principles Candidates may not discriminate on the grounds of:

- Race
- Ethnic Origin
- Nationality
- Colour
- Religion or Belief
- Gender
- Sexual Orientation
- Marital Status
- Disability

Health and Safety

Under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, it is your duty to:

- Take reasonable care for the health and safety at work of yourself and any other people who might be affected by your acts or omissions
- Co-operate with your employer and others to enable them to comply with statutory duties and requirements
- Not intentionally or recklessly misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare

The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1992 further requires you to:

- Use any equipment, etc., provided in the interests of safety
- Follow health & safety instructions
- Report anything you consider to be a serious danger
- Report any shortcomings in the protection arrangements for health & safety

When on assignment, it is the client's responsibility to familiarise you with their own Health & Safety policy and procedures, and with locations of fire escapes, first aid contact person etc. At a client's request in writing, Mediplacements will undertake to train Candidates to be supplied in standard workstation safety. We cannot, however, be held responsible for the suitability of workstations used by our clients. If you express concern over the Health & Safety arrangements of your employing client, we will ask the client to investigate.

If you refuse to work for a client on Health & Safety grounds, we will attempt to find you other employment without prejudice.

Record Keeping

Good records are essential to safe and effective patient care and should be:

- Clear, legible and indelible
- Factual and accurate
- Written as soon after the event as possible
- Signed, timed and dated

Records should:

- Be written with the involvement of the patient, client or their carer where possible
- Be written in terms the patient or client can understand
- Be consecutive
- Identify problems that have arisen and action taken to rectify them
- Show care planned, decisions made, care delivered and information shared

Please be aware that full records are essential should any questions be raised about the care and standards of care delivered.

For more detailed information, please see the relevant Professional Bodies' guidelines.

Fraud awareness

Mediplacements has comprehensive arrangements for countering fraud and corruption and all staff are duty bound to report any suspicions.

Fraud is an act of dishonesty with the intention to make a gain for themselves or another, or to cause a loss to another or to expose another to a loss.

Examples of what might constitute fraud include:

- Falsely claiming sick leave which is paid
- Claiming for hours not worked
- False expense claims
- Falsifying records to steal NHS property
- Failing to declare criminal convictions
- Falsifying qualifications.

If you suspect that fraud of any type has occurred or is in progress you must not attempt to investigate it yourself. Any genuine concerns about fraud may be reported directly to the Trust's Counter Fraud Specialists. Alternatively, any suspicions can be reported to:

NHS Fraud and Corruption Reporting Line – 0800 028 40 60

Calls to the National Fraud and Corruption Reporting Line are treated in confidence by trained staff and information given will be professionally assessed and evaluated. Callers have the option to remain anonymous should they wish to do so.

Lines are open 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.

All reports of fraud at a Trust will normally be referred to the Trust's Counter Fraud Specialists. Dependent upon the information received, the Counter Fraud Specialists will usually arrange a meeting to obtain more information and to give advice on whether or not an investigation is appropriate. The diverse nature of information received means that it may not always be appropriate to conduct an investigation or it may be appropriate to involve the Police and/or the regional NHS Counter Fraud Service team.

If a criminal investigation is necessary, this will be carried out in accordance with the law and best practice.

Fraud against the NHS is never acceptable. All appropriate legal, civil, and disciplinary action will be taken against those responsible. The government is determined that the fraudster will not benefit and have instructed that, where public money has been defrauded, this will be the subject of recovery procedures in every case.

Wider details on countering NHS Fraud can also be found at:
<http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/fraud>

Confidentiality

Any patient information obtained by you during the course of your duties is confidential and should not be disclosed to any third party if it is not legitimately in connection with their treatment or any other official investigation.

Please take care with patient records when on assignment to ensure that they are not in undue danger of being accessed by unauthorised individuals.

Patients'/clients' information should only normally be shared with their consent – you should make sure patients/clients understand that their information may be shared with various Candidates of the team providing care. It is a patient's/client's decision what information should be shared with their family or others.

