

**NHS Lothian**  
**INFORMATION GOVERNANCE GUIDANCE FOR ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT**

The following guidance is intended for students undertaking modules / courses delivered by NHS Lothian or modules in the Collaborative Agreements between NHS Lothian and Queen Margaret and Edinburgh Napier Universities.

**Guidance on the use of anonymised information**

Some modules / courses require students to submit assignments using information based on clinical practice. In such circumstances information must be anonymised. Anonymised information does not identify a specific individual and all patient, staff, relative or carer information used in course / module assignments must be anonymised. If a patient, staff member, relative or carer could identify specific individuals in a piece of written work then it is not anonymous. It is therefore recommended that students use composite information to ensure assignments are truly anonymised.

NHS Lothian policy on Confidentiality of Personal Health Information (2011) states that consent must be obtained to use anonymised personal information (P.18).

To ensure that the confidentiality of patients, staff, relatives and carers is preserved, the following guidelines must be followed when submitting any module / course assignments or work:

- A.** Names, addresses and any other identifiable personal details of patients, staff, relatives or carers should not be used in any circumstances.
- B.** Identifiable work areas such as NHS directorates, hospitals or wards should not be used.
- C.** Identifiable information relating to critical incidents or fatal accident enquires should not be used.
- D.** Where there is an uncommon diagnosis or other distinctive circumstances that could potentially lead to identification of a patient, member of staff, relative or carer this information should not be used without significant adjustment to ensure anonymity is maintained.
- E.** In circumstances such as D above, aggregation of data or information from a number of patients or the use of composite information from multiple sources may be used to ensure anonymity.

## **EXTRACT FROM CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT**

### **Confidentiality**

#### **Obligations Arising from Data Protection Legislation**

Particular regard should be given to your responsibility to abide by the principles of Data Protection Legislation and any subsequent legislation or formal guidance issued by the Scottish Executive. Further information is available from the Data Protection Officer.

#### **General Obligations**

##### **Patients**

In the course of your duties you may have access to confidential material about patients. On no account must information relating to patients be divulged to anyone other than authorised persons - for example medical, nursing or other professional staff, as appropriate who are concerned directly with the care, diagnosis and/or treatment of the patient.

##### **Staff**

Similarly no information of a personal or confidential nature concerning individual members of staff should be divulged to anyone without the proper authority having first been given.

##### **Health Service Business**

You may also have access to confidential material on Health Service business that should not be divulged to anyone without the proper authority having first been given. If you are in any doubt whatsoever as to the authority of a person or body asking for information on patients, staff or Health Service business you must seek advice from your manager. The Scottish Office Home and Health Department code of practice on confidentiality of personal health information is available from your local HR Department.

##### **Information Technology**

You are required to comply with NHS Lothian policies on information technology security, use of e-mail and Internet access. Copies of these policies may be obtained through your line manager.

### **Failure to Comply with Obligations**

Failure to observe these obligations will be regarded by your employer as serious misconduct that could result in disciplinary action being taken against you including dismissal. You may also be liable to prosecution for an offence under the data protection legislation or an action for civil damages.