

UK EAPA Code of Ethics

Purpose

This United Kingdom Employee Assistance Professionals Association (UK EAPA) Code of Ethics provides guidance regarding ethical conduct for Members, and it defines the standards of ethical behaviour for the benefit of their clients, both individual employees and employer organisations. This Code will apply to the Members' activities and relationships with employees, employers, unions, employee assistance colleagues, professionals from other disciplines, the local community and society as a whole.

Ethical Principles

Service

The delivery of an EAP service allows Members to minimise the impact of personal and/or work problems on productivity, attendance and safety. Members are most effective when they are seen as professional, competent and impartial. Members should recognise the needs of all stakeholders in an organisation but retain focus on the client.

Beneficence

Members' diligently work to benefit the individuals and organisations they serve and to protect the welfare and rights of those with whom they interact professionally. It is expected that Member will seek to avoid or minimise the amount of harm that may result if any conflicts do occur and that they will always strive to find constructive solutions. Members understand that the decisions they offer may affect individual lives or the livelihood of the organisation, and they strive to maintain awareness of the various influences that could impact their decisions.

Fidelity

Members create trusting relationships with key stakeholders within the organisations they provide service for. Trusting relationships are developed with the clients or those with whom they consult. Members are aware of their role and responsibilities and the need to effectively manage conflicts in order to prevent them from resulting in exploitation or harm or the perception of exploitation or harm.

Integrity

Members work to maintain and promote the highest standards of practice, in keeping with the UK EAPA Guidelines and Standards of Practice published from time to time, and any other professional body relevant to them, to include but not

limited to BACP, COSCA, IACP, and BPS. They strive to clarify professional boundaries to minimise confusion of roles and outcomes. A primary goal is the practice and advancement of the values, knowledge and purpose of the Employee Assistance profession. Members work for the benefit of the individuals and organisations they serve and will strive to do no harm by theft, fraud or misrepresentation of fact.

Respect

Members will value the dignity of all people and the rights of individuals to privacy and confidentiality. They also value the organisation that provides the contracted services and the corresponding needs, rights, directives and mandates of that organisation. Members are aware of and respect differences based on gender, race, colour, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, age, sexual orientation and disability. They work to eliminate biases based on these or other related factors.

Competence

Members work to become and remain proficient in professional practice and the performance of professional functions. They will provide services and represent themselves as competent only within the boundaries of their professional education, training, or accreditation. Members will maintain current knowledge of employee assistance trends, research, emerging themes and issues within the profession by reviewing professional literature, seeking professional development education and maintaining involvement with other professionals. Members will be knowledgeable in the application of the UK EAPA Guidelines and Standards of Practice.

1.0 Responsibility to colleagues and other professionals

1.1 Interdisciplinary teamwork and collaboration

Members who participate in interdisciplinary teams will uphold the values and standards of the employee assistance profession. If participation in a committee or other team raises ethical concerns, the Member will pursue appropriate means of resolution, while maintaining adherence to the UK EAPA Code of Ethics published from time to time and their own professional qualifications body.

1.2 Confidential information between colleagues

Members will seek the consultation of colleagues whenever doing so is in the best interest of a client. Consultation will

occur with the confidentiality of the client protected, unless consent to release information or a recognised exception for disclosure exists.

1.3 Respect and cooperation within a professional community precludes the denigration of other professionals to promote self-interests. Members will accurately and fairly represent the qualifications and skills of colleagues.

1.4 Disputes

Members will seek to resolve disputes with colleagues with fairness, accuracy and respect, and will never allow a dispute to interfere with the best interests of a client.

1.5 Impairment of colleagues

Members will endeavour to assist an impaired colleague in receiving appropriate assessment and treatment. Members will strive to prevent the delivery of EAP or clinical services by an impaired practitioner.

1.6 Incompetence of colleagues

Members will strive to prevent the exposure of clients to a practitioner known to be incompetent in a respective discipline or in the problem area for which help is sought.

1.7 Responsibility to supervisees

In all instances, the supervisor/supervisee relationship will remain professional. Sexual relations with supervisees are unethical.

1.8 Non-Discrimination

With regards to the recruitment of staff and other employment issues, Members will provide equal opportunities for all actual and prospective employees. Members will not discriminate against any person on the grounds of race, gender, colour, ethnicity, religion, national origin, political affiliation, disability, sexual orientation, age, marital status or education. Members will comply with all relevant legislation and employment law concerning such discrimination.

