

# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK



Mental Health Concern and Insight Healthcare are part of  
**Concern: The mental health and wellbeing group**

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## CONTENTS

<b>1. WELCOME</b> .....	4
1.1 Organisation Background.....	5
1.2 Organisational values .....	6
1.3 Getting the most from your handbook.....	6
1.4 Working arrangements.....	7
• 1.4a Working hours .....	7
• 1.4b Break times.....	7
• 1.4c Timekeeping .....	7
<b>2. OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU</b> .....	8
2.1 Health and safety .....	8
2.2 Equal opportunities .....	8
2.3 Communication .....	9
2.4 Flexible working .....	9
2.5 Career break .....	10
2.6 Leave .....	11
• 2.6a Annual holiday leave.....	11
• 2.6b Special leave .....	11
• 2.6c Maternity, paternity and adoption leave .....	12
2.7 Grievance.....	13
2.8 Attendance management.....	13
• 2.8a Sick Pay.....	14
• 2.8b Notification of sickness absence.....	14
• 2.8c Return to work .....	14
<b>3. OUR EXPECTATIONS OF YOU</b> .....	15
3.1 Confidentiality, data protection and information governance.....	15
3.2 Risk management .....	15
3.3 Disciplinary policy and procedure .....	16
3.4 Capability .....	17
3.5 Internet and social networking .....	19
3.6 Gifts and hospitality.....	19

3.7 Registration/Accreditation requirements .....	19
3.8 Dress code.....	20
<b>4. YOUR DEVELOPMENT .....</b>	<b>21</b>
4.1 Induction .....	21
4.2 Probationary period.....	21
4.3 Training .....	21
4.4 Appraisal .....	22
<b>5. YOUR PAY, REWARD, AND BENEFITS .....</b>	<b>23</b>
5.1 Our approach to reward .....	23
5.2 Pay.....	23
5.3 Benefits .....	23
5.4 Pension .....	23
• 5.4a People’s Pension .....	23
• 5.4b NHS pension .....	24
5.5 Death in service benefit.....	24
5.6 Wellbeing at Work Service .....	24
5.7 Expenses .....	25
5.8 Deductions from your pay .....	25
<b>6. ORGANISATIONAL INTEGRITY .....</b>	<b>26</b>
6.1 Criminal, civil, and professional investigations .....	26
6.2 Right of search.....	26
6.3 Private use of equipment .....	26
6.4 Whistleblowing .....	27
6.5 DBS requirements.....	28
<b>7. LEAVING THE ORGANISATION .....</b>	<b>29</b>
7.1 Notice period.....	29
• 7.1a Notice period – during probation.....	29
• 7.1b Employer’s notice period – post-probation.....	29
• 7.1c Employee’s notice period – post-probation .....	29
7.2 Return of company property.....	30
7.3 Payment of final salary.....	30
7.4 Requesting a reference.....	30
<b>8. USEFUL CONTACTS .....</b>	<b>31</b>

# 1. WELCOME

Welcome to Concern Group. Whether you are new to the organisation, or have been with us for some time, please make time to read this handbook – it sets out information about our people and organisational policies and procedures. It will help you to understand what you can expect from us as your employer, and what we expect from you in return.



Staff engagement is very important to us, as it enables us to develop the policies and practice that meet the needs of both the organisation and its employees.

As an organisation, we understand that enabling and supporting personal and professional development is good for services and staff.

We believe in supporting individuals and teams so that they are skilled, motivated, and can consistently deliver against our organisational values. This will help the organisation to provide services that we can all feel proud of.

We also acknowledge the vital role that good leadership plays in enabling staff to develop professionally and personally. With this in mind, we will support those with lead responsibilities to establish targeted development programmes for their respective staff teams.

More detailed information on our values and policies can be found on our Intranet Site – SharePoint. If you have any questions about the handbook, please ask your line manager.

We look forward to working with you.

**Brendan Hill**  
**Chief Executive**

## 1.1 Organisation Background

**Mental Health Concern (MHC)** and **Insight Healthcare** are part of **Concern Group**.

Our head office is based in the North East of England where, as MHC, we provide a wide range of specialist mental health services and have done so since 1986. Nationally, as Insight Healthcare, we provide a range of primary care mental health services and employee wellbeing programmes. Our services are predominantly commissioned by the NHS and local authorities



Mental Health Concern provides a range of specialist, 24 hour, nurse-led services for people with complex mental health needs, primarily commissioned by the NHS; alongside a range of other community-based projects and services that promote recovery and wellbeing.

