



DISCIPLINARY POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Many current BTHFT policy documents contain references to the “Divisions” (Medicine, Surgery, Womens & Newborn) which were in place until 31st March 2019, when they were replaced by Clinical Business Units and Care Groups. Whilst the policies still remain valid, from 1st April 2019 all BTHFT policy should be applied in the context of the new organisational structure and its associated governance. Any queries about the application of the new governance to this policy document should be directed to the Director of Governance and Corporate Affairs.

This Policy and Procedure has been approved. Circumstances may arise or there may be a change in legislation/guidance where changes may be required to the Policy/Procedure before the planned review date.

Authors/specialist advisors are responsible to identify this to the Policy/Procedure owner who will then put in place a Policy/Procedure review process.

NOTE: all policies remain extant until notification of an amended Procedure.

Author (name and delegation)	HR Department
Version	Revision 6
Supersedes	Previously ratified disciplinary procedure
Approval Committee	JNCC
Ratified by	Education & Workforce Committee
Date Ratified	26 July 2019
Date Issued	16 August 2019
Review Date	September 2022

CONTENTS

<u>SECTION A - POLICY</u>		<u>PAGE</u>
1	Introduction	3
2	Scope of the Policy and Procedure	3-4
3	Policy Statement and Purpose	4-5
4	Roles and Responsibilities	5
5	Applying this Policy and Procedure to Staff Organisation Representatives	6
6	Criminal Offences	6
<u>SECTION B - PROCEDURE</u>		
7	Informal Discussions	7
8	Suspension from Work	7-8
9	Investigation	8-9
10	Notice in Writing of a Disciplinary Hearing	9-10
11	Representation	10
12	Formal Disciplinary Hearing	11
13	Conduct of the Hearing	11-12
14	Disciplinary Sanctions	12-14
15	Right of Appeal	14-15
16	The Procedure for Appeal Hearings	15-16
17	Impact Assessments	16
18	Training Requirements	16
19	Monitoring Arrangements	16
20	Links with other Foundation Trust Policies and Procedures and External Documents	17
21	Policy Review	17
<u>Appendix 1</u>		
	Disciplinary Rules	18-24

SECTION A - POLICY

1 Introduction

- 1.1 At Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (hereinafter referred to as the Foundation Trust) we aim to provide the highest quality healthcare at all times.
- 1.2 Our People Strategy 2017 – 2022 outlines the need to develop a modern workforce with the skills, flexibilities, values and behaviours to deliver new models of healthcare, to enable the delivery of our transformation programme and support the delivery of our overall Trust priorities.
- 1.3 The Foundation Trust recognises the need for employees to be managed in a manner which is supportive, consistent and fair. It is also recognised that employees need to be aware of the standards of conduct expected of them during their employment, and the consequences of failing to meet these standards of conduct.
- 1.4 This policy and procedure is designed to facilitate and encourage all employees to maintain acceptable standards of conduct, whilst safeguarding the interests of the Foundation Trust, its patients, clients and employees.
- 1.5 This policy and procedure also outlines the process that will be followed when it is necessary to take action of a disciplinary nature against employees. The intention is that potential disciplinary cases are dealt with at an early stage, with a view to resolving problems as quickly and fairly as possible; and that employees are encouraged to improve their standard of work and/or conduct.
- 1.6 The procedure is produced in line with the duties imposed by legislation and recognised good practice, as detailed by the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS).

2 Scope of the Policy and Procedure

- 2.1 This policy and procedure applies equally to all employees employed within the Foundation Trust.
- 2.2 Where there are external statutory or other provisions affecting Foundation Trust employees (e.g. the Nurses, Midwives and Health Visitors Act 1979) these must be taken into account where appropriate when disciplinary action is taken. For Doctors and Dentists please refer to the Disciplinary, Capability, Ill Health & Appeals Policy and Procedure for Doctors & Dentists which implements the National Policy Framework (Maintaining High Professional Standards in the Modern NHS).
- 2.3 Management of Attendance / Performance Improvement / Harassment and Bullying - this procedure is not to be used for dealing with management of attendance, or performance improvement or harassment and bullying issues which must be dealt with in accordance with the appropriate policy/procedure.
- 2.4 The Foundation Trust's Personal Responsibility Framework (PRF) sets a framework for a shared responsibility by the employee and the employer regarding expectations of behaviour and accountability. Its aim is to enable the development of a blame free culture which aligns personal responsibility with actions required by employees to reduce the need to resort to formal procedures and to improving the relationship between employer and employee in relation to trust and confidence.

- 2.5 Where things do go wrong the PRF is intended to be used as an alternative means to address concerns and more minor misdemeanours, allowing a more positive approach to achieving improved behaviour and/or standards of conduct. It also recognises that at times there may a significant system or organisational failure that has contributed to the incident/error.
- 2.6 The Personal Responsibility Framework is not designed to negate or remove the use of formal BTHFT policies and procedures where it is appropriate to do so and with any concern, incident, allegation or error an investigation may still be undertaken. However, in the case of allegations of serious/gross misconduct it is appropriate to initially follow this Policy and Procedure in terms of investigation whilst recognising that at any point in the decision making the PRF could still be used/ reverted to if all parties agree.
- 2.7 Staff Side Representatives can approach managers prior to or at the end of a formal investigation to discuss if their members wish to accept personal responsibility and whether it would be appropriate for the PRF to be used in that instance but managers reserve the right to apply formal procedures if there is appropriate evidence to support the decision.

