



The Care Provider Alliance

Working together for excellence and sustainability in social care

Seven principles for the engagement of individual providers on behalf of the wider independent and voluntary adult social care sector

Health and social care services can be improved when people who use services, providers and commissioners work well together. The national associations that make up the Care Provider Alliance (CPA) offer system partners and stakeholders key points of contact to inform, co-produce and – sometimes – constructively challenge policy and practice developments.

The work of the sector's infrastructure can be complemented with the expertise of professionals and providers who work in the sector, whether in the independent or voluntary sectors. In these cases, any conflict of interest that may arise from those acting as sector representatives should be identified and recorded, but need not necessarily preclude full sector engagement and leadership.

The CPA believes the benefits of meaningful involvement of professionals and providers will, in most cases, significantly outweigh any conflict when any such conflicts are managed in a clear and transparent way. In this way, any potential conflicts should not inhibit local authorities, NHS bodies or other statutory partners from engaging actively with professionals and providers from across the independent and voluntary care sector.

The CPA has developed this paper setting out its principles for the engagement of professionals and providers to better support engagement between the independent and voluntary care sector, statutory agencies and system partners. The CPA would like to see organisations committing to working collaboratively to these principles, which are set out in the first two columns of the table below. These principles are based closely on the widely recognised “Seven Principles of Public Life” of which, for ease of reference, the generally recognised descriptions¹ are given in the right-hand column of the table below.



Characteristic	What this means for Adult Social Care (ASC) providers representing the wider sector	For reference, what this means for holders of public office
Selflessness	ASC provider representatives should act solely in the interests of the wider sector and of the people supported by adult social care services.	Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
Integrity	ASC provider representatives should not act, or put forward views, or use information they see in their role as a representative, in order to gain financial or business benefits for themselves or their company, or for related individuals or companies. They must declare any interests and relationships, for example if a discussion about future services could affect their business or organisation in a positive or negative way. They should be willing to withdraw from a discussion if a direct and formal conflict of interest should arise.	Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
Objectivity	ASC provider representatives must act and put forward views fairly and on merit, using the best available evidence and without discrimination or bias.	Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
Accountability	ASC provider representatives are accountable to the wider sector for their actions and for the representations they make. They should be willing to explain their views and representations if reasonably asked to do so.	Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness	ASC provider representatives should act and make representations in an open and transparent manner. They should be clear about whether they are expressing a personal view, or one that has come from a more formal representative process. They should expect that, unless there is a specific reason for a matter to be confidential, any actions they take or representations they make may be shared with the wider sector. They should seek ways to report back to the wider sector.	Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
Honesty	ASC provider representatives should be truthful.	Holders of public office should be truthful.
Leadership	ASC provider representatives should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.	Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

The members of the Care Provider Alliance are:

- Associated Retirement Community Operators
- Association for Real Change
- Association of Mental Health Providers
- Care England
- National Care Association
- National Care Forum
- Registered Nursing Home Association
- Shared Lives Plus
- United Kingdom Homecare Association
- Voluntary Organisations Disability Group

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life--2> .