

Relationships at Work Policy

This policy provides information, advice and guidance to managers and workers regarding acceptable professional boundaries between individual workers and service users as well as relationships between individuals who work together.

Key Words:	Relationships, Personal Relationships with Colleagues, Relationships with Clients/Patients	
Version:	3.1	
Approved by:	Strategic Workforce Group	
Ratified by:	People and Culture Committee	
Date this version was Ratified:	June 2023	
Please state if there is a reason for not publishing on website:	n/a	
Review date:	September 2025	
Expiry date:	July 2026	
Target audience:	All LPT Staff	
Type of Policy	Clinical	Non Clinical √

CONTENTS

	Page
Version Control	3
Key individuals involved in developing and consulting on the document	3
Governance	4
Equality Statement	4
Due Regard	4
Definitions That Apply To This Policy	4
Summary	5
1. Introduction	5
2. Purpose and Scope	5
3. Principles	6
4. Recruitment	7
5. Where a Line Management Relationship Exists	8
6. Where There is No Line Management Relationship	8
7. Forming of Relationships at Work	9
8. Job Evaluation/ Promotion/ Pay	10
9. Disciplinary Issues	10
10. Managing Situations when a Personal Relationship Adversely Affects the Workplace	10
11. Managing Situations when a Personal Relationship Adversely Affects the Workplace	11
12. Relationships with Contractors	12
13. Preferential and Inconsistent treatment in the workplace	12
14. Personal relationship breakdowns	13
15. Confidentiality	13
16. Raising Concerns	14
17. Breaches of Policy	14
18. Duties within the Organisation	14
19. Stakeholders and Consultation	15
20. Monitoring Compliance and Effectiveness	15
21. Dissemination and Implementation	15
22. Training	15
23. Links to other Policies	15
24. Links to Standards/Performance indicators	16
25. References and Associated Documentation	16
Appendix 1 - Due Regard Screening Template	17
Appendix 2 - The NHS Constitution	18
Appendix 3 - Privacy Impact Assessment Screening Template	19
Appendix 4 – Risk Assessment Form	20

Version Control and Summary of Changes

Version Number	Date	Comments (description change and amendments)
1	March 2016	This policy provides information advice and guidance to managers and employees regarding acceptable professional and personal boundaries between individual employees and service users as well as relationships between individuals who work together.
2	October 2018	Formatting Privacy Impact Assessment included as Appendix 3 Paragraph 17 Monitoring Compliance and Effectiveness – measurable added Paragraph 4.11 changed to Managers should not provide official organisational references in any instance. All official organisational references must be provided by the Employee Services team. Para 11.2 changed to ask or accept a date to meet with a patient, client or service user to engage in personal social activity Para 7.3 If a friend or member of staff's family are admitted to your service for treatment and care please inform your line manager as there is a conflict of interest. Staff will be supported to work in an alternative setting whilst the family member or friend is treated. Risk Assessment Form included as Appendix 4
3	December 2022	Addition of section 13 – preferential and inconsistent treatment in the workplace Addition of section 14 – personal relationship breakdown Addition of section 17 – breaches of policy Section 11 amended to add reference to social media and clarification of responsibilities
3.1	May 2026	Ext to allow review

All LPT Policies can be provided in large print or Braille formats, if requested, and an interpreting service is available to individuals of different nationalities who require them.

For further information contact: lpt.hradvisoryteam@nhs.net

Key individuals involved in developing and consulting on the document

Name	Designation
Accountable Director	Sarah Willis, Director of HR & OD
Author(s)	Mandy White, Senior HR Business Partner
Implementation Lead	
Core policy reviewer group	Strategic Workforce Group
Wider consultation	Band 7 and above Managers/Leaders Staff side

Governance

Level 2 or 3 approving delivery group	Level 1 Committee to ratify policy
Strategic Workforce Group	People and Culture Committee

Equality Statement

Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (LPT) aims to design and implement policy documents that meet the diverse needs of our service, population and workforce, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others. It takes into account the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and promotes equal opportunities for all. This document has been assessed to ensure that no one receives less favourable treatment on the protected characteristics of their age, disability, sex (gender), gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity.