3 Policy Statement and Purpose

- 3.1 To promote improvement in individual conduct and not simply to be a means of imposing sanctions. Wherever possible the formal procedure should be used only when informal avenues have been exhausted or when an action or situation is sufficiently serious for formal action to be required.
- 3.2 To ensure that employees are made aware of the standards of conduct expected of them.
- 3.3 To promote fairness and consistency in the treatment of individuals for alleged failures and to help them meet the required standards of conduct.
- 3.4 To give ample warning to individuals of the consequences of failing to achieve standards.
- 3.5 To guide managers and supervisors in day to day dealings with employees.
- 3.6 To provide for full and speedy consideration by management of all the relevant facts, in order that disciplinary action can be applied equitably.
- 3.7 The principles of the procedure are to:-
 - allow for matters to be dealt with without undue delay and in a confidential manner ensuring the management of risk
 - inform employees of their right to be accompanied at the earliest opportunity
 - inform employees of the complaints against them and provide supporting evidence as part of the investigation
 - inform employees what disciplinary action might be taken
 - outline the levels of authority management have when taking disciplinary action
 - advise management to investigate fully before any disciplinary action is taken
 - allow employees to have their say before management reaches a decision
 - other than for gross misconduct or an offence of serious misconduct which also warrants dismissal, no employee shall be dismissed for a first breach of discipline

- ensure that employees are given an explanation for any sanction
- offers an employee a right of appeal against a decision
- ensure that employees are provided with details of expected changes in behaviour/conduct in the future

4 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Chief Executive

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with this policy.

4.2 Director of Human Resources

The Director of Human Resources is responsible for ensuring that the policy is reviewed and disseminated throughout the organisation. This includes ensuring that appropriate training is developed for line managers and that appropriate HR support is provided to line managers in dealing with disciplinary matters.

4.3 **All employees** will endeavour to conduct themselves in a professional manner and act as advocates of the Foundation Trust at all times. All employees will also comply with the procedures and rules set out in this policy. All employees will ensure they are familiar with the behavioural expectations of the Foundation Trust and be aware of the consequences of failing to meet these expectations. All employees have a responsibility to report to their line manager any conduct they witness which may be deemed unacceptable.

4.4 **All Managers** will set an example to those they manage by conducting themselves professionally at all times. Managers will help employees achieve the standards required and provide timely feedback if standards fall short. Managers will consider dealing with minor breaches of conduct informally in all cases. Where it is felt necessary to proceed formally, line managers will investigate thoroughly any alleged incident of misconduct and comply with the procedures as set out in this document. Managers will seek the advice of the appropriate Human Resources (HR) Manager when undertaking any disciplinary investigations. Managers will ensure consistency in their approach to all allegations of misconduct, and will particularly bear in mind the equality statement in section 17.1 of this document.

4.5 **Human Resources** will provide advice to managers on the application of employment law and policy in terms of investigations, disciplinary hearings and appeals, and will assist the nominated manager when making decisions on the outcome of disciplinary or appeals hearings. HR Managers will ensure that decisions taken do not knowingly place the Foundation Trust in legal jeopardy under current legislation. They also seek to ensure that consistency is applied in cases that are similar in context and that high standards of acceptable employment practices are maintained. HR Managers will be required to challenge the decisions of managers in terms of any action taken in line with the policy to ensure it is consistent, appropriate, and non-discriminatory.

4.6 **Staff Side Representatives** will provide support and advice to employees in facilitating the policy. Staff side representatives will represent employees in the workplace at formal meetings and hearings under this policy at the request of the employee. Staff side will work in partnership with Managers and HR representatives to ensure employees are treated fairly and consistently. Trade union representatives attending any meeting within this policy must be from a union recognised in line with the Foundation Trust's Recognition Agreement. A list of these trade unions can be found in section 1.2 of the Foundation Trust Policy on Facilities for Staff Organisations.

5 Applying this Policy and Procedure to Staff Organisation Representatives

- 5.1 Should it be necessary to apply this procedure to an accredited representative of a staff organisation then the full time officer of the organisation concerned must be notified before any action is taken.

6 Criminal Offences

- 6.1 Criminal offences outside employment should not be treated as automatic reasons for dismissal regardless of whether the offence has any relevance to the duties of the individual as an employee. The main consideration should be whether the offence is one that makes the individual unsuitable for his or her type of work or unacceptable to other employees. Any decision on this matter must be taken by the appropriate Divisional General Manager/Director in conjunction with the appropriate HR Manager.
- 6.2 Employees should not be dismissed solely because a charge against them is pending, or because they are absent through being remanded in custody. Where an employee has been charged with a criminal offence and the conduct requires prompt attention, there is no requirement to await the outcome of the prosecution before taking fair and reasonable action, in accordance with this policy and procedure.
- 6.3 Suspicions of Fraud and Corruption (including Bribery). In cases where fraud or corruption (including bribery) is suspected, any disciplinary investigation can only be commenced after an initial discussion with the Foundation Trust's Counter Fraud Specialist.

SECTION B - PROCEDURE

7 Informal Discussions

- 7.1 Managers are encouraged to hold informal discussions with employees relating to their conduct.
- 7.2 Such discussions represent the first attempt to help an employee, and may indicate a training need or organisational defect. There is no formal right to be accompanied at this stage although the manager may permit the employee to be accompanied if they believe the matter to be of a nature that requires support.
- 7.3 Unless persistent, minor breaches of discipline are usually best dealt with on an informal basis by the employee's immediate line manager. The use of the Personal Responsibility Framework would be an appropriate means of addressing minor misdemeanours in the first instance with an action plan agreed to assist individuals in achieving the required improvement.
- 7.4 Only where this fails to bring about the desired improvement, or the matter being dealt with cannot be resolved through informal means, should the formal disciplinary procedures be implemented.
- 7.5 A brief record of the informal discussion and agreed actions should be kept on the employee's personal file. The record would remain in force for 3 to 6 months depending on the circumstances. Please refer to the management toolkit for the template to be used to record the informal discussion and other relevant documentation.

8 Suspension from Work

- 8.1 Suspension from work should be a last resort, that is proportionate in the circumstances having first considered other mechanisms for removing risk. However, there are certain circumstances where an individual will need to be suspended from work whilst an investigation is carried out.