- dementia care
- dementia respite
- rehabilitation and recovery
- supported housing
- supportive rehabilitation
- community support
- carer support



Insight Healthcare has been delivering services since 2008 (originally branded as MHCO and rebranded as Insight Healthcare in November 2013). Our reputation for performance and a collaborative approach has led to significant success in securing contracts to provide a range of psychological services throughout the country. We now provide services for, and work with, over 36 Clinical Commissioning Groups.

Insight Healthcare is currently the largest provider of talking therapies in England, and now has extensive experience of delivering NHS-commissioned primary care services, as well as a range of wellbeing at work programmes for employers.

## **1.2 Organisational values**

Our values provide the framework for how our services are provided. They guide us in everything we do and underpin the decisions we make as an organisation.

**“Improving the mental health and wellbeing of the people we serve”**

**We value:**

- **compassion and hopefulness**
- **being open and friendly**
- **inclusivity and fairness**
- **experience and expertise**
- **hard work, creativity and innovation**
- **going the extra mile with people to achieve the right outcomes**

You should be committed to this mission and work together to deliver an excellent service. Concern Group will provide members of staff with the opportunity to develop their skills and talents in order to achieve to the best of their ability. In this way, we can all be part of an organisation that we are proud of.

## **1.3 Getting the most from your handbook**

This is your essential guide to working for Concern Group. It is designed to provide you with information covering key aspects of your employment with us, whether you have just started with us or have been here for a while.

Please read it carefully and keep it safe for easy reference.

Some elements of the handbook form part of your contract of employment. This logo indicates where you should refer to your statement of Main Terms and Conditions of Employment Agreement.



You will also find that a number of sections within this handbook provide summaries of our company policies. You will be able to find a full version of these policies on the intranet. Where staff do not have access to the Intranet, full versions will be made available within a folder on the shared drive.



This logo indicates where organisational policy applies; please click the logo to gain access to the policy. Alternatively they are available by request from the HR Department.

Occasionally it may be necessary for us to change some of the details contained in this handbook to reflect changes in company policy or to comply with new legislation, so it is important that you always refer to the most current and up-to-date policies and handbook. The latest versions will be published on the intranet.

## **1.4 Working arrangements**



### **1.4a Working hours**

Working hours will be explained either at interview stage if requested, be outlined in your contract of employment, or on your first day at work.

### **1.4b Break times**

Break times will be outlined by your line manager. Breaks should be taken during working hours and not at the end or start of the working day.

### **1.4c Timekeeping**

All members of staff are expected to arrive at work in sufficient time to be ready to commence work at the start time agreed by your manager.

Time keeping will be regularly monitored by Concern Group management and any member of staff who is continually late or leaves early may be subject to the Capability procedure.

## 2. OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

### **2.1 Health and safety**

Concern Group recognises that it has a responsibility to ensure that all reasonable precautions are taken to provide and maintain working conditions which are safe, healthy and comply with all statutory requirements and codes of practice.

Concern Group will, so far as is reasonably practicable, pay particular attention to:

- the provision of such information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure the health and safety at work of members of staff and others
- the places of work that are under its control, maintaining them in a safe condition
- the provision of a safe means of access to and from places of work
- the maintenance of a working environment that is safe, without risks to health and provides adequate facilities and arrangements for welfare at work

You have a responsibility to do everything you can to prevent injury to yourself, your fellow members of staff, and others affected by your actions or omissions at work. You are expected to follow Concern Group procedures, in particular, to report any incidents which have led or may lead to injury or damage.

You should ensure that you use any equipment provided in accordance with the training that you have received, inform the Health and Safety Officer about any serious or imminent danger, and also report any shortcomings that you see in the protection arrangements.

### **2.2 Equal opportunities**

Concern Group is an equal opportunities employer and opposes all forms of discrimination on the grounds of any protected characteristic such as age, sex, marriage/civil partnership, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability (including mental health and clinically obese), religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation and pregnancy. Any form of discrimination on these grounds is unlawful and will not be tolerated.



You should be aware of the Equal Opportunities Policy.

The aim of this policy is to:

- eliminate potentially unlawful discriminatory practices
- promote positive measures to prevent discrimination occurring
- set standards of conduct which will enhance Concern Group's image as a progressive employer

## **2.3 Communication**

Concern Group recognises that good communication will improve both organisational and individual performance, and support the decision-making process. Concern Group will work with you to ensure that you:

- have the information you need to do your job
- understand Concern Group's values, priorities and vision
- know how your role can help achieve Concern Group's objectives
- are informed about decisions that affect you and/or your department in a timely manner
- have the opportunity to raise concerns and issues about your job

Concern Group believes that communication should be a two-way process where your views are valued and encouraged.

## **2.4 Flexible working**



Flexible working is offered to further increase work-life balance options. In all cases, consideration should be given to flexible working requests in an attempt to try to accommodate them within the organisation. We will endeavour to facilitate requests unless organisational needs dictate otherwise.