Due Regard

LPT will ensure that Due regard for equality is taken and as such will undertake an analysis of equality (assessment of impact) on existing and new policies in line with the Equality Act 2010. This process will help to ensure that:

- Strategies, policies and procedures and services are free from discrimination.
- LPT complies with current equality legislation.
- Due regard is given to equality in decision making and subsequent processes.
- Opportunities for promoting equality are identified.

Please refer to the due regard assessment (Appendix 1) of this policy.

Definitions that apply to this Policy

Close Personal Relationship	<p>For the purposes of this policy a close personal relationship can be defined as a family, sexual or romantic relationship and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spouses or partners • Parents, including in-laws and step-parents • Children, including in-laws and step-children • Siblings • Grandparents and grandchildren • Aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces and cousins • Separated or divorced people • Other personal and stable relationships, both same sex or heterosexual • Any personal relationship whether long or short-term
Due Regard	<p>Having due regard for advancing equality involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics. • Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people. • Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

Summary

The Relationships at Work Policy and Procedure applies to all staff (temporary or permanent) including medical and dental employed by Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (hereafter referred to as LPT), students, contractors and agency staff and is available to all staff to support them in ensuring that acceptable professional boundaries between individual employees and services users as well as relationships with individuals who work together are maintained.

1.0. Introduction

This policy provides information, advice, and guidance to managers and employees regarding acceptable professional and personal boundaries between individual employees and service users as well as relationships between individuals who work together.

It is acknowledged that relationships of a non-professional nature may develop or exist between people who work together.

LPT values and relies on professional integrity of objective relationships between employees. To ensure that LPT's business is conducted in a professional manner it is necessary to recognise personal relationships between employees which overlap with professional ones.

It is also recognised that employees must establish a rapport with service users, their relatives and carers; they are also responsible for establishing and maintaining appropriate boundaries between themselves and those who use our services. It is essential that all interactions between service users and employees are viewed and maintained in terms of a professional relationship.

All staff should act in accordance to our Trust leadership behaviours for all and be able to evidence adherence in situations that involve relationships at work. A fundamental approach to developing our Leadership behaviours for all is our ability to both give and receive feedback in a positive and insightful way. The feedback method is based on defining; Context, Understanding, Behaviour and Effect (CUBE).

2.0. Purpose and Scope

This policy provides clear guidance to employees and managers of their responsibilities to ensure that issues arising from or involving close relationships are dealt with promptly, sensitively and effectively. Specifically, this Policy aims:

- To protect employees against potential claims of favouritism, bias or prejudice where one has a supervisory or managerial responsibility for the other;
- To avoid situations where there is potential for conflict of interest;
- To ensure that situations do not develop where other employees feel unable to speak openly and honestly, or feel that a relationship is having an adverse impact on their own employment;
- To avoid the potential for abuse of patients;
- To avoid the potential for fraudulent activity;

- To facilitate and encourage the development of an organisational culture where employees feel confident to voluntarily declare personal relationships.

- 2.1 It is recognised that close personal relationships can be sometimes formed at work and there is a possibility within LPT for related persons or individuals with a close personal relationship to be employed within the same team, establishment or work area.
- 2.2 Whilst respecting the right of employees to privacy and family life, LPT has a legitimate right to protect the interest of the organisation, patients / service users and other employees and to take action when close personal relationships either have the potential to have a negative (or reputation) impact upon services.
- 2.3 This Policy's aim is therefore to minimise the risk of problems arising, to provide employees and managers with clear guidance as to their responsibilities and to ensure that issues arising from or involving close personal relationships are dealt with promptly, sensitively and effectively.
- 2.4 To ensure that all employees feel confident of fair and consistent treatment without the concern that a close personal relationship, including if they are part of such a relationship, will adversely influence their or other employees treatment at work or wider working relationships.
- 2.5 To ensure that all employees are clear as to the standards of behaviour that are expected of them in their dealings with patients and service users and the professional boundaries that must be respected in that relationship.

3.0 Principles

- 3.1 Although the existence of a close personal relationship does not constitute a bar to employment or promotion employees are required to declare to their line manager any relationship that may give rise to a real or perceived conflict of interest, trust, or breaches of confidentiality. Where the relationship is with their line manager, this must be declared to the next in line manager.
- 3.2 Employees may normally continue to work together in the same team or department for so long as they both maintain the highest standards of behaviour and conduct in not allowing that relationship to adversely affect the functioning of the team, the treatment of other employees or the provision of services. It is expected that employees will behave responsibly and not put themselves in a position where their close personal relationships may adversely impact on their employment with the Trust and the services it provides.
- 3.3 People who use our services are at the centre of everything we do. Whilst it is recognised that staff must establish a rapport with people who use our services, their relatives and carers they are also responsible for establishing and maintaining appropriate boundaries between themselves and those who use our services. It is essential that all interactions between people who use our services and staff are viewed and maintained in terms of a professional relationship.

4.0 Recruitment

- 4.1 LPT's Recruitment & Selection Policy is designed to ensure objectivity and equality of opportunity throughout the recruitment and selection process, and has been developed to safeguard these principles and participants in the process, where the relationship between applicant and recruitment/selection decision makers may present a risk of conflict of interest (e.g. where applicants are close friends or relatives of the recruiting manager or panel members).
- 4.2 All applicants for positions within the Trust must declare on their application form, if they are related to a director, or have a relationship with a director or employee of the appointing organisation, stating the relationship.
- 4.3 Where a relationship between applicant and recruitment/selection decision makers may present a risk of conflict of interest (e.g. where applicants are close friends or relatives of the recruiting manager or panel members), a panel member must notify the recruiting manager. Where a recruiting manager identifies such a risk they must notify their immediate line manager.
- 4.4 In cases where a potential conflict of interest has been declared, a risk assessment must be undertaken to determine if there is a conflict of interest. If a conflict is identified that panel member will not participate in the selection process any further. If no conflict is identified, normal process will continue. The risk assessment is available at appendix 4.
- 4.5 Advice may be sought from the Human Resources team where further clarification is required.
- 4.6 All decisions related to the declaration of potential conflict and risk assessment are correctly recorded and returned to Human Resources.
- 4.7 Once appointed if an employee is found to have failed to declare a relationship on their application form with an employee who was involved in the recruitment process or with whom they now have a line management or subordinate working relationship this will be investigated under Trust's disciplinary procedures and may lead to disciplinary action.
- 4.8 If an individual is appointed to a position where they will either generate or authorise the ordering of goods or services, including the payment of invoices, or expenses of another employee with whom they have a close personal relationship this must be brought to the attention of their line manager immediately to enable alternative authorising arrangements to be made.
- 4.9 Agency/Bank employees should be asked to declare if they have a close personal relationship with any employee of LPT in the department/service in which it is intended to place them before they commence duties.
- 4.10 Where an applicant if appointed would work in the same team with another employee with whom they have a close personal relationship the implications of this should be considered and discussed as part of the selection process. This is to ensure that, assuming they are otherwise the most suitable candidate for the post, their appointment would also be appropriate taking into account operational issues such as shift/working patterns and requirements for annual leave. There is no guarantee

of matching annual leave or working patterns. Any decision not to appoint must be on the basis of service needs and documented accordingly.

- 4.11 Managers will not provide official organisational references in any instance. All official organisational references must be provided by the Employee Services team.

5.0 Relationships in the workplace

- 5.1 Employees are expected to behave in a professional manner respecting all LPT's policies and confidentiality requirements regarding information one employee may have access to but not the other. Any adverse impact on their own work, the team's work or the functioning of the team is not acceptable, such as:

- Neglecting work
- Communicating confidential, sensitive or inappropriate information to each other
- Behaving in a way that may cause difficulty or embarrassment to others, for example arguing in the workplace or open displays of affection
- Not communicating with each other as a result of disagreement or the breakdown of the relationship
- Inflexibility in working arrangements, this may be of particular importance within small teams where cover is already difficult.

It is not the relationship itself which is not acceptable, which is why all employees are expected to behave in a professional manner at all times.

Where There is No Line Management Relationship

- 5.2 Where employees have identified to their line manager the existence of a relationship, discussion will take place as to the possible risks to themselves and the team. Consideration will be given to working patterns and practices that would protect those employees from unfounded accusations of impropriety by colleagues, for example not rostering both to the same shifts on a ward.
- 5.3 Employees in a close personal relationship may feel uncomfortable remaining working together in the same team in this situation they will be supported in looking for an alternative role.

