



## QUINTE HEALTHCARE CORPORATION

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### Corporate - Behaviour at Work

<b>Title: Corporate - Behaviour at Work Policy</b>		<b>Policy No:</b>	<b>4.4.39</b>
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<b>Approved By:</b>	<b>Senior Leadership Team</b>		

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Quinte Healthcare Corporation (QHC) is entrusted with the responsibility of providing exceptional quality of care and service to the patients and families we serve in our communities. In fulfilling this responsibility and delivering on our mission, we must ensure that we consistently practice the highest level of ethical conduct and professionalism.

The QHC Behaviour at Work policy outlines and describes the fundamental principles that guide our behaviours and the way we work with our patients and with each other. It is our expectation that everyone employed by or associated with QHC, including Board members, employees, credentialed medical staff, volunteers, students, and contract workers, shall be compliant with this Behaviour at Work policy at all times.

### 2. POLICY

QHC is committed to a climate of mutual respect and a work environment that is free from discrimination, harassment or other behaviours that are not consistent with QHC Values. Our Behaviour at Work policy describes the fundamental principles of ethical conduct, respect and professionalism that QHC was built upon. Compliance with this policy and other hospital policies is mandatory and is a condition of employment and privileges.

QHC promotes and fosters a workplace culture that is in alignment with our values of: Imagine It's You; Respect Everyone; Take Ownership; We All Help Provide Care; and Always Strive to Improve. As such, the Behaviour at Work policy is structured on these five organizational values and behaviours as set out below.

### **Imagine It's You**

- Demonstrate compassion, empathy, and patience in every interaction and provide effective care and support to our patients, families, and each other.
- Actively strive to consistently meet the expectations of patients and families throughout their experience with QHC.
- Provide a clean, comfortable, and safe environment for our patients, families, and each other.

### **Respect Everyone**

- Treat patients, families, and each other with respect and dignity at all times.
- Demonstrate professionalism in all our interactions and communicate in a courteous and considerate manner with both our language and actions.
- Respect and preserve the rights of patients, families, and each other to privacy and the security of personal information.
- Maintain the confidentiality of hospital business and do not disclose information about the hospital without the proper authorization.

### **Take Ownership**

- Take personal responsibility for our decisions and actions and follow through on our commitments and obligations.
- Carry out our work duties utilizing safe work practices to ensure the safety of ourselves, colleagues, and the patients and families we serve.
- Take active responsibility for the care and use of QHC property and resources and ensure they are used effectively and in a prudent manner.

### **We All Help Provide Care**

- Work as a member of a cohesive team of equally valued partners with consideration of the unique abilities of others.
- Seek input and feedback from others, as appropriate, and resolve conflicts in a respectful manner.
- Encourage patients to be actively involved in their care and provide them with information about their diagnoses and treatments in a manner easily understood so they can make informed decisions.

### **Always Strive to Improve**

- Actively seek opportunities to learn and further improve our daily work, processes and practice.
- Report errors, incidents, and 'near-misses' using the prescribed procedures and identify and help implement opportunities to improve processes and practices.

- Work with collegiality, cooperation and professionalism, and comply with applicable laws, policies, and regulations and ensure valid registrations, re-certifications, and credentialing to continue professional practice.

**2.1** The Behaviour at Work policy is linked to all QHC policies. Everyone employed by or associated with QHC, including Board Members, employees, credentialed medical staff, volunteers, students and contract workers shall be compliant with the Behaviour at Work policy and all other QHC policies at all times.

**2.2** Off-duty behaviour and incidents that affect the work environment and/or the organization's reputation and professional values in the community will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

**2.3** Everyone employed by or associated with QHC is expected to report significant violations of the Behaviour at Work policy. The reporting process is detailed further in this policy.

**2.4** QHC is committed to protecting individuals who report, in good faith, perceived violations of the Behaviour at Work policy, from reprisal. Individuals will be protected from reprisal when, in good faith, they make a complaint or participate in an investigation. Any perceived instances of reprisals should be reported by the individual immediately to his/her immediate supervisor, Human Resources and/or Medical Affairs.

**2.5** As it is expected that individuals will bring issues forward in a sincere and responsible manner, no action will be taken against an individual who makes an allegation in good faith, even if after investigation, the allegation is not substantiated. However, allegations, or statements made in the course of an investigation that are found to be deliberately dishonest, made with wilful disregard for the truth or found to have been made in bad faith, may subject the individual to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or privileges.