### **Eligibility criteria**

You should have completed 26 weeks continuous service at date of application before becoming eligible to request flexible working. You are permitted to make one application for a flexible working arrangement in a 12 month period.

### **Methods of flexible working**

- **Reduced hours working** – when you are contracted to work for anything less than full-time hours (37.5 hours per week)
- **Job Sharing** – an arrangement where two people are retained on a reduced hour's basis, performing the job normally undertaken by one person working full-time
- **Annualised hours** – working time organised on the basis of the number of hours worked over a year, rather than over a week. Salary is usually paid in equal instalments over the course of the year, regardless of the number of the hours worked in a four week period

- **Compressed hours** – where you work agreed hours over a shorter period, e.g. working your normal hours in fewer numbers of days/shifts. (The length of your working day will, however, be an important factor when making a decision to approve, as the needs of service users and the quality of service provided must come first. Long-hour days are not supported in general)
- **Staggered hours** – allow you to start and finish the working day at different times, e.g. this may mean that your start, finish, and break times are different to that of your colleagues' or standard hours for your shift/ team

## **2.5 Career break**



The Group recognises that some employees may wish or need to take an extended break from work for a variety of personal reasons, during the course of their employment.

Reasons for a career break may include:

- care and/or responsibility for children or other dependents
- personal study, training or development
- travelling or voluntary work

To apply for a career break you must meet the organisation's eligibility criteria as outlined in the policy.

### **Duration and number of career breaks**

A career break will normally be for a minimum of three months and up to a maximum of 12 months.

You may seek to take more than one career break, but there will normally be at least three years between each break and separate approval must be sought on each occasion.

The total period of career breaks during an employee's career should not exceed two years.

## **2.6 Leave**

### **2.6a Annual holiday leave** C

Annual leave entitlements will be stipulated in your contract of employment.

**P** Employees accrue leave on a pro rata basis during their employment (unless stated otherwise) and, under normal circumstances, you are expected to take your full leave entitlement during the leave year (1 April to 31 March).

The leave year is split into four quarters (1 April to 30 June, 1 July to 30 September, 1 October to 31 December and 1 January to 31 March). You are expected to take at least one contractual week as leave per quarter.

You are responsible for ensuring that your manager formally authorises leave before it is taken (under normal circumstances).

Managers are responsible for checking that the amount of leave for their staff is correct and maintaining central records for staff leave.

### **2.6b Special leave** C

**P** Concern Group recognises that you have commitments outside your employment and on occasion may seek leave over and above your normal entitlements. These absences fall into the following broad categories:

- personal and domestic circumstances
- public service activities
- other circumstances

## 2.6c Maternity, paternity and adoption leave

P

Concern Group offer enhanced maternity, paternity and adoption pay for members of staff who are eligible to take the leave.

**Maternity** – All female employees have an entitlement to a period of 26 weeks ordinary maternity leave (OML) and 26 weeks additional maternity leave (AML). An employee must take, as a minimum, 2 (4 in certain cases) weeks compulsory leave starting from the date of the birth.

**Paternity** - Employees who qualify for Ordinary Paternity leave are entitled to take either one or two week's ordinary paternity leave. Odd days may not be taken and if the employee is taking 2 weeks they must be taken together. Leave must be taken based on the employee's usual working pattern.

**Adoption** - Adoption leave is available to all employees who are identified as the primary carer for a child they have been newly matched with who meet the eligibility criteria. Eligible employees are entitled to a total of 52 weeks adoption leave; 26 weeks ordinary adoption leave (OAL) and 26 weeks additional adoption leave (AAL).

Adoption leave may commence from the date of the child's placement or up to two weeks prior, in order to prepare for the arrival of the child.

Further information on qualifying criteria and enhanced entitlements is available in the policy; further advice can be taken from your line manager or HR Department.

## 2.6d Shared parental leave

P

Shared Parental Leave enables eligible parents to choose how to share the care of their child during the first year of birth or adoption. Its purpose is to give parents more flexibility in considering how to best care for, and bond with, their child.

All eligible employees have a statutory right to take Shared Parental Leave. There may also be an entitlement to some Shared Parental Pay. This policy sets out the statutory rights and responsibilities of employees who wish to take statutory Shared Parental Leave (SPL) and statutory Shared Parental Pay (ShPP).

## **2.7 Grievance** **C**



Concern Group recognises the importance of maintaining good working relationships, and it seeks to achieve a working culture in which problems can be discussed and easily resolved at an early stage, by encouraging open and honest communication.

You (and, in some circumstances, former members of staff) have the right to seek individual redress for any grievance that relates to your employment with Concern Group. The grievance procedure will be followed to ensure that grievances are dealt with in a fair, open, and timely manner.

