



**Headway North Cumbria**

[www.headwaynorthcumbria.org.uk](http://www.headwaynorthcumbria.org.uk)

the brain injury association

## **HEADWAY NORTH CUMBRIA VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

1. Headway North Cumbria believes that all individuals involved with, or volunteering on behalf of, people affected by brain injury should respect one another and work constructively to achieve Headway's aims and objectives. We expect that all those connected with or acting on behalf of Headway North Cumbria take personal responsibility for complying with this code of conduct<sup>1</sup>.

### **THE VOLUNTEER'S CODE**

2. A volunteer should:
- a. be a positive ambassador for Headway North Cumbria and ensure that he/she takes no action or make any comment that might damage Headway North Cumbria.
  - b. show respect to all and be committed to the principle of access and inclusion for all individuals connected with Headway North Cumbria.
  - c. respect and understand the need for confidentiality in relation to the organisation and its members.
  - d. take all reasonable steps to ensure health and safety of yourself and others and to protect the property of Headway North Cumbria.
  - e. be committed and reliable in their role within Headway North Cumbria and not use their position to pursue personal, professional issues or policies which conflict with those of Headway North Cumbria.
  - f. accept the need for appropriate training, guidance and support relating to their role within Headway North Cumbria.

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<sup>1</sup> Volunteers are required to sign a declaration to this effect.

- g. adhere to Headway North Cumbria relevant policies and procedures and Headway North Cumbria standards, where appropriate.
- h. work within the boundaries detailed below.
- i. sign the Volunteer Code of Conduct Declaration<sup>2</sup> prior to commencement of service.

## **VOLUNTEER BOUNDARIES**

3. A volunteer engages in a supportive relationship that focuses on the needs of the Headway North Cumbria member. Moving the focus of care away from meeting members' needs towards meeting the volunteer's own needs is unacceptable.

4. In support of this the following guidance is provided:

a. Befriending is an appropriate relationship for volunteers, and part of building the necessary trust to work with Headway North Cumbria members. However, volunteers should not confuse befriending with friendship. All volunteers must be aware of the difference between:

(1) Befriending a member - which is a professional relationship, made to meet a member's needs, and

(2) Becoming a service user's friend – which is a relationship that focuses on the needs of both people. A professional relationship focuses solely on the needs of the member.

b. Volunteers must be aware of the difference between being a counsellor and using counselling skills (such as active listening with a non-judgmental approach) that are appropriate for the delivery of care and support. Counselling is not an appropriate role for volunteers and members should be given advice and support to access other appropriate agencies.

c. Advice should normally only be offered to members when they request it. You should be aware of the areas in which you are not qualified to give advice and/or feel it is not appropriate for you to offer advice. In these instances, you should inform members of this, making every effort to assist them in accessing appropriate and/or qualified advice. However, directive

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<sup>2</sup> This declaration includes the confidentiality clause that volunteers are required to sign to comply with the Headway North Cumbria Confidentiality Policy.

advice may be appropriate at times, for example in a situation where there is a potential for physical harm or danger, and you should aim to do this in a non-judgemental manner. When you offer advice, you should ensure that you provide sufficient information for service users to make an informed choice. The most appropriate way of assisting service users in making decisions is to give sufficient information and options in order that the person can make an informed choice for themselves.

d. Volunteers must be careful not to influence members with their own beliefs and personal values, in particular be aware of their potential to influence vulnerable and/or impressionable service users. Although morality, religion and politics are common areas of conversation and members may wish to discuss their views, volunteers should never promote or impose their own views.

e. Volunteers must respect members' rights to privacy and be sensitive and responsive to any different personal and cultural needs for privacy that may arise.

f. Volunteers should not divulge any personal information about themselves or other volunteers or colleagues at Headway North Cumbria.

g. Volunteers should approach touching with great care and caution as some members may misinterpret physical contact as affection outside the professional relationship and others may also see physical contact as expressions or favouritism, for example where a volunteer hugs one member and not another. All volunteers should therefore be aware that physical contact risks being misunderstood and it may result in volunteers being vulnerable to allegations of inappropriate professional behaviour. Where touching occurs, it must only take place within the context of a professional relationship and with the member's agreement.

h. Volunteers should not enter into any financial transactions with service users including buying, selling, exchanging or bartering goods or services, lending or borrowing money. Volunteers should not normally handle money on behalf of members.

i. Volunteers should not agree to become trustees, beneficiaries or executors in relation to the wills of Headway North Cumbria members.

j. Volunteers must not give members their personal contact details, for example postal address, telephone number, fax number, email address, etc.

k. Volunteers must not give members the personal contact details of any Headway North Cumbria colleague.

l. Volunteers who encounter members out of hours should be pleasant and civil if approached by the member but should generally discourage prolonged social contact. Volunteers should not approach members in any social setting if the contact is not instigated by the member.

m. Should a volunteer develop an attachment towards a particular member the volunteer should ensure that this does not lead to a breach of professional boundaries. Any difficulties a volunteer is having in this area should be discussed with a Committee member or senior member of staff of Headway North Cumbria.



## HEADWAY NORTH CUMBRIA VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

### DECLARATION

- I have read and understood the provisions of the Volunteer Code of Conduct.
- I have read the Headway North Cumbria Confidentiality Policy and agree to the confidentiality clause:

*You shall not use or disclose to any person either during or at any time after your time with Headway North Cumbria any confidential information about the business or affairs of the charity or any of its business contacts, funder's, client details or any other matters which may come to your knowledge in the course of your time with the charity.*

- I undertake to familiarize myself with Headway North Cumbria policies and procedures and appropriate Headway North Cumbria standards.
- I shall declare all conflicts of interest as and when they arise. If at any time these conflicts hamper my ability to perform my role as a volunteer I shall resign from my position.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_