These circumstances include:

- where the allegation is gross misconduct and remaining in the workplace poses significant risk to the employee, his / her colleagues / members of the public or Foundation Trust property
 - where the presence of the employee at work could hinder the investigation process
- 8.2 Suspension is not in itself a disciplinary sanction and will be for no longer than is necessary. As an alternative to suspension, consideration should be given to the possibility of transferring the employee to another area of work / department or restricting their practice or duties (for example, administrative), whilst the investigation is being undertaken, dependent on risk. If this is the case, the situation will be reviewed monthly for the duration of the investigation to ensure the limitations are still appropriate.
 - 8.3 Please see Table A for managers with authority to suspend. Authorisation for suspension must be sought from the Chief Nurse in the case of nurses and midwives and AHP's, and the Director of HR for all other staff groups **before** a suspension is carried out, Out of hours the decision must be taken by the Executive Director on call and discussed with the Chief Nurse/Director of HR on the next working day.

8.4 Where a manager is considering suspension, Human Resources advice must be sought at the earliest opportunity and any necessary professional advice taken. Suspension will normally be carried out on a face to face basis, with reasons given for the suspension, but in exceptional circumstances this can be conducted by telephone. Where an employee is informed that they are to be suspended, they will be entitled to be accompanied but in the event that their chosen representative cannot be present, the Foundation Trust will arrange that a witness is present

8.5 Where an individual is suspended from duty, the suspension will apply to all posts and contracts held within the Foundation Trust, for that individual including bank and locum / agency work.

8.6 Where an individual is suspended from duty, they are not permitted to undertake paid work for another employer during their normal working hours with the Foundation Trust, including bank and locum work.

The decision to suspend will be confirmed in writing within three working days of the suspension. This will include confirmation of the terms of suspension, including the reasons for the suspension, the fact that suspension is not a disciplinary sanction and that suspension is on full pay, to be inclusive of any regular enhancements payable (i.e. unsocial hours).

The employee will also be informed that they must not contact any member of staff during the period of the investigation other than their union representative, Occupational Health or the investigating manager should they need access to any emails, documents or calendar information. It will be agreed with the employee who the most appropriate manager will be to keep in touch with them during the suspension, frequency and type of keep in touch arrangements will be agreed between both parties. The employee will be sign posted to occupational health services and the Trust employee assistance programme for support as necessary.

8.7 Suspensions will be reviewed by the relevant Executive Director on a monthly basis and HR, to determine whether the suspension should continue, and also to ensure that the employee is supported throughout the period of suspension and regularly updated on how the investigation is progressing. Upon review, consideration should be given to whether an individual may be brought back to work on restricted or amended duties in line with paragraph 8.2.

8.8 Whilst on suspension, an employee will be required to surrender his/her hospital identification badge and any keys or swipe cards they have. These will be returned to the individual if appropriate once the suspension has been lifted.

8.9 Employees who are suspended are only allowed to come onto Foundation Trust premises with the express permission of the suspending or investigating manager, except in the following circumstances:

- Where the individual is seeking medical treatment for themselves or a member of their family;
- Where the individual is attending the Foundation Trust for a counselling or occupational health appointment or a meeting with their Trade Union/ Professional Association representative.

9 Investigation

- 9.1 Once a potential breach of conduct is identified, the commissioning manager (usually the Director of Operations / Director / Head of Service or equivalent) will appoint an investigating manager to carry out the investigation. Where appropriate, they will be supported by a member of the HR department.
- 9.2 A full and thorough investigation of all the facts and circumstances is essential, and investigation of alleged breaches of discipline shall be carried out without delay, but in such a manner so as not to preclude the careful collection of all the facts.
- 9.3 The investigating manager must undertake the investigation without delay and ensure that it is given priority. Whilst there is no time limit for completion of the investigation, the investigating manager should strive to complete it within 4 weeks of appointment and submit the investigatory report within a further week. Timescales should be reviewed by the commissioning manager, ensuring that those involved in the investigation are regularly updated.
- 9.4 If an investigation has not been concluded within 4 weeks, the investigating manager is required to produce a written progress report to the commissioning manager to provide an update and assurance that the delay is unavoidable and a timescale by which the investigation will be completed.
- 9.5 If after 4 weeks the investigation has not been completed, the investigating manager will provide an update to the commissioning manager who will review the case and agree an action plan. If the commissioning manager is not the Director of Operations /Director/Head of Service (or equivalent) the case will be escalated to them to review and agree an action plan. If the commissioning manager is Director of Operations/Director/Head of Service or equivalent, the case will be escalated to the next management level above to review and agree the action plan. It is important that the suspended employee is kept informed of any delay in the investigatory process.

Witnesses required to provide statements to be used as part of the investigation should be given sufficient time to complete and agree them. Only in exceptional circumstances should witness statements remain anonymous. (for example, a witness who does not want to be named as they are fearful of being victimised as a consequence).

- 9.6 Where the employee who is the subject of the allegations is called to an investigation meeting, they will be given reasonable notice in writing informing them of details of the allegations against them. An employee may be represented at an investigatory meeting by a work colleague or trade union representative. Following the investigation meeting, an employee will be sent a copy of the notes/statement taken at the meeting and will be asked to sign them to confirm accuracy. They may submit a separate personal statement should they so wish.
- 9.7 On completion of the investigation, the investigating manager will produce a report on their findings which will make a recommendation as to whether or not there is case to answer at a disciplinary hearing. If a decision is taken to proceed to a disciplinary hearing this recommendation will be made to the commissioning manager whose responsibility it will then be to convene the disciplinary hearing.
- 9.8 In cases of potential fraud and corruption the investigation may be jointly undertaken with the Foundation Trust's Local Counter Fraud Specialist (LCFS). No investigation should be commenced without an initial discussion with them.

- 9.9 In cases of suspected child abuse or adult abuse managers must refer to the Foundation Trust's Safeguarding Adults - Policy & Guidance for Managing Incidents of Suspected Adult Abuse, Safeguarding Children Policy and Policy and Procedure for the Management of Allegations against People who work with Children which outlines how you should handle incidents of suspected abuse.

The manager should consult the Foundation Trust's Named Senior Manager for Safeguarding Children or Adult Protection Co-ordinator before instigating an investigation under the Disciplinary Procedure. (The Head of Equality for Safeguarding Children and the Lead Nurse for Safeguarding Adults).