2.0 Responsibility to employees as clients

2.1 Informed consent

Members will adequately inform clients of their rights regarding the disclosure of information to others and will obtain 'informed consent' prior to the release of such information.

Clients will be informed of any limitations of confidentiality such as child protection, anti-terrorism, health and safety threat or threat to self/others.

2.2 Privacy and confidentiality

Members will treat all clients' information as confidential unless released in compliance with statutory requirements, a proper court order or subpoena, and informed written or verbal consent of the client. Disclosure may occur when the Member has reasonable grounds to believe that failure to report such circumstances could place in imminent danger

the physical safety of a particular client or others. When necessary, the Member will seek professional consultation with appropriate professionals, including but not limited to, supervisors, peers, or UK EAPA's Executive Board.

Members will protect confidentiality in line with UK EAPA Guidelines and Standards and/or their own professional body.

2.3 Client Record

In compiling any client record Members will use all reasonable endeavours to ensure that it is:

- Accurate and up to date
- Contains only such information as is directly related to and necessary for the provision of employee assistance services to the subject client
- Does not include speculation or value judgement about that person or any other party.

2.4 Screening and assessment

Service decisions will be made according to the client's best interest. Members will recognise the boundaries of their competence and their professional discipline. Members will only provide services in areas in which they are qualified and trained. When providing telephonic, online or other remote services, professionals will have received training specific to working with clients via the specific method of service delivery. Members will be competent in addressing chemical dependency and emotional/mental health disorders.

2.5 Referrals

All referrals will be made with the best interest of the client as paramount. Referrals will be based on individual need, void of any conflicts of interest, and in compliance with data protection legislation. Members will refer clients to other professionals based on individual needs and the professional's expertise, education, credentials, and competence in treating the assessed problem. Members will also consider other issues in ensuring a successful referral, including the relationship fit of the professional and the client and any concerns regarding costs, availability and distance. Members will refer to themselves only in the absence of other viable referral options and only after a review of all available options with the client and a decision by the client to continue with the EAP professional in conjunction with the EAP Case Manager.

Members will not accept payments of any type (in-kind, monetary, gifts, etc.) for referrals made to a specific person, programme or company.

Members will not accept payments such as money, in-kind, gifts etc. for referrals made to a specific person, programme or company. Entertainment such as lunch, dinner, and tea/coffee are acceptable where they would reasonably be expected as part of normal business discussions.

2.6 Follow up

The Member will strive to follow up within the limits of the contract with the client organisation clients to make sure that the welfare, needs, and risk factors are properly addressed.

2.7 Sexual conduct

The relationship between the Member and the client is built on trust and non-exploitation. The Members are not allowed to engage in sexual conduct with a client or former client.

2.8 Professional competence

Members will practice only within the boundaries of their competence and discipline based on their education, professional training, supervised and/or advisement experience and corresponding credentials. Members will participate in continuing education and professional training programs to maintain and enhance their proficiency and competency.

2.9 Representation of qualifications

Members will only present themselves in areas for which they have expertise, training, education and direct experience. Members will be forthcoming in disclosing those areas outside their qualifications and competence. Where a Member holds an additional professional qualification or accreditation or certification, the Member must recognise any other ethical code that applies.

2.10 Non-Discrimination

Members will not discriminate because of a client's race, colour, ethnicity, religion, national origin, culture, marital status, education, political affiliation, disability, gender or sexual orientation, age, marital status or education.

2.11 Avoiding harm

Members will conduct themselves in such a manner that their business concerns will not harm or in any way interfere with their professional responsibilities to clients, employer organisations and the community at large.

Members will manage the duality of obligation inherent in serving the needs of employee and employer alike. When Members encounter conflict in reconciling such dual obligations, they will seek professional consultation to guide them to resolution.

Members will be advocates for both their organisational and individual clients. Members must seriously consider situations where preservation of human life may supersede confidentiality and, whenever possible, obtain professional consultation before taking action.

2.12 Full disclosure

Members will make full disclosure to their clients and employer organisations regarding the functions and purposes of their employee assistance programme.

Members will also provide total transparency regarding: non-professional relationships; potential conflicts of interest; dual relationships; financial arrangements or fiduciary relationships with providers, programmes, agencies or professionals; or other services that might be offered to the employee, regardless of whether or not they are considered clients of the Member.