The aim of the procedure is to deal with any grievance at an appropriate level, within a reasonable timescale and to the satisfaction of all those involved.

All complaints made under this procedure will be treated seriously and with discretion.

## **2.8 Attendance management**



Concern Group has an Attendance Management Policy. This policy is intended to achieve a balanced approach to managing sickness absence in relation to the needs of the individual, as well as those of the organisation.

To this end, the organisation will maintain monitoring systems which enable sickness absence to be handled appropriately.

We are committed to dealing sympathetically and sensitively with you if you are permanently or temporarily incapacitated for ill-health reasons.

We accept that whenever sickness absence becomes an issue, there must be a proper investigation of the facts, followed by consultation with you. Investigation and consultation are pre-requisites to ensure that sickness absence is handled in a fair, supportive and efficient manner, whatever its duration or pattern.

We have an obligation to manage attendance levels in order to maximise service provision and minimise costs. We will further explore areas of concern and take appropriate action against the small minority of employees who abuse the sickness absence procedures.

Concern Group recognises its statutory obligations to ensure your health, safety and welfare, so far as is reasonably practicable, including the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA).

## 2.8a Sick Pay



During your probation period you will only be paid statutory sick pay (SSP) for any sickness absence. On completion of your probation period, you will be eligible for the following sickness benefits:

- year one of post-probationary period: one month's full pay and one month's half pay
- year two of post-probationary period: two months' full pay and two months' half pay
- year three of post-probationary period and thereafter: three months' full pay and three months' half pay

These allowances do not affect the employer's right to terminate the employment on the grounds of incapacity due to ill-health within the period of allowance.

## 2.8b Notification of sickness absence



It is your responsibility to notify your manager of your sickness absence and the reasons for it, as soon as practicable. Your manager should notify you of this process. Normally this means no later than 30 minutes after your normal start time on the first day of absence from duty. You should telephone your manager or leave a message with the next most senior member of staff. Texting should be avoided. You should indicate the nature of the incapacity, the date it commenced, and the likely duration. You need to keep your manager informed of any changes and, once known, confirm a return to work date. Contact should be made again, no later than the fourth day of absence.

If you are absent for more than seven days you should update your manager at least weekly thereafter, regarding any changes and potential return to work date.

You must submit a Fit Note to your line manager no later than the tenth calendar day of absence, covering absence from the eighth day, for sickness absence exceeding seven calendar days. Further fit notes will be needed to give continuous cover for the period of absence.

If you fail to comply with the sickness absence notification procedures, then this may affect payment of salary. Furthermore, such failure may be regarded as a breach of contract, which could lead to disciplinary action.

## 2.8c Return to work



The Organisation requires staff to attend a return-to-work interview following periods of sickness absence.

## 3. OUR EXPECTATIONS OF YOU

### **3.1 Confidentiality, data protection and information governance** **C**

Concern Group recognises the need to protect personal data in accordance with the principles of the Data Protection Act and organisational Information Governance Policies. All information derived directly or indirectly during the course of your employment relating to the Organisation or clients must be treated confidentially and must not be discussed or disclosed to any unauthorised person. Any breach of confidentiality will result in disciplinary action by the Organisation, and may result in civil action for damages (by the Organisation or a third party).

You will be made aware of your responsibilities as part of the Information Governance Toolkit. This will include appropriate information security responsibilities in areas such as encryption, home working, and remote access policies. In addition, training will be given on records management and information quality responsibilities. Information Governance and Information Security will form part of your induction training and your job description will outline the particular responsibilities associated with your role.

You must not remove any documents or tangible items which belong to the Organisation, or which contain any confidential information from the Organisation's premises, at any time without proper advance authorisation.

You must return to the Organisation, upon request (or upon the termination of your employment), all documents and tangible items which belong to the Organisation and are in your possession or under your control.

With the implementation of the Access to Health Records Act 1990, clients have the right to access their health records. It is therefore the responsibility of all of the Organisation's employees who are involved in recording client information to ensure that all information relating to client care is recorded sensitively, accurately, and legibly, not only for client safety but also for medico-legal purposes.

As an employee of the Organisation you are bound by the Data Protection Act and you must agree to:

- the Organisation processing personal data and sensitive data during your employment
- comply with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 when handling information concerning the Organisation's employees and clients

### **3.2 Risk management**

As an employee of Concern Group you are required to be risk-aware; readily able to identify risks faced by you and by the Organisation in the course of your day-to-day employment. Where a new risk is identified, it is to be reported through your line manager.

