

# Richmond, Kingston & West London



## ME Group

### CODE OF CONDUCT

#### **Purpose:**

The Richmond, Kingston & West London ME Group has a mission: **to provide support to anyone affected by ME/CFS**. In pursuing its goals, the Group does a series of activities in the interest of those diagnosed with the condition. The following Code of Conduct (“the Code”) is designed to allow the Group to preserve its ways of working and the behaviour expected from its members when they form part of the Committee guiding the direction of the organisation.

#### **The Code is organised into categories, as follows:**

#### **Service:**

1. Always act with fairness, honesty, integrity and openness; respect the opinions of others and treat all with equality and dignity irrespective of gender, race, colour, creed, ancestry, place of origin, accent, political beliefs, religion, marital status, disability, age, or sexual orientation.
2. Promote the mission and objectives of the Richmond, Kingston & West London ME Group in all dealings with the public on behalf of the Group and within the organisation.
3. Provide a positive and valued experience for those receiving support within and outside the Richmond, Kingston & West London ME Group.

**Accountability:**

1. Act with honesty and integrity and in accordance with any professional standards and / or governing laws and legislation that have application to the responsibilities you perform for or on behalf of the Richmond, Kingston & West London ME Group. Policies will be reviewed if an issue arises with its interpretation and use.
2. Comply with the spirit of any training or orientation provided to you by the Richmond, Kingston & West London ME Group in connection with those responsibilities.
3. Adhere to the policies and procedures of the Richmond, Kingston & West London ME Group and support the decisions and directions of its Committee.
4. Take responsibility for your actions and decisions. Discuss with other Committee members to facilitate the effective resolution of problems.

**Conflict of Interest:**

Conflict of interest arises when a Committee member participates in a decision about a matter (including any contract, leasing or provision of goods and services) which may benefit or *be seen to* benefit that member because of his/her direct or indirect monetary or financial interests affected by or involved in that matter. It is the duty of any Committee member taking part in the operations of the Richmond, Kingston & West London ME Group to adhere to this Conflict of Interest Policy at all times. In the event that such a matter arises, the member shall formally disclose the interest, refrain from attempting to persuade or influence other Committee members participating in the decision, and shall not cast any vote on the matter.

**Confidentiality:**

1. Respect and maintain the confidentiality of information gained as a volunteer or trustee, including, but not limited to, all computer software and files, the Richmond, Kingston & West London ME Group private documents and printouts, and all volunteer, membership, donor and supporter records.

2. Respect and maintain the confidentiality of members' personal information according to the new General Data Protection Regulation implemented on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018, which establishes that any personal information cannot be shared or disclosed to others without the consent of the member affected.

### **Personal Harassment:**

Personal Harassment means any conduct whether verbal or physical that is discriminating in nature, based upon another person's race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, accent, political beliefs, religion, marital status, physical or mental disability, sex, age or sexual orientation. It is discriminatory behaviour, directed at an individual, that is unwanted or unwelcome causing substantial distress to that person and which serves no legitimate work-related purpose and is not in line with our Equal Opportunities policy.

The Richmond, Kingston & West London ME Group has a zero tolerance policy with respect to Personal Harassment, especially in relation to the amount of stress this situation gives to the individual(s) affected. Stress has been identified in the Group's Health and Safety policy as the biggest threat to a member's health and possibly to his/her life. Therefore Personal Harassment in any form is strictly prohibited and may be grounds for termination as a Committee member or a member of the Group, with immediate dismissal from the organisation for just cause after a Committee consensus on this matter.

### **Implementation:**

Strict observance of the Code is fundamental to the activity and reputation of the Richmond, Kingston & West London ME Group. It is essential that all Committee members and volunteers adhere to this Code and understand that such adherence is a condition of the volunteer work they provide; therefore, any violation of the Code of Conduct may be grounds for termination as a volunteer with immediate dismissal for just cause, without notice and independently of any decision made at the most recent AGM.