



The Voluntary Care  
**Professional Register**

Registered Care Professionals

Code of Practice & Conduct  
For VCPR Registrants

This document contains codes of conduct and practice, for Registered Care Professionals (RCP), who have an entry on the Voluntary Care Professional Register (VCPR) It describes the standards of conduct and practice within which they should work. This introduction is intended to help you as a RCP to understand what the codes are for and what they will mean to you as a voluntary registered professional Care Worker

The Voluntary Care Professional Register became active on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023, and sets out to raise the status of a social care worker as a professional working in the social care sector.

The VCPR Code of Practice & Conduct for Registered Care Professionals is a list of statements that describe the standards of professional conduct and practice required of an RCP as they go about their daily work, and to which they should adhere to in order to maintain their status as a voluntary registered Professional Care Worker.

The VCPR Code of Practice & Conduct should be used in conjunction with VCPR Values Statement and their employers conduct policies to ensure that employees adhere to the standards set out in their policy and to support social care workers in meeting their code and to take appropriate action when workers do not meet expected standards of conduct.

The VCPR will take account of the standards set out in its Code of Practice & Conduct for RCP's in considering issues of misconduct.

## **IMPORTANT**

In Scotland, Northern Ireland & Wales it is a requirement for care workers to be registered with the Care Regulator in these countries. It is the individual care workers responsibility to ensure that they are registered.

## What will the code mean to you?

As a registrant on the VCPR, you will have a set of criteria to guide your practice and be clear about what standards of conduct you are expected to meet. You are encouraged to use the code to examine your own practice and to look for areas in which you can improve.

Employers/Providers will know what part they are expected to play in the regulation of the workforce and the support of high quality social care. As a RCP you are encouraged to review your own standards of practice and policies in the light of the standards set out in the code.

As a user of services or member of the public the VCPR code of practice will help you understand how a RCP should behave towards you and how employers should support RCP's to do their jobs well.

## **Self Employed Care Professionals**

For the purposes of this Code, the term self employed is an overarching term used to describe a private care professional, micro-enterprise, Personal Assistant or live-in care professional, who identify as independent self employed care professionals.

As a self employed care professional, the VCPR Code of Professional Conduct and Practice should be your point of reference in establishing the highest standards of business operation and in the delivery of care and support services. The code is **not** intended to instruct you on how to operate your business.

### **Regulatory Compliance**

As a self employed care professional, you will need to be mindful of any regulatory compliance that may apply to you and your business, particularly in regard to offering services that are deemed to be a “regulated activity”, such as personal care.

It is strongly recommended that you refer to the Care Quality Commission (England), Care Inspectorate Wales (Wales), Scope of Registration, the Scottish Social Services Council, and the Northern Ireland Social Services Council registration requirements and guidelines. Remember, it is your responsibility to ensure that you comply with any regulatory requirements.

### **Disclosure & Barring Service**

To work in the social care sector, it is a requirement for all who deliver and/or provide care and support services, to have an up to date and “clear” Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check. An up to date Enhanced DBS check is also a condition of registration for the VCPR.

### **HMRC**

As a self employed professional, you will have certain obligations to Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs, such as tax and national insurance contributions. Again this is your responsibility to ensure that you understand your obligations.

### **Right to Work in the UK**

Your right to work in the UK depends on your immigration status - this is also called your ‘leave’. If you don’t have the right to work, you might be able to apply for it. It is an offence to work in the UK without the proper authorisation to do so. You can find details on how to check your immigration status and your right to work at [Prove your right to work to an employer - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/proof-your-right-to-work-to-an-employer)

## **Code of Practice & Conduct for VCPR Registrants**

The purpose of this code is to set out the conduct that is expected of VCPR registrants and to inform service users and the public about the standards of conduct they can expect from a VCPR registered professional care worker. It forms part of the wider framework of RCP conduct requirements alongside legislation, practice standards and employer's policies and procedures. RCP's are responsible for making sure that their conduct does not fall below the standards set out in this code and that no action or omission on their part harms the wellbeing of people who require the support of a RCP

## **Status**

The VCPR fully expects its registrants to meet this code and may take action where a registrant fails to do so

Employers of social care workers will be encouraged to take account of this code as part of their own good governance.

1. As a VCPR Registrant, you should always protect the rights and promote interests of those who use/require/need services and colleagues.