### **3.3 Disciplinary policy and procedure** **C**

#### **Purpose and Scope**

**P**

Concern Group has a disciplinary procedure which is designed to help and encourage you to achieve and maintain standards of conduct.

The aim is to ensure that you are treated fairly and consistently, and to provide a method of dealing with any shortcomings in a way which can help you to become effective again.

Incidents or allegations which may require investigation should be reported to HR to ensure that a response is coordinated. An Investigation Manager (IM) will be appointed by the appropriate Director or Associate Director to investigate the incident or allegation and provide an investigatory report.

The purpose of the investigation is to seek the truth and to provide those conducting disciplinary proceedings with sufficient information upon which to reach a fair and reasonable decision. A decision must be based on the balance of probabilities and does not require a standard of proof which is beyond all reasonable doubt.

Once an investigatory report has been received, the Organisation will determine whether or not a disciplinary hearing should be held.

At the disciplinary hearing you have the right to be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or friend/colleague who is not acting in a legal capacity.

The disciplinary action that can be taken includes the following:

- remedial note
- first written warning
- final written warning
- redeployment /demotion/removal of increments
- dismissal (with or without notice)

Any employee who has been issued a remedial disciplinary sanction of first warning or above may appeal against the decision.

### 3.4 Capability C



The purpose of this policy and associated procedure is to assist you if you are performing below the standard expected, and to improve your performance.

It aims to provide a fair and clearly-defined framework for dealing with all cases of capability, including matters related to competence, capability, and attendance.

We must support, enable, and develop you to ensure that you achieve a high standard of attendance and performance within your role. The policy covers both capability (attendance) and capability (performance).

The policy aims specifically to:

- improve performance and attendance where there are deficiencies
- ensure that you are clearly informed of your role, responsibilities and standards expected
- encourage you to discuss work related issues with your line manager at an early stage
- address performance /attendance issues quickly, in a fair, consistent and supportive manner
- support you to achieve and maintain the required standards
- provide you with clearly defined expectations and to inform you of the link with the performance appraisal process and attendance management policy
- ensure accurate monitoring of performance/attendance to enable timely intervention and action
- ensure a full investigation into all capability matters is undertaken
- provide guidance on reasonable action, should supportive and developmental measures be unsuccessful

If, following informal procedures, insufficient improvement has been made, consideration will be given to commencing formal capability proceedings. Prior to a decision being made, the necessary investigation should be conducted to ensure that all of the relevant information/evidence is considered. Upon completion of the investigation, the evidence will be considered and a decision made as to whether to commence formal capability.

If a decision is made to commence formal capability, you will be invited to a formal capability review meeting.

## **Outcomes of capability review meeting**

- no further action
- extension
- redeployment
- improvement Notice
- first level improvement notice
- second level improvement notice
- final written improvement

At the end of any review period, a meeting should be arranged between you and your manager to discuss your performance/attendance over the timescales stipulated in the improvement plan.

## **Outcomes**

- no further action
- further formal capability action

## **Gross incompetence**

You may be dismissed without prior improvement notices if the act is regarded as gross incompetence.

## **Ill health**

You may be dismissed without prior improvement notices on the grounds of ill health. Where in the circumstances of the case alternative employment is not appropriate, or a suitable post cannot be identified and reasonable adjustments are not practical, or if implemented will not facilitate a return to work; termination on the grounds of ill health may be considered. The decision to recommend termination of contract is not a medical issue, but one to be made by a senior manager in the light of all the information available to them at the time. No decision should be made to terminate a contract without having already sought a medical opinion from OH staff and advice from HR

## **Right of appeal**

If you have been notified of an outcome under the formal capability procedure, you have the right to appeal the outcome imposed.

### **3.5 Internet and social networking** C

You are required to be mindful of the need to maintain the Organisation's integrity when using the internet (particularly social networking sites). This means being polite and courteous towards others and in relation to their work. Breaches of client or Organisation confidentiality may be regarded as gross misconduct.

### **3.6 Gifts and hospitality**



Concern Group has a policy on gifts and hospitality, which covers all gifts and hospitality provided to or received from Group intermediaries, other business contacts, or even service users and their relatives.

You must at all times be cautious about accepting or providing gifts and hospitality which could give grounds for suggestions of any impropriety on your or Concern Group's behalf.

During the course of your work you may be offered gifts and hospitality. Similarly, you may wish to provide gifts or hospitality. We encourage the building of relationships; however, personal relationships with external contacts should remain, and be seen to remain, on a professional footing.

The offer of gifts and gratuities from service users or relatives is more often than not meant as a gesture of kindness and support, and can act as positive acknowledgement to you that they are appreciated. It can, on occasion, create unease, conflict, and tension for you; the Organisation recognises the importance of issues arising from the offer of gifts and gratuities relating to boundaries and safeguarding adults.

