

CONFIDENTIALITY AND OPENNESS POLICY

1. Introduction

Real Purpose wishes, as part of its accountability, to act in an open and accountable way in relation to its clients, local communities, local authorities and other interested parties.

As a general rule, information about Real Purpose's work, Board and employees should be available unless there are good reasons to do with confidentiality or practicality why not.

The right to confidentiality of clients and other individuals using our services is equally important and must be respected.

2. Openness

The law requires that certain types of information must be available to members, auditors, the DWP, NHS, clients, other service users and the public. You need to be aware of which information Real Purpose is open about, and act accordingly. If in any doubt, you should refer to the Directors.

Real Purpose operates an open records policy so that clients can see the information we hold about themselves, but not third-party information; requests will be processed within 7 working days.

3. Confidentiality

Our staff, Directors and volunteers need to be aware of which information must be kept confidential. Personal information about Real Purpose's clients, other service users, colleagues or other individuals will be regarded as strictly confidential. Information about such individuals may only be released outside the organisation with the written consent of the individual concerned.

Exceptions to this include where there are risk concerns regarding:

- Harm to clients themselves, or others;
- Clients becoming mentally unwell i.e. relapse;
- Child Protection issues;
- The commission or planning of a significant criminal offence;

Or

- Outside requests for information where there are legal requirements.

Information to be passed outside the organisation can only be done by the Directors. In unusual circumstances, with written permission from a manager, other staff can fulfil this function. Our staff, Directors and volunteers will not use any information obtained in the course of their employment/ placement for personal gain or benefit, nor will they pass it on to others who might use it in such a way.