2.13 Delivering EAP services via telephone or other remote technologies

Members will remove barriers to providing timely, effective services to clients while protecting their confidentiality. When using service delivery methods other than directly face-to-face, Members will operate according to established policies and procedures that comply with applicable data protection legislation. Prior to delivering services the Member will develop appropriate technological skills and obtain specialised training in working with clients in the specific distance modality to be used (i.e., web portal, email, chat, video, Skype, virtual environment, telephone etc.).

3.0 Responsibility as professionals

3.1 Boundaries of competence

Members will be proficiently competent and knowledgeable about the employer organisation, human resource management, EAP policy and administration and the delivery of EAP direct services, and they will demonstrate a competence in applying this knowledge in their employee assistance practice. Members will be knowledgeable of applicable governmental laws and regulations, professional standards and the corresponding professional codes of conduct relevant to the work organisation.

3.3 Supervision, consultation and advisement

Members will provide supervision, consultation and advisement within their scope of competence.

3.4 Integrity

Members must not misrepresent or falsify their experience, credentials, or areas of competence, and will not deceive others in regard to themselves, other practitioners or the benefits or risks of proposed employee assistance strategies and services.

3.5 Acknowledging credit

Members will be clear and straightforward in recognising the contributions of other professionals in any work or presentation in which they have collaborated and will not claim the work of others as their own through omission or direct statement.

4.0 Responsibility to employers or work organisations

4.1 Accurate representation of capability and capacity

Members will accurately and honestly market or sell only those services that are deliverable within the professional and technical limits and capabilities of their employee assistance programme. Members will accurately represent their capabilities and capacity in regard to their services, including but not limited to: quantitative and qualitative limits to workplace consultation; emergency procedures; after hour's coverage; trainings and educational programmes; geographical coverage; and the experience, credentials, and competencies of professional staff.

4.2 Contracting truthfully

Members will accurately offer and deliver services as proposed and defined in their service contracts with client organisations. Members will take full responsibility for the limitations of their services if they fail to deliver their claimed benefits, and they will take corrective action promptly and professionally.

4.3 Accuracy and honesty in reporting utilisation, program results and outcomes

All reports to employees or client organisations will accurately, honestly and fairly reflect the activities and utilisation of the programme's services. Applicable confidentiality and information privacy laws and regulations will be fully considered in reporting utilisation, programme results and outcomes, client satisfaction and any other performance metrics.

4.4 Provision of management training and consultation

Members will provide training and consultation only within their scope of competence. When a Member seeks to provide such service, the Member will first obtain further training on any EAP-related aspects of management consultation for which he/she is not currently competent.

4.5 Consultation on organisational policies or work conditions

Members will work to advance their client or employer organisations' policies and procedures.

4.6 Employer confidentiality

Members will earn and maintain the trust of the employer organisation's management. Members will not disclose the content of any organisational, management or customer consultation to a third party without informed consent to do so by the party receiving the consultation.

4.7 Commitment to employers

By accepting payment, the Member assumes the responsibility and obligation to serve the employee or employer organisation with dignity and to bring no negative publicity upon the client company. Should the Member believe an unethical practice is occurring in the client or client organisation, the Member will raise the concern with the client or employer organisation, seek appropriate consultation from colleagues, and work toward an ethical resolution.

4.8 Billing

Members will take reasonable steps to ensure the accuracy of billing and reporting of the nature and extent of services provided and to protect the individual client's confidentiality. While the payment of commissions or other incentives normally does not benefit the Member, the Member will ensure that there is transparency and full disclosure around such transactions, if requested by the employer organisation.

4.9 Pricing and rate setting

Although pricing and rate services are business decisions, the pricing of employee assistance services will reflect ethical practice and transparency.

5.0 Responsibility in conducting research

5.1 Informed consent

Participants (or subjects of research endeavours) have the right to consent or refuse to participate in research. Members/researchers will obtain voluntary and written consent from participants, when appropriate, without any consequence or penalty for refusal to participate. Participants have the right to withdraw consent at any time. Members planning or engaged in research will always seek the approval of and coordinate with the client or employer organisation.

5.2 Institutional approval

When institutional review is required, Members/researchers will provide accurate information about their research proposal and obtain approval before conducting the research. When Members/researchers do not have access to institutional approval they will consult with researchers who are familiar with IRB procedures or ways to safeguard participant rights.

5.3 Inducements

Members/researchers will take reasonable efforts to avoid offering excessive or inappropriate incentives or inducements for research participation and to avoid any sense that participants were coerced into participation.

