

Business Standards Regulations



COHPA BUSINESS STANDARDS

COHPA has set a number of business standards requirements that cover both ethical and service provision considerations. Meeting these standards is a mandatory condition for continued membership. This enables the association to be seen as a safe place from which to choose a provider and a body of whom questions may be asked.

At present COHPA is not a regulatory body. Any standards approved will be intended as guidelines to help providers to develop self-regulating systems.

Relationships with others.

With Purchasers of Services

Purchasers of services shall be issued with clear written contracts which provide:

- Information about the nature and extent of the services provided and specifically any services that are excluded
- Details of the applicable charges and fees and payment terms
- Information regarding any complaints procedures that are available in the event of a dispute
- Details regarding communication with management and employee representatives

With Client Employees

For those who seek medical consultation (i.e. client employees) occupational health providers shall:

- Communicate frankly, courteously and in an unhurried manner
- Supply information about the nature and extent of the services provided
- Offer all client employees the same quality of service irrespective of status
- With the client employee's consent, notify their General Practitioner of any treatment or referral to a specialist for treatment
- Make available appropriate information regarding complaints procedures

With Other Occupational Health Providers

There is significant inter-trading / subcontracting between Commercial Occupational Health Providers. In these relationships both parties will:

- Not accept or perform work they are not competent to undertake
- Relate impartially, honestly and ethically in all professional relationships
- Declare all potential conflicts of interest

With Other Occupational Health Professionals

Occupational health services may be multi-disciplinary. Multi-disciplinary teams may include occupational health physicians, occupational health nurses, occupational hygienists, ergonomists, physiotherapists, psychologists, counsellors, etc. In all circumstances, the professionals shall:

- Only delegate professional tasks to other personnel when that person is specifically trained and has demonstrated competence in the performance of that task

With General Practitioners

Occupational health providers shall respect the relationship between General Practitioners and their patients.

Specifically, they shall:

- Comply with all legal requirements relating to medical reports
- Inform the General Practitioner of health issues concerning their patients as appropriate and with consent
- With the client employee's consent, notify their General Practitioner of any treatment or referral to a specialist for treatment
- Not influence workers in their choice of General Practitioner

General Principles: Providers of Occupational Health Services

ALL PROVIDERS OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES SHALL WITH REGARD TO:

Professional Regulation

- Comply with all regulatory requirements
- Verify the doctors are licensed to practice by the GMC and nurses by the NMC
- Verify that all other clinical professionals are properly registered with the appropriate bodies
- Verify that occupational health practitioners have suitable liability insurance or indemnity
- Maintain and update a register of the qualifications and competencies of their occupational health staff
- Maintain in force at all times appropriate business insurances such as Employers Liability and Directors Vicarious Liability wherever appropriate

Service Delivery

- Act impartially in the interests of the clients of the occupational health service
- Maintain financial propriety in dealing with purchasers
- Ensure a service to clients is provided and supervised only by staff who have appropriate knowledge, skills, qualifications, experience, training and competency
- Ensure adequate equipment and support (e.g. clerical) is available for the services provided
- Provide services to clients appropriate to the level of risk as well as the number of employees
- Make the range and scope of their services known to their clients in simple, clear language
- Provide clear and transparent guidance about the duties occupational health professionals have to patients and to those with whom they have contractual arrangements, particularly in relation to disclosure of information
- Ensure that the intellectual property of the client is protected

Internal Standards

- Maintain the highest levels of clinical practice and administrative standards
- Provide education and training for occupational health staff to ensure contemporary knowledge and skills
- Ensure that occupational health staff have appropriate supervision by providing access to and advice from an accredited specialist in Occupational Medicine
- Ensure that appraisal systems are in place for occupational health staff
- Maintain and monitor an effective complaints procedure including investigation of complaints against occupational health staff
- Assess their service's performance by quality and audit processes
- Ensure that occupational health staff are trained in, and apply, principles of equal opportunities
- Ensure adequate support is available to assess quality and audit processes

Medical Records

- Ensure adequate, factual, contemporaneous and legible medical records are maintained confidentially for all those workers for whom they provide a service
- Ensure that medical records are stored safely and securely, including the encryption of electronic data
- Protect information from improper or accidental disclosures, (e.g. website security / encrypted emails)
- Release information only in line with guidance from the GMC, NMC and other professional bodies
- Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation e.g. Access to Medical Reports Act 1988, Access to Health Records Act 1990 and Data Protection Act 1998

Tendering for Contracts

- Limit advertising to the provision of factual information about services and avoid making excessive claims
- Not damage the professional, personal or business reputation of other occupational health providers and professionals
- Ensure suitable procedures exist for the transfer of records on change of contract
- Fully participate in any TUPE consultation with any affected staff



*COHPA membership signifies a commitment
to advancing the industry .
Adherence to our Business Standards
Regulations conveys a pledge from member
organisations towards best business
practice.*



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