As a result of these issues, all offers of gifts or hospitality from service users, their relatives, or from business contacts and contractors, must be notified to your line or location manager.

### **3.7 Registration/Accreditation requirements** C

If you are required to have registration in order to practise, it is a term of your contract that you maintain your registration and that you provide your manager with proof of registration as required. Failure to be registered, or remain registered, or submit evidence of registration may lead to suspension of pay for the period concerned, or to the termination of your contract.

### **3.8 Dress code**



Concern Group considers the way you dress and your appearance to be of significant importance in portraying a caring and professional image to all users of our services, and other people that come into contact with us.

An appropriate dress code is necessary in order to:

- present a smart and professional image that instils service user and public confidence in us
- ensure the health and safety of our service users and staff

Locally, your manager should set their expectations regarding dress code and ensure that this is clearly communicated to you.

As a general principle, you should wear clothing that is clean, safe, and appropriate to your role. Clothing should present you in such a way that does not offend colleagues, visitors, or service users.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that appropriate standards of dress are adhered to at all times in respect of the employees that they manage.

## 4. YOUR DEVELOPMENT

### 4.1 Induction

As part of the performance management process, Concern Group aims to ensure that you receive an induction on joining, and thereafter receive continuous performance reviews from your manager, including an annual performance appraisal.

### 4.2 Probationary period



The first six months of your employment will be probationary. During this time, your notice period will be one week.

Your performance and suitability for continued employment will be reviewed throughout your probationary period. Failure to meet the required standard will result in the termination of your employment. This period can be extended if management deem appropriate. You will remain on probation until you are issued with a letter confirming that your probationary period has been successfully completed and, if not already completed, that all statutory checks have been received and deemed satisfactory.

### 4.3 Training

Concern Group recognises the importance of staff training and will actively encourage you to gain and maintain qualifications that meet the needs of the organisation.

Training and development is grouped in three categories:

- **Statutory:** This training enables the organisation to meet the requirements of development legislation, and helps you to maintain your safety and wellbeing at work.
- **Organisational:** This training develops and maintains the values base which underpins the organisation, supports safe and effective delivery of services, and supports the common culture of services throughout the organisation. This training is generally considered 'essential for continued employment and advancement within the organisation'.
- **Personal and professional development:** This training supports continuous development and lifelong learning. It promotes evidence-based practice and provides opportunities for job enrichment. This training is identified via annual appraisal.

## 4.4 Appraisal



Concern Group supports the appraisal process and expects you to engage with, and benefit from, this process. Effective performance appraisal means that you are more likely to be engaged in your work and be clearer about your objectives and the expectations of the Organisation.

You should have an annual discussion around your current role, which will include performance appraisal and future development needs, with your manager or a delegated senior member of your team.

Concern Group, reviews and appraises performance in a continuous process, but for business effectiveness we operate an annual cycle commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> April, where objectives are set at the beginning and reviewed at the end. Reviewing performance typically has four elements:

- **Regular everyday dialogue:** Everyday discussions between you and your line manager regarding work and development, while often unstructured and not recorded, are important managerial events.
- **Supervision:** Whether 'case/clinical', 'personal' or 'administrative/managerial', it is an opportunity to review your performance.
- **Annual appraisal:** Where performance objectives can be set, reviewed and evaluated. This must include a formal rating of performance and the setting of a Personal Development Plan (PDP).
- **Recorded appraisal reviews:** At least once a year the objectives set at annual appraisal must be formally revisited to allow progress to be established and support needs to be addressed. This is normally referred to as the interim review and will occur mid-way through the appraisal year.

### **Overall rating**

Every employee is rated at the end of the annual review period and is scored 0 to 4 as below.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 0 | Not assessable/not long enough in role/attendance problems |
| 1 | Poor performance/fell well below expected standard         |
| 2 | Average performance/met most but not all standards         |
| 3 | Good performance/met and in some cases exceeded standards  |
| 4 | Excellent performance/consistently exceeded standards      |

### **Links with incremental salary progression**

In order to be considered for an incremental rise, you must achieve at least an overall rating of 3.

However, it is important to note that any incremental progression will also be based on commercial viability and not simply individual performance alone. Therefore achieving an overall rating of 3 or above does not guarantee an incremental rise.

## 5.YOUR PAY, REWARD, AND BENEFITS

### **5.1 Our approach to reward**

The Organisation believes that it is important to appropriately recognise and reward you, as it:

- positively reinforces organisationally-aligned behaviour and performance
- builds staff engagement and job satisfaction
- benefits recruitment and leads to higher retention rates
- encourages staff to develop innovative approaches to work

We have always been mindful of the need to ensure that our pay policies are realistic and, given the likely continued financial constraints in health and social care, our pay and reward strategy will require frequent review.

