



BIRMINGHAM LINK CODE OF CONDUCT

This Code of Conduct sets out what you can expect from the LINK and what is expected from you as a Birmingham LINK member.

If the Link Host does not meet your expectations please speak to us about your concerns. Our complaints policy can also be referred to.

Adherence to the 'Public Service Values' (the Nolan Principles) is integral to the membership of the LINK and this Code of Conduct will help to clarify and set out the details of this duty. A condition of membership to the LINK is close adherence to the Code of Conduct. Any breaches of the code could lead to action being brought under the Birmingham LINKs Standards of Conduct Policy.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

I understand that as a member of Birmingham LINK, I will:

- Seek out and listen to the views of patients, carers and the public, especially those individuals and groups whose voices are not usually heard.
- Conduct myself and act in a reasonable way in relation to staff or volunteers or members of the public I work with or meet as a member of the Birmingham LINK.
- Raise issues for consideration by the Birmingham LINK which are based on evidence from patients or the public which demonstrate that this is a matter of wider concern
- Not disclose confidential and sensitive information unless there is a legal duty to do so, for example, in the interest of public safety.
- Ensure that people are aware of who can deal with complaints about personal or individual treatment, such as the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), Independent Complaints and Advocacy Service (ICAS), Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Care Quality Commission.
- Endeavour to attend training and other opportunities to develop my understanding of the Birmingham LINK and health and social care structures.
- Let the LINK know of any changes to my employment or personal circumstances which could affect my membership of the Birmingham LINK.

- Declare any possible conflict of interest, or anything that might be perceived by other people as a conflict of interest, as soon as it arises to the LINK who will keep the Register of Interests updated.
- Comply with relevant legislation including equal opportunities, discrimination, human rights, data protection and freedom of information.
- Not accept gifts of hospitality which could be seen as trying to influence the independence, decisions or activities of the Birmingham LINK.
- Treat all people with respect and behave in a way that does not discriminate against or exclude anyone.

WORKING IN THE LINK

It is likely that your participation in the LINK will vary at different times. You may want to have a permanent membership, interested in everything that the Birmingham LINK undertakes and become part of any working group, or you may only want to be active when particular issues important to your group / organisation arise. You may wish to be kept up to date via newsletter so that you feel informed and involved. It's up to you how and when you get involved.

The following provides an outline of general rules of conduct which may apply depending on your current level of involvement.

I understand that as a member of the Birmingham LINK, I will:

- Be committed to playing an active role in the Birmingham LINK, contributing to meetings and being involved with working groups and other projects.
- Prepare for meetings and events and send apologies when I cannot attend or will be late.
- Listen to and respect the views and experiences of the Birmingham LINK members, and support fellow members to contribute to the work of the LINK.
- Ensure that if I am going to have difficulty undertaking work or meetings associated with the Birmingham LINK that I let the relevant person know as soon as possible.
- Promote and present other relevant views which may not always be the same as my own.

JOINT RESPONSIBILITY

- Not go against the majority view of the Birmingham LINK once a decision has been democratically taken, but I may request that my viewpoint, if it varies from the majority, is recorded in the minutes.

- Only undertake work and carry out visits in line with the action plan and protocols agreed by the Birmingham LINK and only when I have taken part in and passed the necessary training.
- Have the general agreement of the Birmingham LINK before speaking, writing or attending meetings on behalf of the LINK.
- Ensure that when I am representing the Birmingham LINK at a meeting or event, that I am speaking on behalf of the group and not myself
- Feedback to other members of the Birmingham LINK when I attend anything on the LINKs behalf. A 'meeting report' feedback form to be completed within two weeks of attending the activity

I understand that Birmingham LINK will endeavour to provide me with:

- Assistance to undertake my work with the Birmingham LINK.
- Appropriate support and materials to carry out my LINK activities.
- Advice and guidance in dealing with any difficulties I am having and support in situations that are new to me.
- Appropriate re-imburement for the help I need to take a full part in the work of the Birmingham LINK such as interpreter, translations, advocate, carer support and travel.
- An introduction to the Birmingham LINK when I join which may include meeting relevant individuals and organisations. Extracting the right information including annual reports, work plans and minutes of previous meetings.
- Training in areas I have highlighted which will help me in my involvement with the Birmingham LINK.
- Accurate and current information sent in a format (such as email or post) that I have agreed.
- Meetings held at an accessible venue and at an appropriate and convenient time as requested by members of the Birmingham LINK.
- An appropriate level of insurance when taking part in Birmingham LINK activities which are carried out in line with SLS support, guidance and regulations.
- Relevant ID for those members appointed by the LINK working group for the purposes of entering and viewing premises in accordance with the Local Involvement Network Regulations 2008.

GENERAL CONDUCT DURING MEETINGS

- Switch mobile phones off or turn to silent throughout the duration of the meeting.
- Keep in mind the agenda when making contributions and also content and length of contribution.
- Raise points of discussion, questions and remarks, through the Chair so as not to prolong the meeting any more than necessary.
- Show courtesy and respect for others opinions-all members have the right to be heard on matters relevant to the agenda items discussed, members of the Birmingham LINK treating colleagues, staff and visitors with respect.
- Do not use sexist, racist, ageist, homophobic or any other language that may be considered offensive to any group or individual.
- Members to observe time limits for discussions.
- The Chair has the power to curtail discussion as appropriate. A member dominating the discussion may be asked by the Chair to give way to other members wishing to speak.
- No member should complain on behalf of the Birmingham LINK without prior discussion and agreement at a meeting of the LINK working group.
- A binding vote to be taken on issues upon which members disagree. The Chair does not have an individual vote unless it is necessary for the Chair to enter a casting vote in the event of a split decision.
- If the Code of Conduct is breached during a meeting, the Chair / Host has the right to suspend and withdraw support for the meeting.