6.0 Where a Line Management Relationship Exists

- 6.1 Where an existing/new employee is knowingly appointed to a position in which they will be line managed by another employee with whom they have a close personal relationship then arrangements must be made for them to report to another manager for supervision. Any timesheets, expenses claims and annual leave requests must be verified and authorised by another manager. They are not permitted to countersign any official documentation for each other, e.g. patient/drug records.
- 6.2 The line manager will not be involved in any formal procedures, including appraisals, if they have a personal relationship with the individual concerned.

- 6.3 Where a relationship develops between two employees who are also in a line management relationship it is the responsibility of the manager to disclose this to their line manager, who will then discuss with both employees alternative arrangements for supervision, authorisation of leave, appraisals, expenses claims and also what, if any, information will be communicated to other colleagues.
- 6.4 Where a relationship develops between two employees who are in a line management relationship they may decide not to continue working in the same service, in this situation they will be supported in looking for an alternative role.
- 6.5 Equally, where it is not possible to implement the provisions detailed at 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3, consideration will be given to redeploying one of the staff.
- 6.6 Both employees will be consulted to identify who will be re-deployed if only one party is to be moved. In the majority of cases their wishes will be honoured but consideration will be given to the knowledge, skills and experience of both employees, also the impact upon their careers and therefore the relative ease with which each might be redeployed.
- 6.7 If agreement cannot be reached between both employees as to which will be redeployed, for example where a relationship has broken down then LPT will make that decision based on the best interests of the service, patient care and relative impact upon each employee.

7.0 Forming of Relationships at Work

- 7.1 Friendships naturally are formed in the work place. Employees are expected to exercise judgement in determining whether or not a friendship has developed to such an extent that it can be described as a close personal relationship. Where two employees within a team form a personal relationship it is their responsibility to consider whether this places them at risk of being compromised and they are encouraged to inform their immediate line manager in confidence of the existence of the relationship. Factors they should consider include:
- Whether they are at risk of having or being perceived as having conflict of interest
 - Whether they could be perceived as having or be accused of bias, favouritism or prejudice
 - Whether they are at risk of accusations of fraud or financial irregularities.
- 7.2 They may not under any circumstances countersign any official documentation for each other e.g. patient/drug records. If the situation will arise where countersigning will be necessary the relationship must be declared.
- 7.3 If a friend or member of staff's family, or other close personal relation, are admitted to your service for treatment and care please inform your line manager as there is a conflict of interest. Staff will be supported to work in an alternative setting whilst the family member or friend is treated.

8.0 Job Evaluation/ Promotion/ Pay

- 8.1 Employees must not be involved in the authorisation or evaluation of any job description for another employee with whom they have a close personal relationship and are expected to declare any such interest immediately if they are approached to participate in the job evaluation process. They will not be involved in any decisions relating the promotion or pay of another employee with whom they have a close personal relationship. Failure to declare an interest may result in action under LPT disciplinary procedures.

9.0 Disciplinary Issues

- 9.1 Employees must not be involved in any investigation, hearing or other decisions involving another employee with whom they have a close personal relationship. This conflict of interest should be declared as soon as the employee is approached to participate in proceedings. Failure to do so may result in action under LPT's disciplinary procedures.
- 9.2 In situations when one employee in a relationship is subject to investigation under LPT's procedures such as disciplinary, consideration will be given to the temporary redeployment of the other employee in the relationship whilst the investigation takes place. This is both to ensure that a thorough and fair investigation is possible and also to protect that employee from false accusations that they might be impeding the investigation.
- 9.3 Where a member of staff in a relationship with another staff member is involved in a workplace investigation (e.g. disciplinary, dispute resolution), the staff member may discuss the case with their partner if they wish to. There is an expectation that the terms of confidentiality outlined as part of the investigation would then extend to the staff member not directly involved in the investigation. If guidance or support is required by either staff member, they should contact their line manager or the named manager identified to provide support during the process.
- 9.4 Where issues arise that involve one employee in a relationship any discussions will remain confidential to that employee.
- 9.5 The above principles would also apply to any other type of investigation including serious incident investigations.

10.0 Managing Situations when a Personal Relationship Adversely Affects the Workplace

- 10.1 In most cases where a personal relationship causes issues in the workplace these will initially be addressed and resolved informally. Issues arising will be dealt with promptly and sensitively by the relevant manager and not allowed to continue unchecked. Where action is necessary consideration will be given to re-arrangement of the work or working patterns if this is a viable first option.
- 10.2 Where a close personal relationship has been identified as adversely affecting the workplace, normally as the result of complaint, specific documented incidents or outcomes of formal investigation such as under the Disciplinary Procedure, an option

for resolution may include the re-deployment of one or both employees depending on the extent to which the functioning of the team has been affected.

- 10.3 Both employees will be consulted to identify who will be re-deployed if only one party is to be moved. In the majority of cases their wishes will be honoured but consideration will be given to the knowledge, skills and experience of both employees, also the impact upon their careers and therefore the relative ease with which each might be redeployed.
- 10.4 If agreement cannot be reached between both employees as to which will be redeployed, for example where a relationship has broken down then LPT will make that decision based on the best interests of the service, patient care and relative impact upon each employee.
- 10.5 Where investigation has clearly identified a particular loss of trust from the team in one employee then LPT will act in accordance with that finding and assist in redeploying that employee in the interests of the team.

11.0 Relationships with Clients/Patients/Relatives

- 11.1 The Trust has a duty of care to all patients/service users. Employees must not engage in personal relationships with patients/service users that they have met as a result of their employment.

If a care worker enters into a sexual relationship with a person with a mental disorder this may be deemed to be an offence under section 38 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

- 11.2 It is the responsibility of the employee to maintain each relationship within its own appropriate boundary. Employees may experience vulnerable patients disclosing intimate or personal matters, which allow potential for these discussions to be misinterpreted. Employees are reminded to conduct themselves appropriately.
- 11.3 Employees will not enter into a platonic, romantic or sexual relationship with a patient. Employees will not:
 - Give or accept social invitations
 - Accept gifts
 - Ask for or accept a date to meet with a patient, client or service user to engage in a personal social activity.
 - Visit a patient, client or service users home unannounced and without an appointment or if visiting their home is not part of the treatment plan or service normally provided without prior consultation with the employees manager. If an unannounced visit is clinically necessary this should be documented.
 - Engage in unnecessary communication, including asking questions of a personal nature that are not necessary for the service or care being provided.
 - Become 'friends' on social media.
 - Develop inappropriate relationships with family members of a person using Trust services visited during escorted leave or assessments made at home.

These examples are for guidance only and are not intended to be exhaustive.

- 11.4 If an employee becomes subject to inappropriate comments or behaviours from a patient/service user, they must inform their line manager immediately.
- 11.5 In a large organisation, it is recognised that some employees may have pre-existing personal relationships with individuals who may at some point become patients/service users, for example relatives, friendships etc. If this occurs, the employee must inform their line manager immediately of this relationship.
- 11.6 If someone that an employee knows becomes a patient/service user, it is the employee's responsibility to inform their line manager of this relationship. At this time, consideration will be given as to whether there any potential boundary conflicts.
- 11.7 Each case will be assessed individually and appropriate action will be taken. This action may include the patient being treated by another clinician, the placement of employee in an alternative ward/area for the duration of the patient's treatment etc. Please be aware this is not an exhaustive list and action appropriate to the situation will be taken.
- 11.8 The employee must not access any patient records of those they share a close relationship with without approval from their line manager. This will be considered a non-authorised access to records and may result in action taken in line with the Trust's Disciplinary Policy.
- 11.9 If an employee becomes concerned that a personal relationship is developing between a colleague and a patient/service user, they have a responsibility to inform their line manager or more senior manager.
- 11.10 Where an employee is not comfortable with these options, they may consider raising their concerns with the Human Resources Department or with a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian.

12.0 Relationships with Contractors

- 12.1 As required by the Declaration of Interest and Standards of Business Conduct Policy no special favour should be shown in the tendering process to business run by or employing, friends, partners or relatives. If an employee is asked to participate in the tendering process, for example by providing expert advice, they will declare any such relationships.

13.0 Preferential and inconsistent treatment in the workplace

- 13.1 Favouritism or conflict of interest may occur, or be perceived to have occurred, when a manager is involved in a process with someone with whom they are in an intimate relationship with. Examples are when:
- Managers decide which team member to promote.
 - Managers decide which contracts to renew.
 - Managers complete performance reviews.
 - Managers discipline the individual
 - Managers are part of a recruitment team.