**2.6** Corrective action for substantiated violations of the Behaviour at Work policy will be determined on a case-by-case basis and may include, but are not limited to: disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or privileges, denial of access to QHC facilities, reporting of violations to appropriate regulatory bodies and/or legal authorities.

**2.7** The Behaviour at Work policy is not intended to interfere with the appropriate discharge of obligations found in professional codes and regulations.

### **3. DEFINITIONS**

**3.1 Appropriate conduct** includes, but is not limited to:

- Adherence to all QHC organizational and departmental policies, practices and procedures
- Competent performance of all duties and tasks assigned
- Ongoing courtesy to and respect for colleagues, volunteers, patients and families and all other association with the hospital
- Maintaining appropriate confidentiality of documents
- Avoiding discussion of confidential patient or hospital matters in places where you may be overheard.

- Ensure that your computer IDs and passwords are not shared
- Punctual and regular attendance.
- Attire and footwear appropriate for the job
- Wearing hospital issued identification and name badges visibly while on site.

**3.2 Unacceptable Conduct** may be written, oral or behavioural and includes, but is not limited to, harassment, discrimination, abuse and violence, as well as disrespectful, offensive and unprofessional conduct or conflicts of interest.

Examples of inappropriate behaviour include:

- Comments that are insulting, hurtful, disrespectful or rude.
- Threatening or abuse language directed at an individual
- Degrading or demeaning comments
- Profanity or offensive language.
- Physical behaviour with another individual that is perceived as threatening, intimidating or unwelcome
- Discussing workplace conduct, concerns and conflict in front of others (gossiping)
- Passive-aggressive behaviour – behaviour that is passive in expression but is aggressive or malicious in intent and may include non-verbal behaviour or body language that is irritating or offensive.
- Insubordination
- Working in an uncooperative manner with others
- Willful violation of hospital safety rules and procedures
- Loitering while on duty or in any circumstance which interferes with another person's job duties or productivity
- Excessive personal use of phones or computers while on duty
- Reporting to work or working while under the influence of alcohol, cannabis or prohibitive substances.
- Any business, financial or other relationship with suppliers, staff, physicians, patients or others that might impair or appear to impair independent judgement with respect to the best interests of the hospital.
- Accepting gifts, favours or gratuities from firms, organizations, agents, employees or other individuals in a manner that is contrary to ethical business practices.

## **4. RESPONSIBILITIES**

**4.1** Employees, credentialed healthcare professionals, volunteers, students, and contract workers are responsible for:

- Fostering and maintaining a positive work environment that encourages constructive feedback, collegiality, cooperation, and professionalism
- Working in compliance with the Behaviour at Work policy in all daily work interactions
- Attempting to resolve concerns through face-to-face communications with the person involved, in a confidential and professional manner.

- Reporting perceived violations of the Behaviour at Work policy in good faith through the reporting process outlined in this policy
- Participating in the investigative process, as required, in alleged violations of the Policy

#### 4.2 Managers and Department Chiefs are responsible for:

- Working in compliance with the Behaviour at Work policy in all daily work interactions
- Fostering and maintaining a positive work environment that encourages constructive feedback, collegiality, cooperation, and professionalism
- Recognizing violations and enforcing standards
- Responding in a timely manner to reports of perceived violations
- Coaching team members to resolve concerns directly with the person involved, provided it is safe to do so.
- Ensuring that investigations are conducted by the appropriate individuals
- Seeking advice, as required, from Human Resources and/or Medical Affairs
- Ensuring that appropriate corrective action is taken when warranted in a timely manner.

#### 4.3 Human Resources is responsible for:

- Fostering and maintaining a positive work environment that encourages constructive feedback, collegiality, cooperation, and professionalism
- Offering confidential advice on appropriate options for addressing a situation, and referring to other resources, as appropriate
- Advising and supporting managers in taking appropriate actions
- Responding to reports or requests for assistance regarding an alleged violation
- Facilitating investigations of formal complaints of alleged violations of the Behaviour at Work policy, as required
- Participating with the manager in determining the scope of the investigation with regard to the nature and degree of seriousness of the alleged conduct
- Based on the results of the investigation, making recommendations on any appropriate remedial actions to be taken

#### 4.4 Medical Affairs is responsible for:

- Fostering and maintaining a positive work environment that encourages constructive feedback, collegiality, cooperation, and professionalism
- Offering confidential advice on appropriate options for addressing a situation involved medical staff, and referring to other resources, as appropriate
- Facilitating investigations of formal complaints of alleged violations of the Behaviour at Work policy, as required
- Advising and supporting Department Chiefs in taking appropriate actions

### 3. PROCESS

The process outlined below is designed to bring appropriate resolution to a potential violation of the Behaviour at Work policy. Please note, that where an employee, volunteer, or credentialed medical staff member would like further clarification on the process outlined below, he/she can speak with Human Resources and/or Medical Affairs, as appropriate.