This includes:

I. Treating each person as an individual;

II. Respecting and, where appropriate, promoting the individual views and wishes of both those who use/require/need services and colleagues

III. Supporting those who use/require/need services rights to control their lives and make informed choices about the services they receive;

IV. Respecting and maintaining the dignity, privacy and family life of those who use/require/need services.

V. Promoting equal opportunities for those who use/require/need services and colleagues; and

VI. Respecting inclusion, diversity and different cultures and values.

2. As a VCPR Registrant you should always strive, establish and maintain the trust and confidence of **those who use/require/need services** and colleagues

This includes:

I. Being honest and trustworthy;

II. Communicating in an appropriate, open, accurate and straightforward way;

III. Respecting confidential information and clearly explaining policies about confidentiality to those who use/require/need services and colleagues;

IV. Being reliable and dependable and acting in a professional manner at all times.

V. Honouring work commitments, agreements and arrangements and, when it is not possible to do so, explaining why to those who use/require/need services and colleagues, Declaring issues that might create conflicts of interest and making sure that they do not influence your judgement or practice; and

VI. Adhering to policies and procedures about accepting gifts and money from those who use/require/need services and colleagues.

VII. Never to engage in or allow the discussion/sharing of issues relating to an individual who uses/ requires/needs services, either publicly or in the company of others who require the same, unless otherwise permitted by law, professional standards or with express authority of the individual.

3. As a VCPR Registrant, you should always strive to promote the independence of those who use/require/need services while protecting them as far as possible from danger or harm.

This includes:

I. Promoting the independence of those who use/require/need services and assisting them to understand and exercise their rights;

II. Using established processes and procedures to challenge and report dangerous, abusive, discriminatory or exploitative behaviour and practice;

III. Following practice and procedures designed to keep you and other people safe from violent and abusive behaviour at work;

IV. Bringing to the attention of your employer or the appropriate authority any operational difficulties that might get in the way of the delivery of safe care;

V. Informing your employer or an appropriate authority where the practice of colleagues may be unsafe or adversely affecting standards of care;

VI. Complying with employers' health and safety policies, including those relating to substance abuse;

VII. Helping those who use/require/need services and colleagues to make complaints, taking complaints seriously and responding to them or passing them to the appropriate person; and

VIII. Recognising and using responsibly the responsibilities that come from your work with those who use/require/need services and your colleagues



4. As a VCPR Registrant, you should always respect the rights of those who use/require/need services while seeking to ensure that their behaviour does not harm themselves or other people.

This includes:

- I. Recognising that those who use/require/need services have the right to take risks and helping them to identify and manage potential and actual risks to themselves and others;
- II. Following risk assessment policies and procedures to assess whether the behaviour of those who use/require/need services presents a risk of harm to themselves or to others;
- III. Taking necessary steps to minimise the risks of those who use/require/need services from doing actual or potential harm to themselves or other people; and
- IV. Ensuring that relevant colleagues and agencies are informed about the outcomes and implications of risk assessments.

5. As a VCPR Registrant, you should always maintain and uphold public trust and confidence in social care services.

In particular you must not:

I. Abuse, neglect or harm those who use/require/need services or colleagues;

II. Exploit those who use/require/need services or colleagues in any way;

III. Abuse the trust of those who use/require/need services and colleagues or access to any personal information about them or to their property, home or workplace;

IV. Form inappropriate personal relationships with those who use/require/need services;

V. Discriminate unlawfully or unjustifiably against those who use/require/need services or colleagues;

VI. Condone any unlawful or unjustifiable discrimination by those who use/require/need services or colleagues;

VII. Put yourself or other people at unnecessary risk; or

VIII. Behave in a way, in work or outside work, which would call into question your suitability to work in social care services or bring the VCPR, your employer and the care working profession into disrepute.

6. As a VCPR Registrant, you should always be accountable for the quality of your work and take responsibility for maintaining and improving your knowledge and skills.

This includes:

- I. Meeting relevant standards of practice and working in a lawful, safe and effective way;
- II. Maintaining clear and accurate records as required by procedures established for your work;
- III. Informing your employer or the appropriate authority about any personal difficulties that might affect your ability to do your job competently and safely;
- IV. Seeking assistance from your employer or the appropriate authority if you do not feel able or adequately prepared to carry out any aspect of your work, or you are not sure about how to proceed in a work matter;
- V. Working openly and co-operatively with colleagues and treating them with respect;
- VI. Recognising that you remain responsible for the work that you have delegated to other care professionals;
- VII. Recognising and respecting the roles and expertise of workers from other agencies and working in partnership with them; and
- VIII. Undertaking relevant training to maintain and improve your knowledge and skills and contributing to the learning and development of others.