- 13.2 To avoid such incidents or suspicions of favouritism and conflict of interest, staff will adopt anti-nepotism guidelines:
- Employees who are related must not be involved in a supervisory/reporting relationship with one another.
 - Employees cannot be transferred, promoted, or hired inside a reporting relationship with a relative.
 - Employees cannot be part of a recruitment team, when a relative is being considered for the position.
- 13.3 Staff will be expected to report or declare any relationship with a relative to HR, if they find themselves in a reporting line relationship with that relative or in a recruitment team that considers that relative for employment. Failure to declare the relationship in this context, could also result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.
- 13.4 When one person in the relationship reports to the other, the lines of accountability and responsibility becomes tricky. This includes relationships of an intimate sexual nature or relationships with staff related to each other. Consider an alternative line manager or transferring one of the employees to a suitable alternative role, following a discussion with both individuals. The two employees must take time to discuss between themselves and decide which one of them will be transferred. Any transfers would need to be practical, done sensitively and carefully, so not to discriminate on grounds of gender or any other protected characteristic.

14.0 Personal relationship breakdowns

- 14.1 If the personal relationship breaks down, all involved employees will ensure that no acts that could be interpreted as arguments or disagreements occur at work. Such employees are encouraged to discuss the situation with their line manager/s.
- 14.2 The employees will ensure that their personal relationship breakdown does not bring the reputation of the Trust into disrepute. An example of a breach of this would be if an employee deliberately damaged a former partner's property, even outside of working hours. Any other behaviour that could, or did lead to a prosecution by the police would fall into this category.
- 14.3 Employees are reminded that if they are suffering from emotional stress from a personal relationship breakdown (regardless of whether it was a personal relationship at work) they may access the Trust Occupational Health / counselling services for support.
- 14.4 Any concerns around domestic violence or abuse should be managed under the Domestic Violence Support for Managers guidelines available on Staffnet.

15.0 Confidentiality

- 15.1 Wherever possible confidentiality regarding the existence of a close personal relationship will not be disclosed, however if this proves necessary then no disclosure will be made without consultation with the line manager and the employees concerned. If alternate working practices or patterns are necessary then it may be necessary to inform other members of the team regarding these arrangements and the reasons for them.

16.0 Raising Concerns

16.1 Any employee who feels that a close personal relationship is adversely affecting their employment, the functioning of the team or the provision of services is encouraged to share their concerns at the earliest opportunity with their line manager or more senior manager if they prefer, where an employee is not comfortable with either of these options they may consider raising their concerns under LPT's Raising Concerns at Work (Whistleblowing) Policy and Procedure. This also applies to employees in a close personal relationship who feel they are being disadvantaged because of the relationship.

17.0 Breaches of policy

17.1 Alleged breaches of this policy will be investigated under the Trust Disciplinary Policy. Dependent on the circumstances, this may result in a referral to the relevant professional registration body, and/or referral for investigation under safeguarding procedures.

18.0 Duties within the Organisation

18.1 The Trust Board has a legal responsibility for Trust policies and for ensuring that they are carried out effectively.

18.2 Managers:

Will be responsible for ensuring that they are familiar with this policy and procedures contained within it.

Are responsible for promoting a culture of openness and transparency regarding personal relationships at work.

18.3 Employees:

Will be individually responsible for ensuring that any personal relationship at work does not interfere with their duties and responsibilities and does not give rise to a conflict of interest, abuse of power or more or less favourable treatment.

Are asked to work positively with the Trust to accommodate any reasonable changes to their work arrangements that are required in order to avoid potential conflicts of interest through personal relationships at work.

18.4 The Human Resources Department is responsible for:

- Providing support and guidance to staff and managers on the implementation and application of this policy.
- Working with managers to identify appropriate mechanisms and interventions needed to satisfactorily resolve matters of this kind.
- Promoting good working relationships through local initiatives.
- Supporting the monitoring of the application of this policy and to update it as required.

19.0 Stakeholders and Consultation

Workforce and Wellbeing Policies are subject to joint monitoring and review between management and staff side in the LPT Staff Partnership Forum. Guidance for this policy has also been received by the Policy group and the Integrated Equality and Human Rights Services with regards demonstrating due regard in context of requirements under the Equality Act 2010.