10 Notice in Writing of a Disciplinary Hearing

- 10.1 If it is the recommendation of the investigating manager that a formal disciplinary hearing is required, the commissioning Manager will write to the employee, (copy to the representative, if known), giving **10** working days' notice of the date of the hearing. If the matter relates to a conduct issue that involves a Doctor or Dentist, Section 3 of the Foundation Trust's Disciplinary, Capability, Ill Health and Appeals Policy and Procedure for Doctors and Dentists must be referred to.
- 10.2 The invite letter should outline the nature of the allegations which are to be answered at the hearing to enable him/her to have the opportunity to state his or her case before a decision is reached. The letter will include details of those who will be present at the hearing.

A copy of the full investigation report, including witness statements and other documents which the investigating manager intends to present at the disciplinary hearing must be submitted to the disciplinary panel and the employee, (copy to the representative if known), **10** working days in advance of the hearing. It is the responsibility of the investigating manager to ensure these documents are circulated.

- 10.3 The letter should inform the employee of the potential outcome of the disciplinary hearing, i.e. the issuing of a formal disciplinary sanction. In cases of serious or gross misconduct, the employee should be warned that the disciplinary hearing may lead to their dismissal from the Foundation Trust.
- 10.4 The letter will also detail the employee's right to be accompanied at the hearing in accordance with section 11 of this policy. If the employee's representative is unavailable on the date chosen and the employee proposes a reasonable alternative date within 5 working days of the original date proposed for the hearing, such a request must be approved by the manager concerned.

Where an employee is persistently unwilling or unable to attend a disciplinary hearing without good cause, the Foundation Trust will hold the meeting in the absence of the employee and make a decision based on the evidence available.

- 10.5 If the employee or their Trade Union representative wishes to submit a statement of case or any additional information to support their case at the hearing, this must be submitted to the disciplinary panel Chair **5** working days in advance of the hearing. This will then be shared with the manager presenting the case so that all parties have the same information prior to the hearing.

11 Representation

- 11.1 An employee must be informed in writing of his/her right to be represented at disciplinary investigation meetings and the disciplinary hearing. Where the employee wishes to be accompanied at the hearing this must be someone who is either:
- A trade union official (this includes full time officers) or

- A co-worker employed by the Foundation Trust and chosen by the employee
- If the employee is under the age of 18, they may be accompanied by their parents/guardians

11.2 The representative may address the hearing and can present the statement of case on behalf of the employee. However, the representative cannot answer direct questions on the employee's behalf. The representative may also confer with the employee during the hearing and will be permitted to ask questions of any witness produced by management. The employee is also entitled to be represented (as above) in any investigatory meeting called by Management.

12 Formal Disciplinary Hearing

12.1 No employee can be given any of the disciplinary sanctions referred to in paragraph 14 without a formal hearing, and the opportunity to state his/her case. For further advice on how to conduct the hearing, the manager should refer to the management toolkit and must seek the advice of the appropriate HR Manager. Other than for gross misconduct or an offence of serious misconduct which also warrants dismissal, no-one is to be dismissed for a first breach of discipline. Examples of offences that could be gross misconduct and which could lead to summary dismissal if committed by an employee are set out in Appendix 1.

13 Conduct of the Hearing

13.1 The disciplinary panel will consist of the appropriate manager in accordance with Table A, together with an HR representative. Other managers can be added to the panel as appropriate, for example where clinical or other expertise is required. The Head of Nursing or appropriate professional lead will sit on all panels where the case is against a registered employee if the allegations are of a professional manner in respect of professional misconduct.

13.2 The investigating manager will present the results of his/her investigation into the matter and will introduce documentary evidence and witnesses as appropriate. Key witnesses will normally be called to attend a disciplinary hearing to give their evidence. The investigating manager may, where circumstances dictate, be supported by an HR representative or another appropriate manager. Once any witnesses have given evidence they will be required to leave the hearing.

13.3 Once the management evidence has been completed the employee and his/her representative will then be allowed to present their written statement and other documents and introduce witnesses as appropriate. All parties present at the hearing will be entitled to ask questions of both the management and the staff side case as required. Following the presentation of cases and once all questions have been asked, both sides will have the opportunity to sum up their case. Management side will sum up first, followed by the employee or staff side.

13.4 Both management and the employee and staff side representative will then be asked to withdraw to enable the disciplinary panel to reach a decision.

13.5 Wherever possible, a decision will be made on the day of the disciplinary hearing. Both parties will be recalled into the hearing and the chair will deliver the outcome and what, if any, sanction is to be applied.

13.6 In extenuating circumstances, it may be necessary to adjourn the hearing and reconvene on an alternative date. This may be the case if the panel feel that more information is needed prior to being able to make their decision. However, this should be on an exceptional basis only.

13.7 The outcome of the hearing will be confirmed in writing and a copy will be sent to the employee's representative where appropriate.

13.8 The letter informing the individual of the outcome of the meeting shall include:

- Details of the allegations which were considered at the hearing;
- Which of the allegations were upheld;
- The sanction to be imposed and its duration;
- The change in behaviour required to avoid further action;
- Consequences of a further breach of conduct, or failure to improve.
- If they are to be referred to a professional body

13.9 The employee shall also be informed of the right of appeal in accordance with paragraph 16 of this procedure.

14 Disciplinary Sanctions

14.1 The point at which the procedure is entered and the sanction applied will depend entirely on the seriousness of the offence. A series of minor offences or a repetition of one such offence will normally involve an oral, written and final written warning before dismissal whilst a serious offence may warrant a final written warning or possibly even dismissal.

