



EXE EAR CARE

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**POLICY TITLE - Confidentiality**

**POLICY NUMBER – 008**

Date authored – 23/09/2024

Next review – 22/09/2025

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## REFERENCE

- A. [Data Protection Act 2018.](#)
- B. [The Care Quality Commission \(CQC\) guidelines](#)
- C. [The Health and Social Care Act 2008](#)
- D. [The Caldicott Principles](#)

## INTRODUCTION

1. At Exe Ear Care, we are committed to ensuring that all personal and sensitive information about our clients is handled with the utmost confidentiality and in compliance with relevant data protection laws, including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.
2. This policy outlines how we handle and protect confidential information in the course of delivering healthcare services to clients in their homes or care homes. All staff, contractors, and associates of Exe Ear Care are required to adhere to this policy to maintain trust and uphold professional standards.

## **SCOPE**

3. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, and any other individuals acting on behalf of Exe Ear Care. It covers all information, whether obtained verbally, in writing, electronically, or by any other means, related to the personal data and health information of our clients.

## **DEFINITION OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

4. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to:
  - a. Personal details (e.g., name, address, date of birth)
  - b. Medical history and health-related information
  - c. Treatment plans and records
  - d. Contact details of family members, carers, and other healthcare professionals
  - e. Any other information that could identify a client or is deemed private and sensitive

## **LEGAL COMPLIANCE**

5. Exe Ear Care is committed to complying with all legal obligations, including:
  - E. The UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018
  - F. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) guidelines
  - G. The Health and Social Care Act 2008
  - H. The Caldicott Principles, particularly in relation to handling patient-identifiable information

## **PRINCIPLES OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

6. **Need-to-Know Basis:** Confidential information shall only be shared with staff who require it to perform their duties. Sharing information must be justified, and only the minimum necessary data should be disclosed.
7. **Client Consent:** Whenever possible, we will obtain explicit consent from clients before sharing their personal or medical information with third parties, such as other healthcare providers, family members, or external agencies. In situations where consent cannot be obtained (e.g., in emergencies), information will only be shared in the client's best interest and in accordance with legal requirements.
8. **Safeguarding:** If we suspect that a client is at risk of harm or neglect, we may need to share information with the appropriate safeguarding authorities, even without the client's consent. However, this will always be done in line with safeguarding protocols and legal obligations.
9. **Secure Handling of Information:** All client information will be stored and transmitted securely. Paper records will be stored in locked files, and electronic data will be password-protected and encrypted where necessary.

10. Confidential Discussions: Discussions about client care should be conducted privately and discreetly, ensuring that no unauthorised individuals can overhear. When delivering care in clients' homes or care homes, staff should ensure that conversations about the client's health and treatment are kept confidential and only shared with the relevant parties.
11. Breach of Confidentiality: Any unauthorised disclosure or mishandling of confidential information is considered a serious breach of this policy and may result in disciplinary action, including potential dismissal. It may also lead to legal consequences.

## **CLIENTS RIGHTS**

12. Clients have the right to:
  - a. Access their personal and medical records in line with data protection laws.
  - b. Request the correction of any inaccurate information held by Exe Ear Care.
  - c. Withdraw consent for the sharing of their information, except where it is required by law or for safeguarding purposes.
  - d. Lodge complaints if they believe their confidentiality has been breached.

## **TRAINING**

13. All Exe Ear Care employees and contractors will receive mandatory confidentiality and data protection training as part of their induction and will be required to attend refresher courses annually. This ensures that all individuals handling sensitive information are fully aware of their responsibilities and the legal frameworks governing confidentiality.

## **REVIEW OF POLICY**

14. This Confidentiality Policy will be reviewed annually or as necessary to ensure it remains compliant with current legislation and best practices.

## **AUTHORITY**

15. This policy was written today the *23rd September 2024* and is enacted with immediate effect. All directors and employees of Exe Ear Care are to follow the guidance and direction within.



**R. J. Toon**

**CEO.**