#### **4.1 - Stage 1 - Direct Communications**

An individual who has concerns regarding a behaviour or action that is felt to be contradictory to the Behaviour at Work policy attempts to resolve the issue by communicating directly with the person in a confidential and professional manner. The ideal method is done face-to-face, but if this is not possible, it could be done by telephone. Email or other forms of electronic communication is not an appropriate method of attempting to resolve an issue of inappropriate conduct.

Where an individual is uncomfortable speaking with the person, it is recommended that he/she seek confidential assistance from his/her immediate supervisor, and/or his/her Human Resources Consultant in seeking strategies for speaking with the person about his/her conduct. The Supervisor will have responsibility for follow-up on the concern if the individual is still unable to do so.

In order to promote a healthy work environment, if the issue persists following the direct communication, it should proceed to the next stage.

#### **4.2 - Stage 2 - Formal Complaint Submission**

If, after Stage 1, the issue remains unresolved, the inappropriate behaviour continues, or where the issue would be considered either an egregious act or when there is fear for one's safety rendering direct communication at Stage 1 inappropriate, an individual submits his/her written complaint outlining the nature of the alleged Behaviour at Work violation to his/her immediate supervisor.

If the alleged Behaviour at Work violation involves the manager or department chief, reporting can be made directly to Human Resources or the Chief of Staff's Office, as appropriate.

The Supervisor will be responsible for working with Human Resources and/or Medical Affairs to conduct an investigation that involves all appropriate parties. For confidentiality reasons, the person who submitted the complaint may not be able to receive a report about the specific outcome, but the Supervisor is responsible for informing the person that the issue has been resolved.

#### **4.3 Confidential and Anonymous Reporting**

All individuals subject to this policy are able to anonymously and confidentially submit reports concerning violations of the Behaviour at Work policy, including any suspected wrongdoing or unethical activities. This service is through Integrity Counts – a third-party company that provides confidential “whistle-blower” services to Canadian organizations.

Confidential or anonymous concerns can be reported through:

1-866-921-6714

(answered by a trained operator, 24 hours a day)

[www.integritycounts.ca](http://www.integritycounts.ca)

[qhc@integritycounts.ca](mailto:qhc@integritycounts.ca)

The reporter determines the level of confidentiality they wish to maintain in making the report. However, reports that are submitted with total anonymity may limit QHC's ability to investigate or follow-up on a complaint.

All reports received through this hotline will be provided directly to the Vice President and the Director of Human Resources, and then referred to the relevant department for fact finding and appropriate action. Any reports involving the Vice President or Director of Human Resources will be sent to the CEO.

#### **4.4 - Investigation**

Within five (5) business days of receiving the formal complaint of alleged Behaviour at Work violation, the manager or department chief, in collaboration and coordination with Human Resources and/or Medical Affairs will endeavour to initiate an investigation into the alleged violation. This investigation may include the gathering of evidence including the review of documents and/or interview of witnesses, and will be conducted in a timely manner. An individual who submits a complaint alleging a violation of QHC's Behaviour at Work policy will be made aware that an investigation has occurred and, if appropriate, any actions taken to address the concerns.

## APPENDICES AND REFERENCES

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### **Appendices:**

Appendix A- *Behaviour at Work Declaration*

Appendix B- *Procedure for Behaviour at Work Concerns – Medical Staff*

Appendix C- *Procedure for Behaviour at Work Concerns - Employees*

### **References**

Brockville General Hospital. 2009. Administrative Policy Manual. *Code of Conduct.*

Hotel-Dieu Grace Hospital. 2010. Human Resources Manual. *Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention Program. Code of Conduct.*

Providence Care. 2009. Providence Care Administrative Manual. *Code of Conduct.*

Sick Kids. 2009. Administrative Policy. *Code of Conduct.*

MacKenzie Health. 2010. Corporate Policies and Procedures. *Code of Conduct.*

Credit Valley Hospital. 2008. Administrative Policy. *Medical Code of Conduct*