Table A – Authority to Issue Sanctions / Dismiss

Action	Authority	Appeal Authority
Suspension Manager	Matron, CBU General Manager or equivalent	To be authorised in advance by Chief Nurse or Director of HR or nominated deputy in their absence see section 8.3
Oral, First, and Final Written Warning (including action short of dismissal)	CBU General Manager / or Equivalent/	Directors/Deputy Directors/Heads of Service or equivalent Individuals to submit their appeals to the Deputy Director of HR
Dismissal	Directors/Deputy Director of Operations/Heads of Service or equivalent.	Trust Board Appeal (will include a Non-Executive Director, a member of the Senior Leadership Team and a staff side representative *#) – individuals to submit their appeal to the Director of HR, Executive Directors, Director of Operations, Director of Transformation, Operations, Medical Director.

In the case of disciplinary hearings on conduct matters for Consultants, the disciplinary panel will normally consist of the Chief Executive and the Director of HR. Where there are issues of professional conduct or of a professional nature the panel must include a member who is either medically qualified or dentally qualified and who is independent of the Foundation Trust. (See Section 3, Disciplinary, Capability, Ill Health and Appeals Policy and Procedure for Doctors and Dentists).

*The staff side representative must be accredited in accordance with the Policy on Facilities for Staff Organisations and would normally be a member of the JNCC or at least be a senior official within their respective branch. The staff side representative cannot be a full-time officer and cannot be from the same staff organisation the appellant (and his/her representative) belongs to.

In the event of a staff side representative not being available, the Foundation Trust reserves the right for a second management representative to sit on the Appeals Panel, as a replacement.

Table B – Duration of Sanctions

Level of Sanction	Duration of Sanction	Comments
Oral (confirmed in writing)	6 months	
First Written Warning	12 months	
Final Written Warning /	18 months In exceptional circumstances the serious nature of the disciplinary situation can warrant an extension of the time limit to 24 months, for a final written warning.	It should be made clear to the employee that any further incidence of misconduct, if proven, will normally lead to dismissal during the 18 or 24 month period, dependent on the circumstances of the case.
Dismissal		If there is no improvement in conduct or standards then dismissal or action short of dismissal may be considered as per paragraph 14.2. Where the offence is gross misconduct, dismissal would be summary (i.e. with immediate effect and no notice / pay in lieu of notice)

Aggregated and concurrent Sanctions

Where an individual already has a live disciplinary sanction on their record and this sanction directly relates to the matter being considered at a disciplinary hearing, the panel should aggregate the sanction (i.e. if an individual has an oral warning and is then subject to a disciplinary sanction for a similar related issue, they should be given a written or final written warning for the second breach of conduct).

If the current warning is not related to the matter being considered, the panel have the option to issue concurrent warnings for matters of a different nature. It is therefore possible for individuals to have several warnings on their record for unrelated conduct issues. Less serious sanctions should not be aggregated.

14.2 Other Action Short of Dismissal

There may be cases where management take the view that organisational and employee circumstances may best be served by action short of dismissal itself. In these circumstances, one of or a combination of the following sanctions may be considered as an alternative to dismissal. These sanctions will normally be applied on a permanent basis.

- Disciplinary transfer
- Loss of increment(s)
- Demotion
- Extending the length of the final written warning by 12 months

The sanction(s) (other than the extension of the final written warning as per the final bullet point of paragraph 14.2 above) will be used in conjunction with a final written warning in accordance with paragraph 14.1, Table B.

14.3 Withholding of Incremental Progression

A live disciplinary sanction can be used as a basis for withholding incremental progression in a given year if the misconduct was as a result of an individual's unsatisfactory conduct. This should be applied at the Manager's discretion and it should not be an automatic trigger to withhold the progression.* (* Applies to AfC employees only)

14.4 Dismissal

Employees dismissed on the grounds of misconduct are entitled to receive the appropriate period of notice except in cases of summary dismissal for gross misconduct (see appendix 1) where no notice is payable.

14.5 Withdrawal of Action

Should any disciplinary action be reconsidered and effectively withdrawn at any stage of the procedure, any written references will be disregarded for the purposes of any further disciplinary action.

14.6 Details of Warnings

Details of all warnings and other action short of dismissal shall be maintained on the employee's personal file for the life of the sanction (detailed in Table B). After its expiry it will be disregarded for the purposes of any further disciplinary action.

15 Right of Appeal

15.1 An employee aggrieved by the disciplinary sanction given, including dismissal, has the right of appeal in accordance with Table A. The appeal can be on the grounds of the decision or outcome of the hearing; or the process, if they feel that policy or procedure has not been applied.

15.2 Appeals against Oral, First and Final Written warnings should be submitted to the Deputy Director of HR no later than 10 working days following the date on the letter notifying the individual of the sanction. The appeal hearing will then be convened, chaired by the appropriate manager outlined in Table A and supported by a member of the HR Department not previously involved in the case.

15.3 Appeals against dismissal should be made to the Director of HR no later than 10 working days following the date of the letter notifying the individual of their dismissal.

15.4 The constitution of the panel will be in accordance with Table A.

15.5 For appeals against dismissal, the panel has the authority to make a decision on the matter on behalf of the Foundation Trust Board of Directors.

15.6 In all appeal cases every effort will be made to hear the appeal within one month, but where this is not possible both parties should mutually agree a date to hear the appeal.

15.7 Any manager responsible for, or involved in, the disciplinary action shall not be a member of an appeals panel, although he/she may be present either as a witness or as the management representative.

- 15.8 The employee will be given as much notice as possible of the date of the appeal, and will be entitled to be represented (see paragraph 11 on representation). The employee will be allowed to call witnesses in his/her own defence.
- 15.9 For appeals against dismissal where there is a possibility that a special knowledge of the field of work of the employee may be required, the employee, the management representative and/or the panel may request the appointment of an independent assessor from the relevant profession to act in an advisory capacity to the panel. The independent assessor should be agreed by all parties.

