

Conflicts of Interests policy

All Trustees staff and volunteers of Growing Hope will strive to avoid any conflict of interest between the interests of Growing Hope on the one hand, and personal, professional, and business interests on the other. This includes avoiding actual conflicts of interest as well as the perception of conflicts of interest.

The purpose of this policy is to protect the integrity of the Growing Hope's decision-making process, to enable our stakeholders to have confidence in our integrity, and to protect the integrity and reputation of volunteers, staff and Trustees.

Trustees have a legal duty to act in the best interests of the charity and personal responsibility to declare conflicts of interest.

A conflict of interest is any situation in which a Trustee's personal interests or loyalties could, or could be seen to, prevent the Trustee from making a decision only in the best interests of the charity.

Conflicts of interest relate to a Trustee's personal interests and also the interests of those connected to them.

Examples of conflicts of interest include:

1. A Trustee who is employed by the charity as a lead therapist and clinic manager when there is a decision to be taken on staff pay and or/ conditions.
2. A Trustee who is also a user and there is a decision to be taken changing service provision.
3. A Trustee who is related to a member of staff and there is decision to be taken on staff pay and/or conditions.
4. A Trustee who is also on the Board of another organisation that is competing for the same funding.
5. A Trustee who has shares in a business that may be awarded a contract to do work or provide services for the organisation.

Upon appointment each Trustee will make a full disclosure of personal interests, such as relationships, and posts held, that could potentially result in a conflict of interest with Growing Hope. This will be recorded in writing within the minutes where each trustee is appointed, and in a register of interests.

It is noted that for each local Growing Hope the lead therapist and clinic manager will be a Trustee and will also benefit personally from the charity by working in a paid role clinically. This creates a conflict of interest and the charity's decision to employ them must be legally authorised by the Charity Commission before it can take effect. The lead therapist and clinic manager MUST leave the room for any discussions concerning their employment such as salaries, working conditions, and workload.

In the course of meetings or activities, Trustees will declare any interests in a transaction or decision where there may be a conflict between the charity's best

interests and the Trustee's personal interests or a conflict between the best interests of two organisations that a Trustee is involved with.

After any disclosures:

- A Trustee **who stands to benefit personally from any decision** will withdraw from discussion and decision-making about that item. This will involve leaving the room while it is discussed. Decisions will be made by a quorum of trustees, excluding the individual who has a conflict of interest.
- Where there is a conflict of loyalty and the affected Trustee **does not stand to gain any benefit personally**, the other Trustees will decide what level of participation, if any, is acceptable on the part of the conflicted Trustee,

A decision about the participation of the affected trustee will depend on whether it is a high risk or controversial decision or could significantly affect, or could be seen to significantly affect, the trustee's decision making at the charity. The affected trustee may be allowed to participate where the existence of his or her other interest poses a low risk to decision making in the charity's interests, or is likely to have only an insignificant bearing on his or her approach to an issue.

All decisions and discussions will be recorded in full in the minutes of the Trustees' meeting or in any resolution in writing (including electronic form) which takes place outside a trustee meeting, according to the charity's constitution.

This policy is meant to supplement good judgment, and Trustees, staff and, volunteers should fully consider any potential conflicts. Details of conflicts of interest as outlined in the charities constitution are shown in figure 1.

Conflicts of interest and conflicts of loyalty

A charity trustee must:

- (1) declare the nature and extent of any interest, direct or indirect, which he or she has in a proposed transaction or arrangement with the CIO or in any transaction or arrangement entered into by the CIO which has not previously been declared; and
- (2) absent himself or herself from any discussions of the charity trustees in which it is possible that a conflict of interest will arise between his or her duty to act solely in the interests of the CIO and any personal interest (including but not limited to any financial interest).

Any charity trustee absenting himself or herself from any discussions in accordance with this clause must not vote or be counted as part of the quorum in any decision of the charity trustees on the matter.

Figure 1 conflicts of interest as outlined within Growing Hope's constitution

Date Adopted: **November 2017**

This policy should be read alongside other Growing Hope policies.