

Neami National Code of Ethics

This code applies to all staff and Associate Staff (including students). Each reference to staff in this document refers to both staff and associate staff.

An ethical and safe environment relies upon each staff member taking responsibility for their professional behaviour and in turn staff can expect Neami National Management and Board to lead by example in promoting and complying with the Code.

1. Commitment to Social Justice

Neami is committed to the following principles with and on behalf of people experiencing mental illness and/or homelessness

- **Equity** a fairer distribution of economic resources and power
- **Access** ensuring fair and equal access to services that are important for quality of life
- **Participation** maximising the opportunities to participate in the circumstances which affect a person's life and their personal development
- **Rights** to advocate for and promote rights regarding a person's civil, social, economic and political rights

All staff and students will work towards achieving the above principles for those with a mental illness and homelessness in our community and particularly those experiencing additional forms of disadvantage through low income, ethnic background and gender

2. Confidentiality and privacy

- Staff and students will respect the confidentiality of information obtained in the course of their role with Neami
- Staff and students will not share confidences revealed by consumers without the consumers consent except in circumstances of compelling moral, ethical or safety concerns
- Staff and students shall respect and uphold any confidences disclosed in the course of any meeting as agreed by the participants of that meeting
- Staff and students must fully inform consumers about the limits of "confidentiality" in any given situation and explain the purpose for which consumer information will be obtained and how it will be used
- Consumers will be given access to their file on request to the relevant manager
- Consumers will be supported to access their file either by the staff member working with them or, if that person is no longer available, a support person will be appointed by the manager

- Staff and students have a responsibility to ensure that any third party information contained in a consumer file will not be given to or be viewed by the consumer
- In situations where there may be “Duty of Care” concerns around a consumer viewing their information this must be referred to the relevant manager
- “Need to Know” principles apply within the workplace and information regarding a Neami consumer will only be made available, in writing or verbally, to staff who have a “need to know” and is of benefit to the consumer

3. Professional conduct

- Staff and students will perform their duties in the spirit of the Code of Ethics and act in a manner that facilitates consumers to access resources, services and opportunities that contribute to their wellbeing and recovery
- Staff and students will make every effort to ensure that consumers give informed consent for their participation when addressing social and personal issues
- Staff and students may share personal information, including experiences of recovery, where this information is reasonably believed to be of benefit to the intended audience e.g. consumers, colleagues or other organisations
- Staff and students will be mindful at all times of issues related to “Conflict of Interest” and avoid any actions or situations that could be perceived as such

4. Relationship with employing organisation

- Staff and students are required to act in a manner that reflects the values, aims and objectives of Neami
- Staff and students are expected to perform their duties in a competent manner and in accordance with all legislative requirements, funding obligations and all Neami policies and procedures
- Staff and students personal beliefs or values that are contrary to the values, aims and objectives of Neami must not be practiced or exercised by the staff in the course of their duties
- Staff and students must not publicly engage in any activity/affiliation that reflects negatively upon Neami’s reputation and would be perceived as being in contradiction to the Neami Code of Ethics.

5. Consumer self-empowerment

- Staff and students will support and actively encourage consumers to exercise their right to self-determination and to advocate on their own behalf
- Staff and students will provide consumers with accurate and up-to-date information on possible services and support options available for them to access, and will not knowingly withhold such information
- Staff and students will, as much as is possible, inform consumers of their rights regarding access to services and supports, the possible implications of engaging with services or supports, and if needed the process for the lodging of complaints either internally or to an external body

6. Expected behaviour of Neami National staff

Staff and students are required to agree to, and comply with, the following behaviors

- Treat colleagues and consumers with respect, courtesy, compassion, sensitively and fairly.
- Endeavour to always deal with events or situations on their merits, deleting and ignoring the irrelevant and only considering the information that is important to the circumstance
- Be committed to team building principles
- Access and use Neami resources in an efficient, economical, ethical and environmentally appropriate manner
- Be aware of and abide by Neami's 10 Green Standards.
- Will be conscious of actively avoiding situations when there may be a "conflict of interest" and if necessary take action to resolve any possible conflicts that may arise between private benefit and their responsibilities as a Neami staff member.
- Staff will not accept or give gifts in the workplace if there is any possibility that the giving or receiving of the gift could be perceived as a conflict of interest. Neami however accepts that the giving or receiving of a gift is acceptable in some social, cultural or ceremonial circumstances.
- Report immediately any suspected fraudulent, corrupt, criminal or unethical behaviours to their manager.
- When attending for duty staff will not present under the influence or be affected by drugs and/or alcohol.
- Be aware of and sensitive to the needs of people living with a disability, social disadvantage associated with language issues, low income, sexual preference, gender, cultural difference and/or learning difficulties
- Be able to sensitively and effectively communicate with consumers, particularly those under stress, to ensure positive ongoing relationships between Neami and consumers
- Follow lawful directions given by their manager and adhere to all Neami policy and procedure
- Represent Neami publicly and to other agencies in a manner that reflects positively on the organisation and supports ongoing constructive relationships

7. Staff financial and legal conduct

- All Staff and Students are required to act in a lawful matter and comply with all legal or regulatory requirements, and funding/contract obligations related to the course of their duties as an employee of Neami
- Additionally all staff must inform Neami of any convictions or charges incurred prior to employment with Neami, and any conviction and/or charges that occur whilst employed with Neami

All staff and students have particular responsibilities in relation to ethical practice around the financial and legal affairs of consumers and carers

Neami staff and students must not:

- attempt to influence, in a workers or students favour, the disposition of a consumer's Will or that of a relative of a consumer

- witness a consumer's Will or the Will of a consumer's relative
- accept any financial or legal responsibility for a consumer such as:
 - operating a bank account
 - accepting power of attorney
 - being appointed an executor of a consumer's or relative of a consumer's estate
 - signing credit or bank account cards
 - offer specific investment advice to consumers
- offer to buy or acquire anything a consumer owns unless the transaction is approved, in advance, by the manager
- Expect or ask for gifts or any personal material gain from a consumer and / or a carer in return for and / or appreciation of assistance provided
- Staff must immediately inform their manager of any unsolicited gift of a value in excess of \$10.00. The Chief Executive Officer reserves the right to direct the staff to return the gift or where appropriate to authorise the staff to keep the gift