16 The Procedure for Appeal Hearings

- 16.1 Both management and the employee with staff side will be required to submit written statements of case to either the Deputy Director of HR (appeals against oral, first written and final written warnings) or the Director of HR (appeals against in advance of the hearing. The appeal hearing will only go ahead where both parties provide written statements of case.
- 16.2 The Management representative will normally be the Manager who issued the disciplinary sanction although this may be an HR representative if appropriate. The Management Representative will be accompanied at the appeal by an HR representative and must be present throughout the hearing.
- 16.3 The Management Representative will present the Management Statement of Case first followed by the employee if they have no representation or the Staff Side Representative who may present on behalf of the employee.
- 16.4 Both parties may introduce witnesses who have previously presented their evidence at the original disciplinary hearing. If either party has a valid reason for wanting witnesses to be present for the whole of the hearing this should be cleared with both the panel Chair and the other party's representative. The members of the panel will be entitled to question either party at any time during the appeal.
- 16.5 Both parties will be allowed to cross-examine each others' representative and witnesses.
- 16.6 Both parties will be allowed to re-examine their own witnesses on any points which emerge from the cross-examination. Re-examination cannot however be used to introduce new evidence.
- 16.7 Both parties will be allowed to sum up with the appellant summing up last. In their summing up neither party may introduce new material.
- 16.8 Any points of order or procedure will be resolved at the discretion of the panel Chair, always bearing in mind the need for the appeal to be conducted in a fair and equitable manner with both parties being given sufficient chance to state their cases.
- 16.9 The employee and his/her representative shall be entitled to be present throughout the hearing but will be required to withdraw along with the management representatives when the panel considers its findings. The employee and his/her representative will then be informed by the panel of its decision. The decision of the panel must be communicated in writing to the employee within one week of the appeal hearing.

17 Impact Assessments

17.1 Equality Impact Assessment

This Policy was assessed in January 2018 to determine whether there is a possible impact on any of the nine protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

It has potential impact on:

- Disability - It is recognised that some staff may require support, have specific needs or be unable to understand or read the text of this policy. In such instance it will be explained on a one-to-one basis by the Department responsible for this policy or the manager of the member of staff. Any support will be provided in confidence.
- Race and ethnicity – It is recognised nationally and from analysis of disciplinary activity in the past, that BAME staff are more likely to face disciplinary investigation. Whilst our Disciplinary rates for BAME staff does not mirror the national picture we have decided to undertake further investigation into disciplinary outcomes to assess whether BAME staff have poorer outcomes. This Policy may be revisited if required.

It is has been found not to have impact on:

- Age
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Maternity/pregnancy
- Religion and belief
- Sexual orientation

It has also been assessed to determine whether it impacts on human rights against the FREDA principles (Fairness, Respect, Equality, Dignity, Autonomy) and it is considered that it does not have impact. We will continue to monitor disciplinary data to determine whether there is disproportionate impact on protected characteristics. This assessment will be reviewed when the policy is next updated or sooner if evidence of further impact emerges.

17.2 Financial Impact Assessment

There are no direct financial implications in respect of this policy

18 Training Requirements

The HR Department will provide training and support in the application of the policy as and when required.

19 Monitoring Arrangements

The policy and procedure will be monitored in line with any changes in legislation/guidance which may be required to the Policy/Procedure before the planned review date.

20 Links with other Foundation Trust Policies and Procedures and External Documents

20.1 This document can be used in reference to and in conjunction with the following Foundation Trust documents:

- Information Governance Policy
- Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Facilities for Staff Organisations Policy
- Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Safeguarding Children Policy
- Policy and Procedure for the Management of Allegations of Child Abuse against Staff
- Disciplinary, Capability, Ill Health and Appeals Policy and Procedure for Doctors and Dentists
- Fraud and Corruption (including Bribery) Policy
- Personal Responsibility Framework
- Appraisal, Development and Performance Management Policy Management of Attendance and Employee Health and Wellbeing Policy and Procedure
- Social Media Policy
- Information Governance Guidance on Social Networking
- Employment Checks Policy and Procedure
- Our People Strategy – Our People, Our Future 2017 - 2022

20.2 The policy also makes reference to and contains the principles outlined in the following external documents:

- The Employment Relations Act 2004
- The 2015 ACAS Codes of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance

Procedures:

- Maintaining High Professional Standards
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Data Protection Act 1998

21 Policy Review

21.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.

July 2019 – Interim Review

BRADFORD TEACHING HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST
DISCIPLINARY RULES

INTRODUCTION

The ACAS Code of Practice states that fairness and transparency are promoted by developing and using rules and procedures for handling disciplinary and grievance situations. These should be set down in writing, be specific and clear. Employees and, where appropriate, their representatives should be involved in the development of rules and procedures. It is also important to help employees and managers understand what the rules and procedures are, where they can be found and how they are to be used.

Under the Employment Act 2002 employers are required to specify any disciplinary rules applicable to the employee or refer to a document which is reasonably accessible to the employee and which specifies such rules.

In view of the legal requirements noted above and in the interests of good employee relations practice the following disciplinary rules, giving appropriate examples, have been drawn up for the guidance of management, staff organisation representatives and all employees. It is emphasised that no set of rules can cover every circumstance, and the action taken by management in any particular situation must take into account the particular circumstances relevant to that situation.

The Personal Responsibility Framework provides the framework for individuals taking personal responsibility for demonstrating appropriate attitude and conduct or actions that impact on others can be dealt with proportionately and at the earliest opportunity before formal policies are instigated.

GENERAL RULES

1 Hours of Attendance

- 1.1 Every employee is required to give constant and regular attendance. Failure to attend punctually or regularly will normally result in disciplinary action being taken, including dismissal if the offences continue after the issue of warnings as detailed in the Foundation Trust's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. The distance of employee's homes from their place of work, or any difficulty of travelling cannot be accepted as reasons of irregularity of attendance, and it is not normally the Foundation Trust's practice to agree special working hours on the basis of such factors.
- 1.2 Some employees are required to record their time of arrival and/or departure in a book or by using a time clock. Misuse of such arrangements (e.g. clocking another person's card or making false entries in an attendance book/sheet) will lead to disciplinary action being taken - usually dismissal.
- 1.3 Whilst at work employees must not absent themselves without obtaining the prior permission of their supervisor/manager. Such absences must be reported to the relevant supervisor/manager in accordance with the appropriate procedure. If the manager is satisfied, following such an investigation, that an employee has no good grounds for the unsatisfactory attendance, then disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the Foundation Trust's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Absence due to sickness is not a disciplinary matter and must be dealt with by using the Foundation Trust's Policy on the Management of Attendance.

