

Professionalism, Conduct and Behaviour Policy

Scope of Policy

Priory Medical Group (PMG) recognises the importance of how our workforce behaves and conducts themselves at work in creating a compassionate and inclusive culture for all who work for the organisation and those who access the services we provide.

There will also be times where the behaviour and conduct of our employees outside of work could impact the reputation and public perception of the organisation and as a result will also be covered in this policy.

So the purpose of this policy is to make it clear and consistent what conduct and behaviour we expect of our workforce and the levels of professionalism we wish to reflect in the work and interactions we have with our patients and our fellow colleagues.

Definitions

Professionalism – The way in which someone looks and behaves at work in their role, even when faced with challenging situations and workplace pressures.

Conduct – The manner in which someone presents themselves in a particular situation or environment.

Behaviour – the way someone acts especially towards others.

Bullying -Bullying has no legal definition and is not unlawful and maybe characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through a means to undermine, humiliate, denigrate, or injure the recipient.

Personal Harassment - unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person.

Sexual Harassment - a form of personal harassment. This occurs when: someone is subjected to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, or related to sex, or related to gender reassignment.

Victimisation - when someone is treated less favourably as a result of being involved or believed to be involved with a discrimination or harassment complaint .

Physical Appearance at Work

Here at PMG, we expect all our staff to be clean , tidy, and presenting a professional image at all times, whether they be in a patient or a non-patient facing role. The clothing that they wear at work must reflect this.

If as part of your role you are required to wear a uniform then the designated uniform for your role should be worn at all times when on site or at any off-site business meetings here appropriate.

Staff should also wear their allocated name badge at all times when on site or at any off-site meetings.

If you lose or for whatever reason do not have a name badge then please contact HR, who will order one for you.

Whilst we do not prevent staff from having tattoos we do require that all new tattoos be covered by the appropriate dressing and that any tattoo that could cause offence be covered at all times.

Rings and visible body piercing must always be removed or covered with plasters, except for stud earrings. A blue plaster must cover all new visible body jewellery.

Alcohol and Drugs Misuse at Work

Alcohol and drug misuse can have a severely adverse effect not only the person concerned but also anyone who comes into contact with them at work.

Having a safe working environment, providing excellent patient service and care by maintaining productivity levels and avoiding days being lost to illness are all critical to our success and thus, all employees must comply with this.

Breaches of the policy around alcohol and drugs misuse will be taken very seriously and may be dealt with under our disciplinary procedure.

(Please note for the purposes of this policy, the term ‘drugs’ is used to describe both illegal drugs and other psychoactive (mind-altering) substances which may or may not be illegal.)

- Employees must ensure that they are not intoxicated by alcohol and are free of any drugs when they report for work and that they remain so whenever they are at work including lunchtimes and especially when driving.
- Employees must not drink alcohol during working time including lunchtimes.
- The use, possession, storage, transportation, promotion and/or sale of drugs or drug equipment is forbidden during working time including lunchtimes, in the workplace or at a customer’s site.
- Where employees are prescribed medication or are taking over-the-counter medicines or herbal remedies that may affect their work performance or the safety of themselves or others whilst at work or whilst driving, they must advise their Line Manager or HR of the medication and the likely side-effects on them taking it.



- Employees may be required to undergo testing for alcohol or drugs in their system in certain defined circumstances.

Alcohol and Drug Testing

In order to ensure the safety of the individual, fellow staff and patients it may be necessary to carrying out testing to deem if an employee is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The test will be carried out by an independent and reputable external screening company, under a tightly controlled procedure, ensuring the results are fair, accurate and objective. Tests are carried out in the strictest confidence and privacy, and with dignity.

An employee may nominate a colleague or trade union representative to witness the test where this is reasonable and practical, and PMG will try to arrange this where possible.

Any attempts by an employee to falsify a test result or refusal to be tested may result in disciplinary action under the Company's disciplinary procedures.

PMG can be prosecuted if it knowingly allows an employee who is intoxicated or under the influence of drugs to continue working, as this places other people at risk.

If an employee is obviously intoxicated or under the influence of drugs, they will be sent home from work and suspended on full pay immediately and if applicable will remain suspended from work until the test results are available.

All personal data collected for this purpose will be processed in line with the GDPR regulations.