Where a patient/client is considered incapable of giving consent, please consult relevant colleagues. Where a patient/client has withheld consent, disclosures of information may only be made if:

- They can be justified in the public interest (normally where the disclosure is essential to protect the patient/client or someone else from risk of significant harm).
- They are required by law or court order

You should act in accordance with local and national policies if there is an issue of child protection.

Please also be aware that any information acquired in connection with the provision of the Service which concerns the Authority, its staff or procedures should not be disclosed to another individual unless it is already in the public domain.

Data Protection

In addition to the above, you must adhere to the requirements of the *Data Protection Act 1998*.

In brief, anyone processing personal data must comply with the eight enforceable principles of good practice. Data must be:

- Fairly and lawfully processed
- Processed for limited purposes
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Accurate
- Not kept for longer than necessary
- Processed in accordance with the data subject 's rights
- Secure
- Not transferred to countries without adequate protection

For further information, please see www.dataprotection.gov.uk, from which the above guidance is reproduced.

Computer Use

Where our clients grant you access to their computer systems, these must only be used as *authorised* and not to gain access to any other data or programs. In general, please ensure that you:

- Keep any passwords safe
- Keep to the client 's policies and procedures
- Log off immediately after use

Specifically, you must:

- Observe any local policies and procedures regarding passwords, floppy disks, CD ROMs and data storage/transfer
- Not load or introduce any programs onto the computer
- Not access any information service or bulletin board including the Internet without specific prior authority from your line manager
- Not download any files or connect to any network or other computer equipment without prior authority as above

Consent

In accordance with HPC and other relevant Professional Bodies, you must obtain the consent of a patient before giving any treatment or care.

Consent must be:

- Given by a legally competent person
- Given voluntarily
- Informed

Patients/ clients are assumed to be legally competent (that is they can understand and retain treatment information and use it to make an informed choice) unless otherwise assessed by a suitably qualified practitioner.

The exception to this rule is in the case of an emergency where a treatment is necessary to preserve life and the patient/ client is unable to give consent. In all cases, you must be able to demonstrate you are acting in the patient's best interests.

If a patient/client is no longer legally competent, decisions should be based on previous consent/non-consent in a similar situation (providing there is no reason to believe they have changed their mind) or their known wishes. Otherwise, treatment should be in their best interests.

In the case of children (those aged under 16 in England and Wales), the involvement of those with parental responsibility is usually necessary – you should be aware of legislation and local protocol.

It is not usually acceptable to seek consent for a procedure, that you will not be performing yourself unless you have been specifically trained for that area of practice.

All discussions and decisions relating to consent should be documented in the patient's/ client's records. Where consent is withheld, you should follow the policy in force at your assignment location.

Safeguarding Children

We all have a statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. Safeguarding children is about protecting children from harm as well as helping to ensure that children meet their potential and grow up in safe, caring circumstances. Children are defined as being up to the age of 18 including unborn children.

Please consult the local policies and procedures at your workplace as these will vary according to the Trusts strategy and how they work with supporting agencies.

More generic information can be found at:

<http://www.oxleas.nhs.uk/advice-and-guidance/safeguarding-children/>

Caring for Patients in their Own Homes

Please see below for general guidelines relating to assignments carried out in an individual's private home. For further detailed information please refer to the HPC or the relevant Professional Bodies' guidelines.

General Conduct

- Clients and their families should at all times be treated with dignity and respect and due consideration should be taken of their religion, culture and any other preferences
- Clients should be addressed using their preferred name
- Care and support should be offered in the least intrusive manner possible
- The independence of clients should be supported and encouraged where possible through appropriate communication about, and involvement in, their own care. This independence should only be curbed where it is in the client 's best interests and the reasons recorded

Attending and Leaving a Home Visit

- You should announce your identity clearly on arrival and not enter a client 's home without invitation
- Upon arrival at a home visit, you should check whether your client has any specific needs for this visit
- Please take full care securing a client 's home when leaving including, where appropriate, doors and windows and the safeguarding of keys