1.4 Where concerns are raised regarding an issue of conduct that is related to attendance at work then these should, depending on the circumstances, be managed in line with the Foundation Trust's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. Examples of possible attendance related misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- Persistent lateness, extended breaks or leaving early without prior permission
- Repeated failure to follow correct reporting procedure
- Having unauthorised absence
- Late submission of continuous Fit Notes without good reason
- Working elsewhere whilst off sick
- Failure to attend Sickness meetings or Occupational Health appointments without good reason
- Patterns of absence, other information bringing into question whether the absence is genuine. Examples might include:
 - Employee found to be undertaking activities inconsistent with the reason given for illness during sick leave.
 - Pattern of absence suggesting deliberate avoidance of being managed under the policy.
 - Patterns of absence e.g. not returning after extended leave, holiday periods such as religious festivals or public holidays, before and after rostered days off.

Prior to taking action, the manager should consider whether it is appropriate to refer an employee to Occupational Health to establish whether patterns of absence are attributable to an underlying health condition.

If an employee is absent through sickness but fails to comply with the certification and reporting requirements, the Foundation Trust is not obliged to pay sick pay for the period they are absent from work. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised and the Foundation Trust may take action in accordance with the Foundation Trust's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Annual leave will not accrue during periods of unauthorised absence. Anyone with a period of unauthorised absence should have their annual leave for the current year recalculated and adjusted by their manager.

Where it is not possible to make contact with the employee or the employee does not intend to return to work the matter should be discussed with the HR Department as soon as possible.

1.5 Holiday and special leave arrangements must be approved in advance, in accordance with existing procedures.

2 Standards of Conduct

2.1 Every employee is expected to take personal responsibility to undertake a prompt and efficient service with a concern for the feelings of others - especially patients and members of the public but also their co-workers. If the behaviour or conduct of an employee falls short of the standards required, the individual will first be

advised by their supervisor/manager of their shortcomings and will be given an opportunity to correct them. The use of the Personal Responsibility Framework should be considered in the first instance. However, should the unsatisfactory behaviour or misconduct continue he/she will be subject to disciplinary action (including dismissal), in accordance with the Foundation Trust's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

- 2.2 All medical or personal information relating to patients and employees is strictly confidential. Breaches of confidentiality will be regarded very seriously, and will always result in serious disciplinary action being taken.
- 2.3 Employees must inform their manager if they have an interest in a contract which the Foundation Trust has entered into, or proposes to enter into. This is in line with the Trust's Conflict of Interest Policy, In the case of a married couple, or other close relationship, the interest of one is deemed to be the interest of the other. For further advice see the Foundation Trust's Policy on Standards of Business Conduct.
- 2.4 Employees must not bring the Foundation Trust or any of its employees into disrepute in any of their communications or actions. This includes any reference to the Foundation Trust in electronic communications through Social Networking sites where members of the public may be able to view any such reference to the Foundation Trust. This includes:
 - sharing confidential information online
 - posting inappropriate comments about the Foundation Trust, colleagues or patients
 - using social networking sites to bully or intimidate colleagues
 - pursuing personal relationships with patients or service users
 - distributing sexually explicit or hate material.
 - using social networking sites in any way which is unlawful.

3 Summary Dismissal

- 3.1 There are certain types of misconduct which will warrant dismissal without the normal period of notice or pay in lieu of notice. These come under the category of "Gross Misconduct". Gross misconduct is seen as misconduct serious enough to destroy the employment contract between the employer and employee and to make any further working relationship and trust impossible. Examples of offences which are normally regarded as gross misconduct are set out below, although this list is neither exclusive nor exhaustive.
 - a) Deliberate damage to Foundation Trust property
Deliberate damage to any item of Foundation Trust property or equipment.
 - b) Stealing from the Foundation Trust, employees, patients or the public.
Any instance of theft from the Foundation Trust, its employees, patients or the general public including the unauthorised use of Health Service equipment or property.
 - c) Physical assault/intimidation
Any assault on /or intimidation of a patient, a visitor or employee in the course of duty, or off duty but whilst on Foundation Trust's premises.

- d) Fraudulent Behaviour
Any fraudulent behaviour, with the dishonest intent to gain or cause a loss in accordance with the Fraud Act 2006. This includes false representation, failure to disclose information and abuse of position.
- e) Gross Negligence which endangers other people
Any action or any failure to act which seriously threatens the health, safety, or welfare of a patient, a visitor, or an employee.
- f) Breach of Confidentiality
Any breach of confidentiality involving patient or employee records. This will include any serious breach of the Foundation Trust's Information Governance Policy.
- g) Misuse of Vehicles
Breach of rules contained in "Notice to Drivers", including the carriage of unauthorised passengers or goods.
- h) Incapacity for work due to being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
Any incident of incapacity for work due to being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or some other non-prescribed mood altering substance where any offence or misconduct occurs (see also Policy on Alcohol and other drugs in the workplace).
- i) Gross Insubordination
Any incidence of abusive behaviour to a line manager or repeated refusals to obey reasonable instructions from a Line Manager.
- j) Perpetration of a Hoax
Perpetration of a hoax practical joke or other malicious act resulting in serious disruption to services.
- k) Corruption and Bribery
Any corrupt behaviour which is broadly defined as the offering or acceptance of inducements, gifts, favours, payment or benefit in kind, which may influence the action of any person in accordance with the Bribery Act 2010. This includes giving, promising or offering a bribe, or requesting, agreeing to receive or accepting a bribe.
- l) Breaches of the Foundation Trust's Policy on Harassment and Bullying
Incidents of sexual harassment, racial harassment or bullying at work. This extends to communication outside the workplace (including the use of social networking sites) where employees, patients, carers or visitors to the Trust are discussed in derogatory terms with other employees, or where the communication can be viewed / witnessed by members of the public.
- m) Serious breaches of the Foundation Trust's Policy on Information Governance
Serious breaches include visiting "offensive" websites and/or excessive personal use during work time. Guidance can be sought from the Information Governance Manager.
- n) Bringing the Foundation Trust into disrepute by posting derogatory comments on social networking sites which are accessible to members of the public and/or other Trust employees

