**Greater Manchester**

**Adult Mental Health Service User Network**

**Code of Conduct and Respect (COCAR) Policy**

**Introduction**

Greater Manchester Adult Mental Health Service User Network (GM AMH SUN) is a Network established by people with lived experience, who are service users and/or carers of service users of mental health services. The network is managed by a COREgroup consisting of a Chair, Vice-Chair and 10 members. The Subgroup will feed into the GM AMH SUN Steering Group of approximately members across the GM Footprint. The network aims to consist of 3 members from each borough of Greater Manchester, who can provide the link within each diverse locality. The network will:

* Provide direction and coordinate the work of the GM SUN through an annual work programme.
* Act as a voice for the GM SUN members who represent their local GM geographical areas.
* Bring together Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership’s (GMHSC) adult mental health professionals and GM SUN members through the Network annual conference and bi monthly group meetings.
* Proactively engage in GMHSC programmes including carrying out Equality Impact Analysis (EIA) of major decisions, projects and programmes that will have an impact on the Greater Manchester population.
* Co-design pathways, standards and polices that will help improve services for those who are in receipt of adult mental health services.
* Support and provide guidance to GMHSC Programme Leads on the development of new and existing adult mental health programmes.

In order to successfully achieve the above, a Code of Conduct and Respect (COCAR) Policy has been created for the GM SUN Steering Group members; the wider GM AMH SUN and professionals. The COCAR Policy outlines the values and behaviours we would expect members to adhere to at all times.

**Why we are having COCAR Policy**

GM SUN is committed to ensuring that service users, carers and members of the public (which includes those that work with and support GM SUN) are to be treated with dignity and respect at all times and no member of the GM SUN should feel excluded or be made to feel unwanted whilst striving to ensure that every member will have their views listened to and treated with respect. We value and welcome the diversity, experience and opinions of all the members in the GM SUN Steering Group and wider network.

Difficult and uncomfortable conversations may at times be on the agenda and this is to be done in a safe and respectful way. GM SUN wants to understand and address the difficulties and barriers that some groups face and welcomes diverse participation for example; individuals who experience mental health inequalities, individuals who are not currently engaging with services (but are eligible for them), and individuals with protected characteristics e.g. race, religion or beliefs, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnerships or gender reassignment.

**Our Principles**

We expect the GM SUN and Steering Group members to follow the 7 principles of public life set out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (the Nolan principles). By agreeing to be a member of the GM SUN and Steering Group, you will agree to follow and act in line with these principles throughout your involvement. The principles are:

* **Selflessness:** members of the GM SUN Steering Group should take decisions solely in terms of the public and service users of mental health interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.
* **Integrity:**  members of GM SUN Steering Group should not place themselves under any financial or other obligations to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.
* **Objectivity:** in carrying out GM SUN business, including making appointments to the Steering Group or on to boards and steering groups, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for awards or benefits; members of the GM SUN Steering group and wider network should make choices on merit.
* **Accountability:**  GM SUN Steering Group members are accountable for their decisions and actions to the wider GM SUN and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate and required.
* **Openness:** GM SUN Steering Group members should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
* **Honesty:** GM SUN Steering Group members and the wider Network will declare any private interests relating to their duties provided to them as a member of the GM SUN and Steering Group.
* **Leadership:** members of the GM SUN and Steering Group members should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

**Our code of conduct**

In order to maintain a friendly, collaborative, and constructive environment where everyone is included and respected members will be expected to adhere to the following code of conduct:

1. **Respect confidentiality** including as outlined in this Code of Conduct and policy and as directed by the Chair at meetings and also respecting any other member’s stated wish for information they share not to be shared more widely.

This Code of Conduct expects every member to always treat information about other members who you have contact with as confidential and only share confidential information with the Chair (when and if needed). Your involvement with the network may be at stake if confidential information is misused.

1. **Value equality, diversity and inclusion** – including supporting the fair, equal and respectful inclusion of all members regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.
2. **Contribute constructively** –including taking an active part in discussions and keeping comments within the scope of the published agenda (so far as is reasonable).
3. **Listen to others’ opinions and allow everyone to contribute** –including encouraging contributions from members who may find it more difficult to make their voices heard.
4. **Act with honesty and integrity** – including disclosing any potential conflicts of interest.

We recognise that those who are involved in the GM SUN Steering Group and wider Network may at times have changes to their mental or physical health, or their caring role and personal life which could impact involvement in the steering group. We advise that if this happens the Chair is informed as soon as is reasonably possible.

**Complaints**

The complaint and grievance process applies to all the GM SUN Steering Group members and members of the wider Network, members of the public and professionals who attend our events and meetings. Any concerns, grievance or complaints should be raised with the supporting Independent Facilitator in the first instance. The procedure that will follow is demonstrated below:

* In the first instance, the Independent Facilitator will intend to resolve the complaint through discussions with the parties involved, which will be facilitated by the Facilitator
* If the complaint cannot be resolved through discussion, the complainant should put their complaint in writing to the Independent Facilitator, who will then establish a complaints group (within two weeks of receiving the written complaint) to look into investigating the complaint.
* A brief report will be written for the Chair and Vice Chair with conclusions and recommendations for the Steering Group to be implemented. The Independent Facilitator will hold a meeting with the complainant and feedback on the findings of the investigation of the panel.
* The Chair and Vice Chair will take responsibility for ensuring (if any) lessons are learned and the policy amended if needed. The lessons learned will be shared at the steering group.

**Please note:**

Should any member witness or experience an upsetting or distressing incident, it is important to take time with the Chair and Vice Chair to debrief or to attend one of the ‘safe spaces’ that are set up at events and meetings.

Should you witness any incidents involving abuse or harm please speak to the Chair and Vice Chair as a matter of urgency.

Members should be mindful of their own mental health needs and practice self-care to keep themselves safe. Should you experience difficulties during your involvement with the network steering group, you should speak to the Chair and Vice Chair in confidence. Whilst the network or steering group cannot act in a therapeutic capacity, nor is it intended to replace services you are currently using, you will be treated with dignity and every effort will be made to signpost you to the support that you need.

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the code of conduct and respect policy:

Signed: ………………………………………………………………………………..

Name (please print): ……………………………………………………………

Date: ……………………………………………………………………………………