Carrying out Assignments

- Medication should be kept in a safe place, known and accessible to the client, or to relatives and other carers where appropriate
- You should not make use of a client 's property (including, for example, their telephone) without their express permission
- You should report any accident or emergency situations as soon as possible to the relevant authorities and to your Consultant
- All visits, incidents, observations, care and, where relevant, financial transactions should be logged on records kept securely in the client's home
- Records are kept for one month, or until the assignment is over, and are made available to the client, their relatives and representatives
- If you are unable to attend any specific appointment, please notify not only us but also your client and line manager

Allegations of Abuse

Mediplacements will take seriously any allegations of abuse by staff working through us. If we receive complaints of this sort against you, we may not be able to assign you whilst a full investigation is performed.

Ultimately, if allegations are well founded, we may not be able to offer you work in the future. Where allegations are sufficiently serious, we may need to report you to the relevant statutory body and/or the police depending on the allegation.

Appeals against any decisions made by our staff in these matters can be made to the Operations Director, whose decision will be final.

Should you in the course of duty suspect that abuse is taking place you should inform your line manager immediately. In the case of caring for service users in their own homes, you must report any suspicions of allegations of abuse immediately to the business manager of your Mediplacements Branch. There are strict guidelines to be followed in reporting abuse under the Department of Health guidance "No Secrets" and a full report will need to be made prior to investigation.

There are many different forms of abuse:

- Physical, including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanction
- Sexual, including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.
- Psychological, including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks
- Financial or material abuse, including theft, fraud, exploitation, and pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits
- Neglect or acts of omission, including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating
- Discriminatory abuse, including racist or sexist abuse or that based on a person's disability and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment

Investigations and Prosecutions Reporting

The candidate must inform Mediplacements of any criminal or professional prosecutions or investigations that they are subject to. The agency will then consider whether or not there is grounds for suspension. The severity of the accusation will determine if the candidate is suspended, the main criteria being a risk to the health or life of a patient or colleague. This criteria is not exclusive and cases shall be dealt with on an individual basis. The decision is ultimately made by Mediplacements, Managing Director. The relevant statutory body shall then be notified of any decision taken, if seen as appropriate.

It is Mediplacements policy to inform the candidate that it is not in their best interests to continue with the placement. These situations are dealt with the utmost confidentiality and discretion. It is vital that the credibility of Mediplacements is not compromised. The health and safety of the patients and colleagues is the primary concern for Mediplacements in such a situation, influencing our policy.

The candidate must also cooperate with any investigation undertaken by a Trust involving either themselves or another member of staff.

Whistle Blowing

Mediplacements operates a "Whistle Blowing Policy", which encourages a culture of openness within our organisation and aims to prevent malpractice. With the introduction of the

Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 all workers now have legal protection from any form of retribution, victimisation or detriment as a result of publicly disclosing certain serious allegations of malpractice.

The policy will apply in cases where a Candidate genuinely and in good faith believes that one of the following sets of circumstances is occurring, has occurred or may occur within their line of duty:

- A criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed
- A person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which he or she is subject
- A miscarriage of justice has occurred is occurring or is likely to occur
- The health and safety of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered
- The environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged
- Information tending to show any matter falling within any one of the preceding paragraphs has been, is being or is likely to be deliberately concealed

Anyone who wishes to raise or discuss any issues which might fall into the above categories he/she should contact the Operations Director at Mediplacements Head Office in the first instance who will treat the matter in confidence. It is likely that a further investigation will be necessary and he/she may be required to attend a disciplinary or investigative hearing as a witness.

A copy of our full Whistle Blowing Policy is available upon request. Everyone should be aware that if any disclosure is made in bad faith (for example, in order to cause disruption within the organisation), or concerns information which you do not substantially believe is true, or indeed if the disclosure is made for personal gain, then such a disclosure may constitute gross misconduct for which summary dismissal is the sanction.