20.0 Monitoring Compliance and Effectiveness

Minimum Requirements to monitor	Process for Monitoring	Responsible Individual /Group	Frequency of monitoring
Number of cases managed under the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure in relation to inappropriate relationships / professional boundaries	Employee Relations Report	Head of Operational HR Workforce Development Group	Bi-monthly

21.0 Dissemination and Implementation

The policy is approved by the Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust Strategic Workforce Group and is accepted as a Trust wide policy. This policy will be disseminated immediately throughout the Trust following ratification.

The dissemination and implementation process is:

- Line-Managers will convey the contents of this policy to their staff
- Staff will be made aware of this policy using existing staff newsletters and team briefings
- The policy will be published and made available on the Intranet.

22.0 Training

There is no training requirement identified within this policy.

23.0 Links to other policies (available on Staffnet)

- Leicestershire Partnership Trust Disciplinary Policy
- Leicestershire Partnership Trust Raising Concerns at Work (Whistle-blowing Policy and Procedure
- Leicestershire Partnership Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Leicestershire Partnership Mediation Service
- Leicestershire Partnership Equality and Human Rights Policy
- Leicestershire Partnership Stress Management Policy.

24.0 Links to Standards/Performance Indicators


TARGET/STANDARDS	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
Care Quality Commission registration standards (outcome 14) <i>Supporting Employees</i> (21) of the Health & Social Care Act (2008) (Regulated Activities Regulations 2010 CQC essential standards	That the trust maintains compliance with CQC registration standards, this policy supports outcome standards 14

25.0 References and Associated Documentation

This policy was drafted with reference to the following:

- Leicestershire Partnership Trust Disciplinary Policy
- Leicestershire Partnership Trust Whistleblowing Policy
- Leicestershire Partnership Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Leicestershire Partnership Mediation Service
- Leicestershire Partnership Equality and Human Rights Policy
- NHS Employers Standards
- Leicestershire Partnership Stress Management Policy
- Professional Bodies Code of Conduct
- Code of Conduct for Healthcare Support Workers and Adult Social Care Workers in England
- AMICA
- Code of Business Conduct for Trust Staff
- Promoting Equality and Human Rights in the NHS, A Guide for Non-Executive Directors of NHS Boards (2005), Department of Health
- Equality analysis and the equality duty: A guide for public authorities Vol.2 of 5 Equality Act 2010 guidance for English public bodies (and non-devolved bodies in Scotland and Wales), Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Appendix 1 Due Regard Screening Template

Section 1			
Name of activity/proposal		Relationships at Work Policy	
Date Screening commenced		December 2022	
Directorate / Service carrying out the assessment		HR and OD	
Name and role of person undertaking this Due Regard (Equality Analysis)		Mandy White, Senior HR Business Partner	
Give an overview of the aims, objectives and purpose of the proposal:			
AIMS: To provide advice and guidance to managers and employees regarding acceptable professional boundaries between individual employees and service users as well as relationships between individuals who work together.			
OBJECTIVES: To protect employees against potential claims of favouritism, bias or prejudice where one has a supervisory or managerial responsibility for the other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To avoid situations where there is potential for conflict of interest To ensure that situations do not develop where other employees feel unable to speak openly and honestly, or feel that a relationship is having an adverse impact on their own employment To avoid the potential for abuse of patients To avoid the potential for fraudulent activity To facilitate and encourage the development of an organisational culture where employees feel confident to voluntarily declare personal relationships. 			
Section 2			
Protected Characteristic	If the proposal/s have a positive or negative impact please give brief details		
Age	Positive impact on all protected characteristics, as this policy applies to all staff.		
Disability	As above		
Gender reassignment	As above		
Marriage & Civil Partnership	As above		
Pregnancy & Maternity	As above		
Race	As above		
Religion and Belief	As above		
Sex	As above		
Sexual Orientation	As above		
Other equality groups?	As above		
Section 3			
Does this activity propose major changes in terms of scale or significance for LPT? For example, is there a clear indication that, although the proposal is minor it is likely to have a major affect for people from an equality group/s? Please tick appropriate box below.			
Yes		No	
High risk: Complete a full EIA starting click here to proceed to Part B		✓ Low risk: Go to Section 4.	
Section 4			
If this proposal is low risk please give evidence or justification for how you reached this decision:			
The policy and procedure is low risk as the Trust has developed the policy to provide clear guidance to employees and managers as to their responsibilities in ensuring that issues arising from or involving close relationships are dealt with promptly, sensitively and effectively.			
Signed by reviewer/assessor	Mandy White	Date	April 2023
<i>Sign off that this proposal is low risk and does not require a full Equality Analysis</i>			
Head of Service Signed		Date	19 April 2023