5.4 Avoiding injury and minimal interference

Members/researchers will take precautions to avoid any injurious effects to participants and to avoid causing disruptions in the lives of participants as a result of their participation in research.

5.5 Reporting results

Members and researchers will not falsify or fabricate data, and when errors are discovered, they will ensure that steps are taken to correct such errors using appropriate communication and publication means. The result of any research that has professional value will not be withheld, including results that reflect unfavourably on programmes, services or prevailing opinions.

5.6 Avoiding plagiarism

Members and researchers earn and maintain the respect of the wider community by ensuring the proper credit of authorship of professional writings and presentations. Members and researchers will not present another's work as their own.

5.7 Publication credit

When reporting results of research or evaluation studies, Members/researchers will give recognition to previous work on the topic and give full credit to those to whom credit is due.

5.8 Participant confidentiality

Members/researchers engaged in research will ensure the anonymity or confidentiality of participants and, as appropriate, client or employer organisation data obtained from participants. Participants will be informed of any limits of confidentiality.

5.9 Relationships with participants

Members/researchers will avoid non-professional relationships with participants and will remain alert to potential conflicts of interest or dual relationships with participants. The participants' interests are primary when taking steps to resolve any conflicts of interest or other concerns.

5.10 Disclosure of sponsors/Informing sponsors

Sponsors or funders of research will be identified, and Members/researchers will inform these sponsors regarding research methodologies, procedures, results or outcomes, and the publication of findings.

6.0 Responsibility to vendors and providers

6.1 Selection, contracting and pricing

Members will treat their external providers in a fair, lawful, reasonable and professional manner by:

- Providing those vendors chosen to compete for business with identical information and an equal opportunity to quote on requirements and submit proposals.
- Not permitting any prospect of illicit gain or other corrupt motive to influence any decision by the Member in relation to the purchase or supply of any employee assistance services.
- Treating all vendors' quoted prices and information as confidential, except to the extent that such quoted prices and information are public knowledge.

6.2 Conflict of interest

The Member will not:

- Benefit from referral to outside treatment resources
- Refer a client to a spouse, partner or family member who is a therapist, counsellor, treatment provider, or other professional resource without explicit disclosure.
- Refer a client to another Member of the same group practice
- Accept any incentives for referring a client to a particular treatment provider or counselling service or recommending a particular EAP provider
- Attempt to limit service usage in order to minimise costs or obtain greater profits in their contracts.

6.3 Payment

Members who purchase employee assistance services will treat their external providers in a fair manner by:

- Being fair in their demands and settling accounts promptly when services have been provided
- Resolving all claims and disputes on a factual, just and prompt basis.

6.4 Non-Discrimination

Members will use all reasonable means in negotiating and contracting with vendors to provide equal opportunity for all actual and prospective contractors. As such, Members will:

- not discriminate against any person on the grounds of race, gender, colour, ethnicity, religion, national origin,

political affiliation, disability, sexual orientation, age, marital status or education

- under all circumstances, comply with all relevant legislation and applicable employment law concerning such discrimination
- use all reasonable means to ensure any party with whom a Member contracts or sub-contracts for the provision of employee assistance services operates a policy of equal opportunity consistent with these provisions.

7.0 Responsibility to the employee assistance profession and broader society

7.1 Public statements concerning the EA field and/or EAPA UK

Members will not make public statements that are knowingly false or deceptive concerning their profession or the UK Employee Assistance Professionals Association.

7.2 Advertising, marketing, sales, representation and other public statements

Marketing and sales of employee assistance services will adhere to high ethical standards in the advertisement of services and the corresponding rate structure. Members will not knowingly make false or deceptive statements in paid or unpaid advertising, research, the presentation of professional background and credentials, endorsements or other public statements.

8.0 Review of Conduct

8.1 Members shall comply with this Code of Ethics. Any member who shall be found in violation thereof shall be subject to investigation by UK EAPA.

8.2 A Member may be in breach of this code and subject to investigation by UK EAPA if they are disciplined by any similar professional body.

8.3 A Member shall be in breach of this Code of Ethics and subject to termination of Membership of UK EAPA or other disciplinary action* hereunder if such Member shall:

- Be expelled from any similar professional body
- Unreasonably fail to co-operate with UK EAPA in connection with any investigation by it pursuant to investigation by UK EAPA
- Be convicted of any criminal offence committed in the course of and directly related to the provision of EAP services or
- Engage in conduct which could lead to such conviction.

*Such disciplinary action shall be decided by UK EAPA Executive Board.