Bullying

Here at PMG we have a zero-tolerance policy to bullying of any kind and anyone found to be responsible for bullying will find themselves subject to punitive measures in line with our disciplinary policy. In very serious incidences it may be viewed as gross misconduct which could result in dismissal.

Bullying can take place through, for example:

- **Face to face contact**
- **Written communications**
- **Email**
- **Telephone**
- **Social Media**

This policy covers bullying involving staff members both whilst and also outside of work.

It can take many forms of bullying examples include in the list below(but is not limited to):

- **Spreading malicious rumours**
- **Insulting someone.**
- **Ridiculing or demeaning someone, - picking on them or setting them up to fail or by inappropriately and publicly discussing mistakes.**
- **Unwanted and/or intimidating physical contact.**
- **Exclusion.**
- **Victimisation**
- **Unfair treatment.**
- **Overbearing supervision or another misuse of power or position.**
- **Making threats or comments about job security without foundation.**
- **Deliberately undermining a competent worker by unreasonable or repeated, non-constructive and unfounded criticism.**
- **Preventing individuals progressing by intentionally blocking promotion or training opportunities**

Personal Harassment

Whilst bullying has no legal definition and is not against the law. Harassment is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010, when the unwanted behaviour is related to one of the protected characteristics listed below.

- **age**
- **sex**
- **disability**
- **gender reassignment**
- **marriage and civil partnership**
- **pregnancy and maternity**
- **race**
- **religion or belief**
- **sexual orientation**

PMG has a zero-tolerance policy to any form of harassment. As a result, all incidents of harassment will be treated with the utmost importance and seriousness, and anyone found to have committed any form of harassment towards a fellow staff member will be subject to applicable measures as per the company disciplinary policy.

Please note that it does not matter whether or the effect on the individual (s) was intended or not by the person responsible for the conduct.

Some examples of personal harassment include (this list is not exhaustive):

- **spoken words such as 'Banter', insensitive jokes, and pranks.**
- **insulting words or behaviour**
- **lewd or abusive comments about appearance;**
- **deliberate exclusion from conversations.**
- **displaying abusive or offensive writing or material or graffiti**



- **unwelcome touching**
- **aggression, abusive or threatening behaviour towards a person or their property**
- **written words**
- **posts or contact on social media**
- **Imagery**
- **physical gestures, facial expressions, mimicry**
- **acts affecting a person's surroundings**

Sexual harassment is a form of personal harassment and the same degree of importance and approach to incidents of this nature will apply.

Reporting Bullying and or Personal Harassment

Should you believe you are a potential victim of bullying or personal harassment or have witnessed other staff potentially bullying or harassing a colleague(s) then if appropriate please speak to your Line Manager, Senior Manager and or Partner in the first instance.

If you feel that speaking to them is not appropriate then please contact HR who will look into the issue further, provide and signpost you to further support where necessary and advise next steps.

Should the issue need to be escalated then HR will initiate a further investigation to be conducted by an independent senior member of the organisation in line with our grievance policy and process. **(See Grievance Policy).**

The outcome of the investigation or any subsequent disciplinary action will be advised to you as soon as possible (if applicable).

If as a result of being involved or being perceived to be involved in a harassment or discrimination complaint you are victimised i.e. treated less favourably then please notify HR who will take appropriate action to look into the matter and take any action deemed fair and appropriate.

Other Inappropriate behaviour at work

In addition to the above, here at PMG we expect all our staff to treat patients, their relatives, service users, members of the public, internal and external stakeholders, managers and colleagues with the utmost dignity and respect at all times. Being kind to one another and treating others in the same manner in which you, yourself wish to be treated is a crucial part to help us to create and maintain an inclusive and compassionate culture for all.

Inappropriate behaviour outside of work

Should you be invited to attend a work event (social or otherwise) or business meeting or training course offsite outside of working hours then we would expect the same levels of professionalism, conduct and behaviour of all our staff at such events as we would expect of them whilst onsite or working at home during their contracted hours.

We strongly view all of our staff as ambassadors for Priory Medical Group and any behaviour and conduct outside of work should reflect this . Any incidents or conduct outside of work where the reputation of Priory Medical Group is damaged and thus brings the company's name into disrepute could result in further disciplinary action being taken and in extreme cases could lead to dismissal of those concerned.

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Reviewed by Joanne Fox – HR Manager

Next Review due – March 2026