Appendix 2 The NHS Constitution

- The NHS will provide a universal service for all based on clinical need, not ability to pay.
- The NHS will provide a comprehensive range of services.

Shape its services around the needs and preferences of individual patients, their families and their carers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Respond to different needs of different sectors of the population	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work continuously to improve quality services and to minimise errors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Support and value its staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Work together with others to ensure a seamless service for patients	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Help keep people healthy and work to reduce health inequalities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Respect the confidentiality of individual patients and provide open access to information about services, treatment and performance	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 3 Data Privacy Impact Assessment Screening

<p>Data Privacy impact assessment (DPIAs) are a tool which can help organisations identify the most effective way to comply with their data protection obligations and meet Individual's expectations of privacy. The following screening questions will help the Trust determine if there are any privacy issues associated with the implementation of the Policy. Answering 'yes' to any of these questions is an indication that a DPIA may be a useful exercise. An explanation for the answers will assist with the determination as to whether a full DPIA is required which will require senior management support, at this stage the Head of Data Privacy must be involved.</p>		
Name of Document:	Relationships at Work Policy	
Completed by:	Mandy White	
Job title	Senior HR Business Partner	Date: 1 December 2022
Screening Questions	Yes / No	Explanatory Note
1. Will the process described in the document involve the collection of new information about individuals? This is information in excess of what is required to carry out the process described within the document.	No	
2. Will the process described in the document compel individuals to provide information about them? This is information in excess of what is required to carry out the process described within the document.	No	
3. Will information about individuals be disclosed to organisations or people who have not previously had routine access to the information as part of the process described in this document?	No	
4. Are you using information about individuals for a purpose it is not currently used for, or in a way it is not currently used?	No	
5. Does the process outlined in this document involve the use of new technology which might be perceived as being privacy intrusive? For example, the use of biometrics.	No	
6. Will the process outlined in this document result in decisions being made or action taken against individuals in ways which can have a significant impact on them?	No	
7. As part of the process outlined in this document, is the information about individuals of a kind particularly likely to raise privacy concerns or expectations? For examples, health records, criminal records or other information that people would consider to be particularly private.	No	
8. Will the process require you to contact individuals in ways which they may find intrusive?	No	
<p>If the answer to any of these questions is 'Yes' please contact the Data Privacy Team via Lpt-dataprivacy@leicspart.secure.nhs.uk In this case, ratification of a procedural document will not take place until review by the Head of Data Privacy.</p>		
Data Privacy approval name:	Sarah Ratcliffe, Head of Data Privacy	
Date of approval	December 2022	

Acknowledgement: This is based on the work of Princess Alexandra Hospital NHS Trust

Appendix 4 Risk Assessment Form

RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

To be used to risk assess when a personal relationship exists or develops with another employee or patient with whom they have contact, protecting the interests of all who may be affected.

Names of employee or patient involved:	
Employee job title (if applicable):	
Department:	
Manager's name:	
Manager's job title:	
Date of risk assessment:	
Give a brief explanation of the relationship:	

Please note that the information obtained from this risk assessment will remain confidential. If some of the details do need to be shared, you will be notified beforehand.

Area of Risk	YES/NO	If a risk is identified give details of actions to be put into place; or existing control measures:
Have any concerns been raised by other employees or patients? If yes, what impact is this having? Is the employee aware of this?		
Is there a supervisory or managerial responsibility for either individual?		
If employees, do they work in the same work area?		

Does the relationship pose a potential conflict of interest?		
What will happen if the relationship has an adverse impact on their employment?		
What support if any needs to be put into place?		

Additional comments from employee

Signature of employee: _____ Date: _____

Additional comments from the manager.

Signature of Manager: _____ Date: _____

C.c. Personal file / Human Resources