### **5.2 Pay** **C**

The Organisation has a pay structure which aligns every post to a grade and pay band. All grades and pay bands have a spinal column point range. Please refer to your Contract of Employment for your pay grade/band and spinal column point.

### **5.3 Benefits**

The organisation offers the following salary sacrifice schemes to you.

- car lease scheme
- bike to work scheme
- child care vouchers

### **5.4 Pension** **C**

#### **5.4a People's Pension**

The Concern Group has a personal pension plan arrangement with B&CE Pensions (The People's Pension) and, in accordance with UK law, you will be automatically enrolled into this upon commencement of your employment if you meet the criteria for enrolment. Further details can be obtained from

[www.thepeoplespension.co.uk](http://www.thepeoplespension.co.uk)

## 5.4b NHS pension

The organisation can apply for continued access to the NHS Pension if the following eligibility criteria are met:

- A. You are TUPE'd to us as part of a transfer of service from a statutory NHS employer and you are a current member of the scheme at time of transfer **or**
- B. The post you are filling is deemed to require a nursing qualification (Mental Health Concern has a Directions Order with the NHS Pensions Agency for such posts). You must be employed by Mental Health Concern and you will have been contributing to the NHS Pension Scheme during the last 12 months (you will need to prove this to MHC by showing your last payslip and providing your SD number), then you may be eligible to maintain your access to this contributory pension.

If you are eligible and wish to maintain access to the NHS Pension Scheme, you must complete forms SS10 and SD65 within three months of your start date. Although you should be given a booklet which outlines the details of this scheme, full details are available at the NHS Pensions Agency website [www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk) and for further information contact the HR Department.

## **5.5 Death in service benefit**

You are covered by the organisation's Life Assurance Policy. The Policy provides for a payment of twice your annual salary to your family if you die in service.

## **5.6 Wellbeing at Work Service**

Concern Group recognises that the wellbeing of staff is imperative and, with this in mind, you will be able to access the Wellbeing at Work service. This service offers a free-to-access confidential 24 hour helpline, where you will be able to speak to a qualified counsellor who can provide advice, signposting and support.

Helpline numbers: 0800 0277844 or 0300 5550120.

**More information on employee benefits can be found on our intranet site or the folder on the shared drive.**

## **5.7 Expenses** C

The Organisation will reimburse all reasonable expenses properly incurred by you in the proper performance of your duties, provided that such expenditure has received prior approval by your manager and you provide the Organisation with receipts or other evidence of actual payment of expenses, as may reasonably be required.

## **5.8 Deductions from your pay** C

As a term of your employment, the Organisation has the right to make deductions from your salary because of:

- reimbursement to the Organisation in respect of goods, materials, or products obtained from the Organisation for personal use
- circumstances where there has been, for any reason, an overpayment made to you

When it is intended to make any such deduction, you will be notified in advance and will be invited to make any representations you may wish about the matter, including about the frequency and amount of the deductions, although the Organisation will have discretion as to the amount and timing of such deductions.

## 6. ORGANISATIONAL INTEGRITY

### **6.1 Criminal, civil, and professional investigations** C

If you become the subject of an investigation (criminal or civil), or disciplinary action by a professional body or a secondary employer, you must inform your manager (or designated deputy) immediately. As soon as practicable thereafter, you must confirm these details in writing to the HR Department.

### **6.2 Right of search** C

For the safety and protection of you, Concern Group, and its clients, the Organisation reserves the right to inspect and search any vehicle, parcel, briefcase, handbag, item of clothing, or any other item that you bring onto, or wear, on Company premises. A search will only be conducted when a manager has reason to believe that a crime or potential disciplinary matter has occurred, or is very likely to occur. The search will be conducted by the most senior member of staff on the premises at the time. You have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague during all searches.

### **6.3 Private use of equipment** C

Use of the Organisation's equipment for private purposes (e.g. personal use of telephones, computer equipment, etc.) should be authorised by your manager. Regular use may be viewed by HMRC as a taxable benefit.

## **6.4 Whistleblowing**



Concern Group has a Whistleblowing Policy which actively encourages you to bring information about any wrongdoing to the attention of the organisation. We endeavour to provide a safe environment in which you are encouraged to come forward without fear of ridicule, victimisation, or other negative consequence should you suspect any form of wrongdoing taking place.

The policy assures you that:

- your concerns will be considered seriously
- the need for confidentiality will be respected
- you will be given support
- you will be dealt with in a fair and equitable manner
- you will be kept informed of action that has been taken
- as far as possible, you will be kept informed of the outcome of any investigation

## 6.5 DBS requirements



The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) was established when the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) merged in 2012.