- 3.2 This list is not exhaustive and is merely indicative of the type of allegation which may constitute gross misconduct. If an allegation is deemed sufficiently serious, lack of inclusion on the above list will not preclude the allegation from being deemed gross misconduct.
- 3.3 In cases where the Foundation Trust's Managers have reasonable grounds for believing that offences of the type listed above have been committed, they will commence an immediate investigation. In accordance with the Foundation Trust's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure this may require the immediate suspension of an employee (or employees) from duty. If following such an investigation it is considered that an employee, or employees, are guilty of an offence of the type described, dismissal, without notice, for gross misconduct will follow immediately.
- 3.4 In carrying out such investigations and arranging disciplinary hearings, the Foundation Trust's Managers will observe the principles laid down in the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. The Foundation Trust will take the disciplinary action described above in any case where, following an investigation, the Foundation Trust's Managers are satisfied that an employee is guilty of gross misconduct. Normally under such circumstances such disciplinary action will be taken, even if the police are still investigating and irrespective of whether or not there is court prosecution.

4 Statutory Registration

- 4.1 Certain employees are required by law to be registered with a particular body - e.g. General Medical Council, Nursing and Midwifery Council, Health and Care Professions Council. Employees who require a professional registration in order to practice are responsible for ensuring that their registration does not lapse and ensuring that they allow sufficient time to comply with the re-registration requirements of the regulatory body. Registration is both a contractual and a statutory requirement. In circumstances where a registration has lapsed, the employee will be suspended with no pay until the re-registration is confirmed. Registration lapses will not be back dated to the expiry date once the registration is eventually renewed. Employees who continue to work in a registered capacity when they are aware that their registration has lapsed will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal in accordance with the Trust Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. Employees who repeatedly fail to renew their registration before it lapses will also be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. .

5 Professional Bodies

- 5.1 Employees who are subject to the standards of performance/behaviour of professional bodies (e.g. Nursing and Midwifery Council, Health and Care Professions Council, General Medical Council, Disclosure and Barring Service) are reminded that the Foundation Trust has a duty to report instances of sub-standard performance or conduct to the appropriate body, as well as carrying out its own investigation and taking disciplinary action in appropriate cases. Employees affected will be advised when the Foundation Trust has to report such instances.

6 Alert Letters

- 6.1 The Foundation Trust has a mandatory responsibility to have a procedure in place for the activation and management of Alert letters in accordance with the NCAS procedures. An alert letter is a way in which NHS Organisations are made aware

of a Doctor or other registered health professional whose performance or conduct could place patients or employees at serious risk. Please refer to the Procedure for the Management and issue of Alert letters to confirm when this procedure should be used.

7 Loss of Driving Licence

7.1 Employees employed in posts for which there is a contractual requirement for the possession of a valid driving licence must inform their supervisor/manager if that licence is withdrawn for any reason. Failure to do this will result in summary dismissal. Where persons who are employed in such a post lose their licence, their employment will normally be terminated. Suitable alternative employment will be considered in such cases, but will only be offered:-

- a) Where a suitable alternative vacancy exists at the time.
- b) When the circumstances of the case merit such an offer being made (e.g. loss of licence due to a medical condition).

8 Safety Rules / Codes of Practice

8.1 Any employee who deliberately ignores laid down safety rules and procedures will have disciplinary action taken against him/her. This applies equally to codes of practice. For example codes of practice are provided in all catering departments and ward areas to ensure the hygienic handling, preparation, storage and transport of foodstuffs. It is an implied term of the Contract of Employment of employees in these areas that they at all times follow the guidance given in these codes of practice. Failure to follow the codes of practice will normally result in disciplinary action being taken against the employee(s) concerned.

9 Criminal Offences Outside Employment

9.1 Any employee who is convicted of a criminal offence must inform his/her supervisor/manager as soon as practicable. In addition where an employee is charged with a serious criminal offence such as a sexual offence, theft, fraud or a serious assault then the supervisor/manager must also be informed at the earliest available opportunity. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action being taken.

The action the Foundation Trust will take in such circumstances will depend on the facts of the case.

10 Harassment and Bullying

10.1 Instances of abuse or harassment in respect of the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010 will be treated as disciplinary offences, and unlawful discriminatory practices on a personal level will be viewed most seriously and will result in disciplinary action being taken.

10.2 Instances of racial harassment in the course of employment will result in disciplinary action being taken. This includes racial abuse, racially explicit derogatory statements which are found objectionable and offensive, racial graffiti, offensive jokes of a racial nature, and an offensive manner in communication which is not used with other employees and which is likely to constitute racial harassment.

- 10.3 Instances of sexual harassment will result in disciplinary action being taken. Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. It has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of an employee, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them which may also affect their performance at work. Something can still be considered sexual harassment even if the alleged harasser didn't mean for it to be. It also doesn't have to be intentionally directed at a specific person. It can include any unwanted written or verbal comments of a sexual nature such as remarks about someone's appearance, questions about their sex life or offensive jokes; displaying pornographic or explicit images; emails with content of a sexual nature; unwanted physical contact and touching; sexual assault.
- 10.4 In the event of a disciplinary hearing being convened that is as a result of harassment or bullying (irrespective of which policy the matter was investigated under i.e. Harassment and Bullying Policy or Disciplinary Policy), the Human Resources representative involved in the disciplinary process must advise the Harassment and Bullying Lead of the nature of the issue and of the disciplinary outcome.

For further details, see the Foundation Trust's Policy on Harassment and Bullying.