Assistant/Associate Practitioner Code of Conduct  
NHS South Central

Introduction
This Code of Conduct informs the standards of practice and behaviour required of Assistant/Associate Practitioners by the South Central Strategic Health Authority and Trusts and PCTs across NHS South Central. It is intended to ensure that Assistant/Associate Practitioners undertake their work in a safe, skilled and competent manner to ensure high quality and safe patient services, in the interests of public protection.

This Code of Conduct will act to inform the public and other health and social care professionals of the standard of conduct they can expect of an Assistant/Associate Practitioner employed at Agenda for Change band four across NHS South Central. As an Assistant/Associate Practitioner you have a duty of care to your patients and clients, who are entitled to receive safe, competent, high quality care. This Code of Conduct will help Assistant/Associate Practitioners uphold and enhance the good reputation of employing organisations within NHS South Central.

Responsibilities
As an Assistant/Associate Practitioner you are responsible for your practice and behaviour. In caring for patients and clients you must:
1. Respect the patient or client as an individual
2. Obtain consent before you give any treatment or care
3. Protect confidential information
4. Cooperate with others in your team
5. Maintain your occupational knowledge and competence
6. Be trustworthy
7. Identify and act to and minimise risk to patients and clients

1. Respect the patient or client as an individual
   • Recognise and respect the role of patients and clients as partners in their healthcare.
   • Promote and respect the interests and dignity of patients and clients.
   • Demonstrate a personal and professional commitment to equality and diversity.
   • Promote the interests of patients and clients.
   • Treat people kindly, considerately and with compassion.
   • Manage delegated case or work loads and care/work planning around the individual needs of patients and clients.
   • Listen to people and respond to their concerns and preferences.
   • Support people in caring for themselves to improve and maintain their health.

2. Obtain consent before you give any interventions or care
   • All patients and clients have a right to receive information regarding their healthcare. You must be sensitive to their needs and respect their wishes when providing information about their healthcare. Explain what you are doing for and to patients prior to embarking on any physical care or contact.
   • Respect patients and clients right to choose.
   • Involve patients and clients in decisions about their healthcare.
   • Use the Mental Capacity Act appropriately for those who cannot give informed consent.
3. **Cooperate with others in your team**
   - You are accountable to your line manager and should report to them as appropriate, working within the Governance Framework of your individual employing organisation and the NHS as a whole.
   - Respect the skills, expertise and contribution of colleagues.
   - Communicate effectively and share your knowledge, skill and expertise with other members of the team.
   - Work with colleagues to maintain the quality of your work and maintain the safety of patients and clients.
   - Treat your colleagues fairly and without discrimination.
   - Ensure that individuals you manage are adequately supervised and supported.
   - Remain responsible for your own actions and seek advice and support from senior colleagues when necessary.
   - Establish that anyone you delegate to is able to carry out your instructions safely and competently.
   - Consult and take advice from colleagues when appropriate.

4. **Protect confidential information**
   - Respect people’s right to confidentiality and use information only for the purposes for which it is given.
   - Ensure that patients and clients are informed about how and why information is shared by those providing care.
   - Act at all times in accordance with national and local policies.

5. **Maintain relevant knowledge and competence**
   - Deliver care informed by current best practice and evidence.
   - Keep your knowledge and skills up to date and relevant to your role.
   - Possess the knowledge, skills and abilities required for safe and effective practice.
   - Recognise and work within the limits of your competence, only accepting responsibilities for those activities for which you are competent.
   - Use competences of critical thinking, reflection and problem solving to deliver high quality healthcare to patients and clients.

6. **Be trustworthy**
   - Behave in a way that upholds the reputation of Assistant/Associate Practitioners and your employing organisation.
   - Refuse any gift, favour or hospitality that might be interpreted as an attempt to obtain preferential care or treatment.
   - Do not ask for or accept loans from patients, clients or their relatives and friends.

7. **Identify and act to minimise the risk to patients and clients**
   - Work with other members of the team to promote healthcare environments that are conducive to safe, therapeutic and ethical practice.
   - Act without delay if you believe that you, a colleague, or anyone else may be putting someone at risk.
   - Remedy circumstances in the healthcare environment that could jeopardise safe standards of practice. Where you are unable to do this, report these circumstances to a senior colleague with authority to manage them. A written record must support this report.
   - Report any changes in a patients condition promptly and to the appropriate person.
   - Maintain consistent and accurate documentation.

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