Due to the nature of our work (working with adults at risk), we are entitled by law, and often obliged contractually, to ask you or individuals seeking work in our services to reveal their full criminal history, including spent convictions – also known as asking ‘an exempted question’.

Concern Group will use the information provided on DBS disclosure to help make safe recruitment and employment decisions to ensure that you are suitable for the post.

Every person working, paid or unpaid, within the Organisation is required to complete a DBS application on appointment.

Every person working, paid or unpaid, within the organisation must allow access to their DBS information to the Organisation on request.

### **Disclosure level**

The Organisation will determine the level of DBS check required for every post, reserving the right to change the level of check required at our discretion and in accordance with DBS guidance:

- **DBS Enhanced Disclosure with list check:** The Organisation requires this level of check for every person who spends significant periods of time with adults at risk.
- **DBS Standard Disclosure:** The Organisation requires this level of check for every person in a post that does not require them to spend significant periods of time with adults at risk.

Please refer to your job offer, which will inform you which level of check is required for your post.

## 7. LEAVING THE ORGANISATION

### **7.1 Notice period** **C**

#### **7.1a Notice period – during probation**

During your probationary period, either party may terminate the contract with at least one week's notice.

#### **7.1b Employer's notice period – post-probation**

The minimum period of notice that you are entitled to receive from the organisation to terminate your employment for any reason, other than for gross misconduct or whilst on probation, is one month, except where in due course this is exceeded by the statutory minimum notice period calculated as follows:-

- two-12 years continuous service: one week for every completed year
- over 12 years continuous service: 12 weeks

#### **7.1c Employee's notice period – post-probation**

The length of notice you are required to give to terminate your employment is;

<b>Salary bandings</b>	<b>Minimum notice period</b>
Staff up to CG4, C5 and C7a	four weeks' notice
Staff on C7b to C8b	eight weeks' notice
Staff on CG5 to CG6	eight weeks' notice
Staff on C6 to C&7	eight weeks' notice
Staff on CG7 and above	12 weeks' notice

You are required to give the organisation a reasonable amount of notice, depending on length of service, role, and seniority. The minimum levels above should be applied, however the best interests of clients and/or the service must be considered when deciding notice period. Therefore, these arrangements do not prevent you or the organisation from giving, or agreeing to give, a longer period of notice, or either party waiving rights to notice.

The Organisation may, at its discretion, make a payment in lieu of the appropriate period of notice.

In circumstances of gross misconduct/incompetence, summary dismissal (i.e. dismissal without notice or pay in lieu of notice) may be warranted, which will override your entitlement to notice of termination of employment.

## **7.2 Return of company property** **C**

Upon termination of your employment, and at any other time during the course of your employment, at the request of your manager, you must immediately return to the Organisation all property which belongs to Concern Group or which contains or refers to any confidential information.

Where confidential information is in your possession or control in electronic form, you shall return to the Organisation any equipment containing such information and delete it from any computer or laptop or any other storage device owned or operated by you.

All information, personal and business, held on computerised systems owned by, or used on behalf of, the Organisation (e.g. files, emails and calendars) remain the property of the organisation at all times and shall not be removed or downloaded by you on termination of contract without explicit agreement. Access to work email accounts and calendars will be terminated following your last working day of employment.

## **7.3 Payment of final salary**

Any final payments of salary and expenses will be made to you in the normal way, less any deductions due to the company. Once all final payments have been made, you will be sent your final pay slip and relevant statutory forms such as your P45. Any adjustment for accrued holiday which has not yet been taken, or where you have taken more holiday than you have accrued, will also be made or deducted within your final payment. These holiday days will be paid at your basic pay rate.

## **7.4 Requesting a reference**

We are committed to giving accurate and timely references for past employees and will supply a standard written reference. References will not be given over the telephone. References will only be provided by the HR Department, Buttress House to prospective future employers and not directly to employees.

## 8. USEFUL CONTACTS

### **HR Department**

**Telephone:** 0191 2170377

**Email:** HR@concerngroup.org

### **Insight payroll department**

**Telephone:** 01423 536536

**Email:** Payroll@insighthealthcare.org

### **MHC payroll department**

**Telephone:** 0191 217 0377

**Email:** Payroll@concerngroup.org

### **Staff Wellbeing Service**

**Telephone:** 0800 0277844                      0300 5550120

**Website:** [www.insighthealthcare.org](http://www.insighthealthcare.org)

### **NHS Pensions Agency**

**Telephone:** 0300 3301 346

**Website:** [www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk)

### **The People's Pension**

**Telephone:** 0300 2000 444

**Website:** [www.thepeoplespension.co.uk](http://www.thepeoplespension.co.uk)