Complaints

General Principles:

- Line managers will handle all verbal and written complaints, reporting to the Operations Director.
- In the absence of the Operations Director, another Company Director will handle the complaint.
- The Line Manager is responsible for monitoring the complaints and adhering to the response time detailed in this policy.
- Complaints are monitored for emerging patterns, as detailed in this policy.
- Poor performance issues are addressed in the Policy for Training, Development and Appraisals.
- It is within the rights of client to terminate an assignment if dissatisfied.

Complaints raised by a Client, or Locum in respect of a Mediplacements member of staff:

1. The complaint will be acknowledged within 24 hours of receipt.
2. The member of staff concerned is to be contacted and informed of the matter.
3. In all instances the member of staff should be given the right of reply. This should be given in writing and copies supplied to all the relevant parties.
4. If the complaint relates to a work permit application, the 'Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner' (OISC), can be contacted at 5th Floor, Counting House, 53 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QN, telephone 020 7211 1551.
5. On receipt of written confirmation of the complaint from the Client or Locum, Mediplacements in conjunction with the Client/Locum will come to a decision as to the method by which the complaint should be handled. This will include deciding on how an investigation would be conducted, if an investigation were to be deemed necessary. This will depend on the nature of the complaint.
6. In all cases, the complaint will be recorded on the member of staff's file.
7. In all cases, Mediplacements will keep all parties informed of developments at all times.

Complaints raised by a Mediplacements member of staff, a patient or a client's customer against a Client/Locum:

In the event of a complaint being raised by a Mediplacements member of staff, a patient or a client's customer in respect of a work-based problem, the following will be adhered to:

1. In the first instance the complainant should contact the relevant Mediplacements Line Manager.
2. Details of any verbal conversation will be recorded.
3. Advice will be given, and depending on the nature of the complaint, a written submission of the complaint may be requested by the Line Manager.
4. A decision will be made in conjunction with the complainer as to the next stage of the complaint if appropriate, for example if an investigation or further action is required.
5. In all cases the complaint will be recorded on the Client/Locums records file.
6. Where serious complaints are upheld, Mediplacements will take the appropriate action in terms of reporting responsibilities.
7. In all cases, Mediplacements will keep all parties informed of developments at all times.

Monitoring of Complaints:

Mediplacements operates a system of monitoring complaints to identify patterns or trends. The system will operate as follows:

1. Each time a verbal or written complaint is made about a member of staff, Locum or client, a record will be made on the form that is for the purpose of recording such issues.
2. The relevant Mediplacements Line Manager will check these forms on a regular basis. This will be for the purpose of identifying any trends or patterns that could otherwise be missed.
3. There will be a dedicated form for each Client, Locum and member of staff. This form will be completed regardless of other documentation and correspondence that may be required. These forms will be held in a complaints folder in alphabetical order, and each time an issue arises, the form will be completed. This should enable the manager monitoring the system to detect trends or patterns.
4. Should any trends or patterns be noticed, we will take necessary action, depending on the nature of the problem to address the issue.
5. If necessary Mediplacements will seek guidance on how best to take action, from a relevant professional organisation such as ACAS (Arbitration and Conciliation Services), appropriate statutory body, The Police, The Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC), or the relevant governing body to our individual medical professions.

Timescales for Action:

1. Written complaints will be acknowledged in writing within 24 hours of receipt.
2. Details of planned investigations or other appropriate action to be taken will be sent within 5 days.
3. The complainant will be kept informed in writing, on a regular basis as to the progress of the investigation/action.
4. Upon conclusion of the investigation/action a detailed outcome response will be sent.
In the event that any persons involved in a complaint are unsatisfied with the manner in which it has been handled, we would request that further contact is made in writing to the following director within the company:

Edward Simpson

Address: Mediplacements
Ability House
121 Brooker Road
Waltham Abbey
Essex. EN9 1JH.

Tel: 0845 230 6666

Fax: 0845 230 6677

E-mail: info@mediplacements.com

Review of candidate handbook

This handbook will be reviewed on at least an annual basis. The next review will be 15.10.11.