



London Ambulance Service **NHS**
NHS Trust

Management policy statement on staff responsibilities regarding communication

DOCUMENT PROFILE and CONTROL.

Purpose of the document: To outline managers and staffs' responsibilities in regards to communication.

Sponsor Department: Human Resource and Organisation Development

Author/Reviewer: Senior HR Manager (South). To be reviewed by December 2012.

Document Status: Final

Amendment History			
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***Version Control Note:** All documents in development are indicated by minor versions i.e. 0.1; 0.2 etc. The first version of a document to be approved for release is given major version 1.0. Upon review the first version of a revised document is given the designation 1.1, the second 1.2 etc. until the revised version is approved, whereupon it becomes version 2.0. The system continues in numerical order each time a document is reviewed and approved.

For Approval By:	Date Approved	Version
Director of HR & OD	04/07	1.0
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The Pulse	19/05/10	Records Manager	GCT
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The RIB	05/10	Senior HR Manager (South)	HR

EqIA completed on	By
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Links to Related documents or references providing additional information		
Ref. No.	Title	Version
TP/024	Managing patient confidentiality when dealing with the media	
TP/003	Policy statement on duties to patients	
HR013	Equal opportunities policy	
HR021	Disciplinary policy	
TP/031	Internet policy	

Document Status: This is a controlled record as are the document(s) to which it relates. Whilst all or any part of it may be printed, the electronic version maintained in P&P-File remains the controlled master copy. Any printed copies are not controlled nor substantive.

1. Introduction

This document sets out the responsibilities of all LAS employees – managers and staff – in regards to communication.

2. Scope

All London Ambulance Service employees and those working on behalf of the Trust have a duty to respect confidentiality and to protect patients, the public, our colleagues and others working on the Trust's behalf. We also have a duty to protect the organisation's reputation.

3. Objectives

1. To set out the responsibilities of all employees in regards their communication around their work.
2. To signpost guidance available for employees in regards their communication.

4. Responsibilities

All employees have a responsibility to follow the guidelines as set out in this document. Managers are available to provide advice and support as necessary. Managers also have a responsibility to monitor compliance with the document.

5. Guidelines

- 5.1 On a daily basis staff talk or, in some instances, write about their work and experiences with the London Ambulance Service; however in doing this we all have to be mindful that we do not breach the above duty through the manner in which we communicate, and what we communicate, with others.
- 5.2 This applies whatever the form of communication, for example: conversations in public places; emails; contributing to discussion forums on websites or posting blogs (on-line diaries). It also applies even if you communicate in a way that attempts to disguise your own identity or the identity of others. Anyone who breaks confidentiality, communicates in a way that is offensive and/or potentially detrimental to others, or brings the organisation into disrepute, may be subject to disciplinary action.

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- 5.3 All employees should be aware of the implied and explicit duty of confidentiality included in employment contracts. Trust policies relevant to this statement include: Policy statement on duties to patients (TP/003), Managing patient confidentiality when dealing with the media (TP/024), Internet policy (TP/031), Disciplinary policy (HR021) and the Equal opportunities policy (HR013). This list is not exhaustive.
- 5.4 All the above policies are available on the Trust's intranet site, the pulse. Staff should also consider, where applicable, their own professional codes of conduct.
- 5.5 If you are in doubt as to whether a matter falls within the grounds set out in this statement and related policies, then you should speak with your manager in the first instance. This statement cannot cover every situation and as general advice, if you are considering communicating something that you feel may potentially be confidential, offensive or could contravene Service policies, then you should not do it.
- 5.6 This does not affect your rights under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1988, which is covered in the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy - also available on the pulse.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN	
Intended Audience	For all LAS employees
Dissemination	Available to all staff on the PULSE
Communications	Revised policy/procedure to be announced in the RIB and link provided to the document
Training	N/A
Monitoring	By individual line managers