

DepressionUK

Bye Law 1: The Code of Ethics and Conduct of Members of the Council:

a) All practising members undertake to adhere to the following code:

1. Client Welfare

The welfare of the client is the primary concern of the therapist. It should only take second place if not to do so would seriously jeopardise other members of the public or the therapist's welfare.

2. Confidentiality (See Notes)

Confidentiality is to be maintained in all but the most exceptional circumstances. These can only include:

- legal action (criminal or civil court cases where a court order is made demanding disclosure - includes coroner's courts),
- legal REQUIREMENT, e.g. Children's acts,
- where there is good cause to believe that not to disclose would cause danger of serious harm to the client, the therapist and/or others

3. Service

Volunteers will only offer services in areas in which they have demonstrated their competence, to the agreed National Occupational Standards level. They have a responsibility to provide the client with the best possible service available including onwards referral to another therapist or medical practitioner that may offer such a service.

4. Exploitation (See Notes)

All exploitation is abuse.

Volunteers shall not behave in any manner that gives rise to the exploitation of a client. They will

- Not enter into any other relationship, outside the professional/therapeutic relationship, while treating a client. (See notes.)
- Make their charges known to the client before therapy is commenced.
- Terminate therapy at the earliest time, commensurate with the good care and continuing welfare of the client.
- Not accept any inappropriate gifts, gratuities or favours from a client.

5. General Conduct (See Notes)

Volunteers shall not behave in any manner, within or outside the context of therapy that would undermine the public's confidence in the profession or bring the profession into disrepute. Some examples:

- A failure to act appropriately when they become aware of another therapist's unethical activity in a clinical setting,
- Improper use of hypnosis,
- criminal conviction,
- Lack of courtesy towards other Health or Social Care professionals,
- Discrimination on the basis of ethnic or sexual factors,
- Anything that is the subject of any civil judgement regarding neglect of duty of care.

b) Members in practice agree to the following rules of conduct:

1. Professional Indemnity Insurance.

This is a prerequisite for any therapist to practice and adequate cover must be maintained by the practitioner, volunteers not offering therapy are exempt from this.

2. Relationship with DepressionUK

Volunteers shall keep DepressionUK informed of:

- changes to personal details, e.g. name, address, phone number, practise name etc.
- changes to qualifications, including lapses of time limited certification and ongoing training / development.
- any civil or criminal judgements (i.e. crimes against society, the person and property, excluding motor offences except those including alcohol, personal safety and failure to have the correct documentation)

3. Provision of a Contract (see Notes)

All therapy is undertaken as a result of a contract between the client and the therapist. It is preferable that this should be a written contract rather than a verbal contract.

Such a contract should include:

- a statement of cost per session or whole course of therapy,
- a statement of confidentiality,
- the client's right of access to the complaints procedure DepressionUK
- the fact that there can be no guarantee of a 'cure'.

4. Maintenance of Records/Notes and Recording of Sessions.

It is recommended that case notes must be maintained to include

- personal details,
- history,
- definition of the presenting issue,
- a copy of the contract,
- Session/progress notes.
- These should be maintained as hard copy and any use of computer records should be with the client's agreement and within the terms of the Data Protection Act.
- Recording of sessions is acceptable, with client consent (see notes).

5. Workplace/Consulting Rooms

Facilities provided shall be of a professional standard and conform to current Health and Safety Regulations, when operating from permanent premises. These shall include any consulting room, used for the purposes of consulting, with any client, along with any reception or waiting areas associated with such rooms.

6. Display of Credentials

Only valid qualifications and certificates issued in respect of relevant courses or training events or certificates of registration/accreditation as issued by professional governing bodies may be displayed. THIS EXCLUDES TESTIMONIALS OF ANY FORM.

7. Public Protection procedures

All volunteers are subject to and must cooperate with the complaints procedure set out.

Complaint Procedures:

Aim

The aim of this procedure is to afford protection to the public and to protect the name of DepressionUK

Bringing a complaint

- (a) A complaint may be brought by a member of the public seeking or using the services of DepressionUK, either in person or via a third party acting on their behalf and with their authority, or
- (b) by a member of DepressionUK in respect of another member, **not acting as a third party.**
- (c) Complainants accept the principle of double jeopardy

Time scale

A complaint shall be lodged within 2 years of the event(s) which form the substance of that complaint. At the discretion of the Director, more serious complaints may be considered up to 5 years after the event.

All documentary records of complaints that are informally resolved shall be kept for 2 years from the date of the resolution. All records of formal complaint procedures shall be kept for a period of 5 years, unless the member or accredited organisation is found against and then they shall be kept for 5 years or as long as the individual remains a member or the organisation remains accredited, whichever is the longer.

Receiving complaints, etc.

On receipt of any report or complaint of a breach of the Code of Conduct and Ethics of DepressionUK a 'Receiving Officer' shall forward it to the Public Protection Officer - within '72 hours' of receipt, where possible - along with any letters or notes or audio tapes etc. relating to that complaint, and the complaint will be registered.

ALL "UNUSED MATERIAL" MUST BE PRESERVED.

All complaints Procedures shall be conducted in confidence.