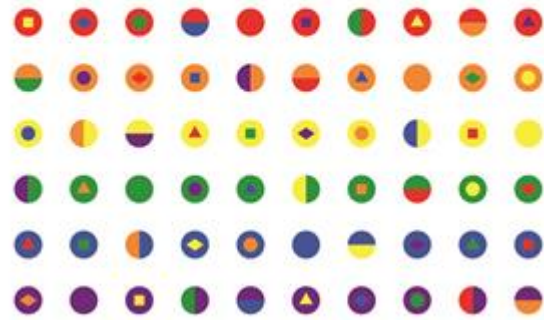


**akt**



# **akt Confidentiality and Information Management Policy**

<b>Document Classification</b>	Confidential	<b>Document Reference</b>	C3
<b>Document Categories</b>		<b>Version</b>	5.0
<b>Author</b>		<b>Date Created</b>	12/05/2009
<b>Owner</b>	AKT	<b>Date Last Updated</b>	11/8/2011
<b>Approved by</b>		<b>Date to be reviewed by</b>	April 2013

## **Confidentiality Policy**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Albert Kennedy Trust holds data which is personal and may be sensitive. We will take all appropriate steps to uphold a person's confidentiality (in accordance with AKT's confidentiality policy) and information will only be used for the purpose it was collected for.

### **2. SCOPE OF POLICY**

This policy outlines the circumstances in which information must remain confidential and when disclosure of information is allowed. Where the word confidentiality is used it means "Confidential within the system". AKT does not guarantee staff, volunteers or service users absolute confidentiality as it may often be necessary to pass information on to other AKT staff in order to take appropriate action or seek advice on decisions.

Where we are required to do so by law; in cases of personal safety for example, and with the signature of the person (if possible), we may release information to a third party, for example under the Children Act (2004). We will consider all circumstances before undertaking such disclosure. A safe method of exchange will be agreed before any information is released to a third party and checks will be carried out to ensure that the agreed method is being followed.

### 3. INSTRUCTIONS FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

All staff are responsible for providing AKT with such information as is necessary for the organisation to fulfil its purpose as well as for complying with reasonable requests for information, i.e. timesheets, performance management etc. You should ensure that you understand this policy, in particular for understanding that information is “confidential in the system” before you disclose sensitive information. You are responsible for the disciplinary consequences that may accrue to you if you

- a) withhold essential information;
- b) deliberately fail to disclose sensitive information that may have a significant negative impact on the AKT; and
- c) breach this policy.

If a volunteer or member of staff has a duty of confidentiality, it means that they must not disclose anything learned from a service user, without their consent, that would allow another to identify that service user. This includes information of a personal nature, i.e. name, address, telephone number, biographical details or any other information which might result in the identity of the service user being disclosed without the expressed permission of the service user. This does not include situations where a service user is threatening to harm themselves.

The exception to this rule is where a service user indicates that they are intending to harm themselves or is proposing harming someone else. In this case the service user must be stopped if possible before the disclosure and warned that AKT’s confidentiality policy ceases in these circumstances, and that if disclosure is made then AKT will be bound to report the matter to the appropriate authorities.

Personal details of service users are totally confidential; however the issues arising from working or volunteering with that service user may be discussed during support / supervision meetings only.

Other policies should be sought for detailed information e.g. Internet and Email policy, Vulnerable Adult Policy etc.

The AKT has a code of conduct which all staff and volunteers must abide by. A checklist of key requirements that must be observed by staff at all times is included in Appendix One.

### **Services staff**

Confidentiality within the client and Services staff relationship is essential, but not absolute. At the beginning of all client assessment, Services staff will ensure that they advise service users of the circumstances in which confidentiality may be breached.

Services staff are responsible for maintaining service user records and must keep the records at the AKT's premises in such a way as to protect service user confidentiality. At the end of all client and Services staff relationships, the relevant service user records must be kept for seven years.

Records of client sessions will be used to produce statistical and narrative reports on the progress of the service. In all cases the identity of the service users will remain anonymous.

When referring service users to external organisations, information concerning service users may only be disclosed with the service users expressed consent and measures to ensure that the information remains secure during the transfer must be agreed and followed.

## **Service Delivery outside AKT premises (including; mentoring, supported lodgings & training)**

Workers and volunteers undertaking detached work / training must not reveal confidential information pertaining to service users, which has been gathered during these sessions, outside the line management and support structures of AKT.

## **Fundraising, PR and Communications**

The identity of young people who are currently using AKT's services must not be revealed in fundraising, PR or Communications activities. Current service users' experiences can, however, be used in these activities if their identity is protected and they sign the release form in Appendix Two. Photographs of current service users can be used in publications provided that:

- An Operations Manager has confirmed that the young person will not be at significant risk if their photograph is seen by their family, friends or someone in their community.
- The young person has signed the release form in Appendix Two.

Ex-service users' may choose to reveal their identity as part of these activities but they, again must sign the release form in Appendix Two.

## **4. VOLUNTEER / STAFF DETAILS**

Volunteer and staff personal details are to be kept confidential to the Chief Executive and relevant line manager.

Criminal Record Disclosures will be kept as confidential as possible with the results only being shown to the individual concerned and those staff and volunteers who would need the information to make a recruitment or operational decision based on the information.

## **5. MANAGEMENT**

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring that the AKT complies with this policy. The line manager will ask staff on appointment and at each annual performance appraisal whether they have any training requirements in confidentiality and information management and record when any such training is completed.

## **6. MONITORING**

The AKT will strive to ensure that monitoring and performance management information respects service user confidentiality. All reports will use anonymous data except where service users have given their express permission i.e. the use of personal testimonies.

## **7. INCIDENTS**

The Chief Executive is responsible for encouraging staff to report any breaches of information security and for ensuring that any such breaches are fully investigated and resolved, although the investigation itself may be delegated to another member of staff or an independent party. The outcome of the investigation will be documented. Severe incidents will be reported to the Board of Trustees. If the incident has a potential or actual impact for another organisation then the Chief Executive will inform the most appropriate member of staff therein.

## **APPENDIX ONE**

### **Confidentiality and information management requirements for staff**

As a member of AKT's staff team you must always:

- Keep password(s) secure; they must be changed regularly and should only be shared with your line manager.
- Lock / log off your computer when away from your desk.
- Dispose of confidential paper waste securely by shredding.
- Minimise virus attacks by taking care when opening emails and attachments or visiting new websites.
- Securely store hard copy personal information when it is not being used.
- Accompany visitors in areas normally restricted to staff.
- Position computer screens away from windows to prevent accidental disclosure of personal information.
- Encrypt personal information that is being taken out of the office.
- Only record the personal information you need for a particular organisational purpose.
- Delete personal information that AKT no longer requires?
- Be aware that there are people who may try and trick you to give out personal information; to prevent these disclosures you should carry out identity checks before giving out personal information to someone making an incoming call and perform similar checks when making outgoing calls. Limit the amount of personal information given out over the telephone and follow up with written confirmation if necessary.
- Be aware that people have a right to have a copy of the personal information AKT holds about them. If someone wants to see their information pass this request on to your line manager – do not deal with it yourself.

- Report any breaches of information security to the Chief Executive immediately.



## APPENDIX 2

### **Release form for service users' participating in fundraising, public relations and communications activities.**

I ..... give my permission for Albert Kennedy Trust (AKT) to use information about my personal experience as an AKT service user in fundraising, public relations and communications activities.

I confirm that I have seen the information that will be released as detailed below and agree to its use by AKT.

I confirm that I am over the age of 18\*

I am a current AKT service user and understand that my name will not be revealed and that no details will be released that would reveal my identity/ I am an ex-AKT service user and agree/do not agree to my name and identity being revealed\*\*

Details of information to be released: *(to be completed by the appropriate member of AKT staff. Any written material should be attached as should any photos that are to be used. The location of any video material should also be included. )*

**Signature:**

**AKT staff member:**

**Date:**

\* If the service user is under 18 the parent or guardian should sign

\*\* Delete as appropriate