

## **Board Confidentiality Policy**

### **Introduction**

HCA is committed to openness and accountability. Its policies shall reflect its wish to release all information it holds as far as this is consistent with the protection of individual privacy, the effective management of its business, and relevant legislation.

### **Purpose**

This Confidentiality Policy is intended to provide guidance to Board members and regulate the release or retention of information by Board members.

### **Policy**

Board members shall be authorised to release to any person any material other than confidential material obtained in the course of their service as Board members where such release is in accordance with the requirements of any applicable legislation and where such release is consistent with the organisation's other policies.

### **Procedures**

The Board shall review and approve the confidentiality policy of the organisation as a whole.

The Board shall decide from time to time whether any or all of its agendas, minutes, or papers, or those of its sub-committees (not otherwise required by legislation, regulation, or its rules to be made public) shall be made public. Where no express decision has been recorded the assumption shall be that the material is not confidential.

On those occasions and for those matters that the Board elects not to make public, Board members shall respect the confidentiality of those documents and of any deliberations of the Board on those matters.

If Board members are uncertain as to the confidentiality of any material they must seek advice and/or approval from the Chair or Chief Executive.

In particular, Board members shall not:

- Disclose to any member of the public any confidential information acquired by virtue of their position as a Board member
- Use any confidential information acquired by virtue of their position on the Board for their personal financial or other benefit or for that of any other person
- Disclose to any member of the public any confidential information related to the interests of individuals, groups or organisations acquired by virtue of their position on the Board
- Make statements to the media in the name of the organisation except as specified in the organisation's Media Relations policy, or

- Permit any unauthorised person to inspect or have access to any confidential documents or other information.

The obligation to protect such confidential matters from disclosure continues, even after the Board member is no longer serving on the Board.

The Board shall decide from time to time whether any observers shall be permitted to attend any or all of its meetings, where appropriate, observers may be admitted subject to their undertaking to maintain confidentiality.

Where appropriate, information identifying individuals may be removed by the Chair from material before its consideration by the Board.

### **Responsibility**

It is the responsibility of the Chair to ensure that Board materials are appropriately classified as confidential or open to release.

Policy name:	Board Confidentiality Policy
Type:	Board
Category:	Governance
Responsible Officer(s):	Board chair, board director, chief executive
First issued:	15 June 2009
Last reviewed:	Board ratified 1 May 2017
Next review due:	May 2020
Applicable legislation:	
Related policies:	
Related procedures:	