

Register of interest policy

1. Introduction

The purpose of the register of interest is to ensure that the decision-making of Healthwatch County Durham (HWCD) is publicly accountable. Board members and HWCD employees must complete a register of interest form providing information about membership of other agencies and their interests, and especially any interest that they may have in health and social care services.

The information is compiled into the HWCD register of interest (see below) and made publicly available by publication on the website of HWCD.

2. What is an interest?

The point is not whether Board members or employees think they have an interest to declare, but whether a member of the public would think they have an interest to declare.

In addition to the register there is a separate procedure for making a declaration of interest at Board meetings. Board members are expected to declare any interest at the beginning of Board meetings. If something is discussed during a meeting in which a member may be seen as having an interest, it must also be made known during the meeting.

3. What will be on the register of interest?

The register will include the names of Board members and HWCD employees, their interests and their membership of relevant agencies.

Interest is defined as being of self, partner, family and relatives, in health and/or social care within County Durham, such as:

- Employment
- Volunteering
- Placement
- Business
- Receipt or gift of hospitality with an estimated value of £25 or more
- Other beneficial interest
- Other involvement in agencies and organisations

Membership is defined as being of:

- A voluntary organisation or community group including as Trustee or Director
- Any NHS body, agency or contractor
- Local authority body or contractor
- Independent health or care provider
- Any other agency or group concerned with health and/or social care

4. Sensitive information

If a Board member or HWCD employee considers that information about personal interests is of a sensitive nature, s/he does not need to include it on the public register when registering his or her interest, but it should be discussed with the HWCD Programme Manager.

Information that is of sensitive nature means information that, if available for public inspection, would create or is likely to create a serious risk that the member or a person who lives with them may be subjected to violence or intimidation.

Date approved:

Review Date: