



# Candidate Handbook Sensible Locums

Welcome to Sensible Locums Ltd. This handbook provides you with details of the relationship that exists between Sensible Locums Ltd and you as a temporary worker. You will find included statements, policies and procedures that are relevant to your work placements and will detail what is expected of you.

This document is not intended to replace the internal policies and procedures in place within the hospitals or other clients that you are assigned to. We feel that a clear understanding of responsibilities will lead to a successful and safe working relationship.

**Sensible Locums**  
Castle House,  
21 Station Road,  
New Barnet, Herts,  
EN5 1PL

Tel: 020 8364 9911  
Fax: 020 8364 9966  
[sensible@sensiblelocums.com](mailto:sensible@sensiblelocums.com)

## Induction

As well as briefing you on general issues and procedures, we will provide you with Induction Training covering:

- 1) Moving and Handling
- 2) Health and Safety
- 3) Fire Procedures
- 4) Risk Incident Reporting
- 5) Lone Worker Training
- 6) Handling of Violence and Aggression
- 7) The Caldicott Protocols
- 8) Complaints Handling
- 9) Food Hygiene (for relevant professions e.g. Occupational Therapists)

## Mandatory Training & CPD (Continuing Professional Development)

It is important that you keep your skills and knowledge up to date. Therefore you are required to take part in regular learning activities and CPD. Sensible Locums Ltd will assist you both practically and financially during your time with us. CPD activities include the purchase of relevant books, attending courses and conferences or subscriptions to journals.

You must complete mandatory training on an annual basis. This includes training on moving and handling, Health and Safety, CPR and other subjects. We regularly organise courses, please contact your consultant for details of available dates. You can also attend courses run by your current assignment's Manual Handling and CPR training departments. You can also source your own training courses and use the CPD allowance to fund it.

## Risk Incident Reporting

Under the Management of Health and Safety Regulations of 1992 you have a legal duty of care to report all accidents, incidents and near misses. These regulations impose a duty on employers to perform risk assessments on all work activities. If during the course of your work you identify a risk to the health, safety or welfare of your own personal safety, and/or that of your colleagues/patients/clients, you have a duty to report this. In the first instance it should be reported to the person in charge of the department to which you are assigned, and to Sensible Locums Ltd. You will then be instructed if further action is required i.e. to complete an incident report form.

## Lone Workers Information

Lone workers are those workers who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. Lone working is not governed by any specific legislation but a wide range of legislation may apply depending on the nature of the work involved. In all instances the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations of 1992 will apply.

Generally, within the healthcare industry, lone workers can be regarded as those who work on a mobile basis such as community/district nurses, domiciliary homecare workers etc, or those personnel who work outside of normal hours e.g. Domestic, porters, security etc In all cases where a worker is expected to work alone a risk assessment should be performed by the employer and steps taken to reduce risk to the lowest practicable level.

**The risk assessment should address:**

- 1) Whether the work can be performed safely by a single person
- 2) What arrangements are required to ensure the lone worker is at no more risk than employees working together.

If for any reason you consider yourself to be at risk working in a "lone worker" situation please contact your recruitment consultant immediately so that a further risk assessment can be performed and arrangements can be made to ensure safe systems of work and your personal safety.

## Violence and Aggression

It has been recognised for some time that workers in a hospital setting work within an environment where there is potential for threat, aggression or violence.

**Violence and aggression can be defined as including the following circumstances:**

- 1) Minor assaults including situations where physical contact and/or injuries occur which require first aid treatment
- 2) Threats with an offensive weapon without physical injury
- 3) Aggravated assault resulting in injury requiring medical assistance
- 4) Threatening behavior which could include verbal abuse or threats, and fear arising from damage to the physical environment
- 5) Assault resulting in serious injury and/or death

Any violent, abusive or threatening behavior is unacceptable. You must report any incident immediately to the person in charge and also to Sensible Locums Ltd. The establishment where you are working the assignment will have policies for dealing with such incidents, and an incident report form should be completed both at the place of work and by Sensible Locums Ltd. Remember, all staff members have an obligation under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to have regard for their own health, safety and welfare at work, and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

## The Caldicott Protocols

The Caldicott review was commissioned due to the development of information technology and its capacity to disseminate information about patients/service users both rapidly and extensively.

An essential component of the clinical consultation in the provision of health care is confidentiality. All healthcare workers have stringent requirements with regard to confidentiality of patients within their care. However information given about patients underpins the efficient operation of the NHS, and it is important that confidentiality does not impede upon the provision of effective patient care. Therefore the Caldicott review devised protocols and recommendations, which assume the appointment of a Caldicott Guardian who is created to safeguard and govern the users of patient information within NHS organisations. Caldicott guardians are senior health professionals.

You are required to familiarise yourself with the local policy on confidentiality within the establishment/NHS Trust where you have been placed on assignment.

## Complaint Handling

From time to time it may be the case that you receive a complaint from a client, patient or other person. If you are on an assignment, please report any complaints to a senior person in the department you are working and document all details of the complaint. You must also report the complaint to Sensible Locums Ltd. Sensible Locums Ltd operates a complaints policy which is available in the downloads section of our web site.

If you personally are the subject of a complaint you will also be asked to record details as part of an investigation and in some circumstances it may be necessary to suspend you from duty whilst the investigation is in process. Any complaints of misconduct against individuals will be reported to the HPC, RPSGB or other relevant Registration Body.

## Fitness to Practice & Immunisations

It is important for your own health and of those in your care that you are fit to practice whenever you attend an assignment. You must declare your fitness to practice or otherwise when you accept an assignment. You **MUST** advise Sensible Locums Ltd if you are or if you become pregnant. If you are concerned that your assignment involves unnecessary risks to your health or fitness, or that of your unborn child, please do not hesitate to contact us. If you are pregnant we are required to perform a health and risk assessment for all expectant mothers.

**You are required to keep the following immunisations up to date:**

- 1) Hepatitis B
- 2) Varicella (Chicken Pox)
- 3) Rubella (German Measles)
- 4) Tuberculosis
- 5) Diphtheria
- 6) Hepatitis C
- 7) Tetanus
- 8) Polio

Any boosters or new vaccinations should be recorded on your Immunisation Record. You need to disclose details on your application form and fax or post proof of vaccination to us. Documented proof is required for Hepatitis B, Varicella, Rubella, and Tuberculosis. Without proof of immunisation we will be unable to offer you assignments.

## MRSA

Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) is the name given to a range of strains of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. MRSA exists on the hands or in the nose of around one third of the healthy population and is usually harmless. It can however prove fatal if it enters the bloodstream of an already weakened patient.

It is usually transmitted by touch. The single most effective measure for preventing MRSA contamination is washing hands before and after every patient contact.

**In addition, please:**

- 1) Use liquid soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub when washing hands – make sure it comes into contact with all areas
- 2) Remove wrist and preferably hand jewellery at the beginning of each shift where you will be regularly decontaminating your hands
- 3) Wear disposable gloves and aprons when attending to dressings or dealing with blood and body fluids (sterile gloves should only be worn when performing aseptic techniques)
- 4) Dispose of gloves and aprons after use
- 5) Cover cuts or breaks in your skin or those of patients/clients with waterproof dressings

If you come into contact with a patient who is later found to be contaminated with MRSA, it may be necessary to attend screening sessions at the hospital's Occupational Health Department. During this time and before you have been declared clear from MRSA, we may be restricted in the assignments we can offer you due to the risks of infection.

## AIDS/ HIV

You should be aware of and abide by the requirements of HSC 1998/ 226 "Guidance on the Management of AIDS/ HIV Infected Health Care Workers and Patient Notification"

- 1) If you believe you may have been exposed to HIV infection in any way you should seek medical advice from your GP or Occupational Health Department and, where appropriate,

undergo diagnostic HIV antibody testing.

- 2) If you are found to be infected, you must again seek guidance from your GP or Occupational Health Department
- 3) If you are found to be HIV positive and perform or assist with invasive surgical procedures you must stop this immediately and seek advice from your GP or Occupational Health Department regarding what action, if any, should be taken
- 4) Please be aware that it is the obligation of all health workers to notify their employer and, where appropriate, the relevant professional regulatory body, if they are aware of HIV positive individuals who have not heeded advice to modify their working practice.

Please note the above guidance does not supersede current Department of Health Guidelines (in particular HSC 1998/226) or local practices and procedures.

## Medicals

Because of the importance of your fitness to practice, we reserve the right to request a certificate of fitness to practice from your GP or an Occupational Health Service. Our clients may also ask that you undergo a medical examination before commencing work for them. In these cases, future placements may be dependent upon your compliance with this request and its outcome, providing it was made with good reason.

## Criminal Convictions

It is the policy of Sensible Locums Ltd to obtain a Criminal Record Disclosure (CRB) or a Disclosure Scotland (DS) for our Locums, particularly those working in Paediatrics and in the Community. Recent disclosures from previous employers may be acceptable. Please be aware that our clients may insist we inform them in writing of any criminal convictions you may have before accepting you for an assignment – we will only provide this information with your consent. Sensible Locums Ltd cannot be held responsible should clients decline your services following refusal to comply with this request or disclosure of a criminal conviction. Our own response to criminal record information will depend upon its nature and seriousness.

## PAY AND BENEFITS

### Timesheets

Timesheets run from Monday to Sunday. Please submit your timesheet to us for each week worked. We run our main payroll on Wednesday and therefore we require your timesheet before this although deadlines may change around Bank Holidays. Payments are made directly into your bank/ building society/ Limited Company accounts by BACS (Please make sure we have the correct details). It is your responsibility to ensure your timesheet is legible, completed correctly and has been authorised and signed by your manager- payment may be delayed if this is not the case.

### Holiday Pay (PAYE members)

As a PAYE member you start accruing holiday pay as soon as you begin work through us and can request this from your Consultant at any time. Holiday entitlement is twenty days per annum for full time workers, apportioned pro rata for part time workers. The holiday year ends 31st December – please be sure to arrange holiday in advance of this date.

## ASSIGNMENTS

### Timekeeping

Please make every effort to ensure you arrive at and leave all bookings at the agreed time, confirmed in your booking confirmation. If, for any reason, you are unable to attend a booking you should contact your consultant as soon as possible.

## Requirements for Assignments

Please attend all bookings with your current Sensible Locums Ltd ID badge, ABC Proof of your immunisations (HEP B, Varicella, Rubella and TB) as well as your HPC certificate, and CRB disclosure form. Mobile phones, unless working in the Community, should be switched off for the duration of your assignment.

The uniform requirements of our clients differ and will be stated prior to the assignment. If in any doubt on what to wear seek advice from your consultant.

## Arriving for Work

**On arrival at a new booking, please take the opportunity to familiarise yourself with the local policies and procedures. In particular, please be aware of the following, where relevant:**

- 1) Crash Call Procedure
- 2) Hot Spot Mechanisms
- 3) Violent Episode Policy
- 4) Procedure for Alerting Security Staff
- 5) Policy for Administration & Assistance with Drugs
- 6) Complaints handling

Where possible, we encourage Members to visit their potential workplace prior to starting work. If you have any queries regarding correct local procedures, or are uncomfortable carrying out any of the duties you have been asked to perform, please raise these issues with your consultant in the first instance.

## Notice Period

When possible you should advise Sensible Locums Ltd of when your assignment is coming to an end, allowing us time to organise your next assignment if necessary. Notice periods are stated in our terms and conditions, however we ask you to give as much notice as possible.

## YOUR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

### Training

**Please keep up to date with all relevant clinical guidance as well as attending to your CPD requirements. In particular, you must have annual training in:**

- 1) Fire Safety
- 2) Health & Safety
- 3) Moving & Handling
- 4) COSHH
- 5) RIDDOR

Please ensure your Training Record is kept up to date at all times by bringing it into or sending to our office, together with proof of training completed, after any new course. We will review training completed at the time of your appraisal.

## Appraisals

Appraisals give us an opportunity to consider with you your performance at work and will be completed periodically. They are also an opportunity for you to raise any concerns or issues you may have.

Appraisals are carried out based on feedback received from clients and cover the following areas:

## OUR POLICIES

You will find our Health and Safety and Equal Opportunities policies on the downloads section of our website [www.sensiblelocums.com](http://www.sensiblelocums.com). Below you will find further information on policies and procedures. These policies and procedures are not intended to replace any policies or

procedures issued by any of our clients or organisation on which you may be placed on assignment.

## Code of Conduct

**Sensible Locums Ltd expects all Members to act in a professional manner at all times. We particularly ask you to pay special attention to:**

- 1) Punctuality
- 2) Standards of Dress and Courtesy
- 3) Quality of Care and Clinical Procedures
- 4) Consideration and Respect for patients, colleagues and managers
- 5) Confidentiality and Integrity

You are responsible for your own actions when completing assignments, co-operating with colleagues and managers for the care of patients and clients. You should comply with all reasonable requests, using your professional judgement at all times.

If you have any questions about your work, please try to resolve these locally at first or seek advice from your Consultant.

You should not smoke at work or attend work under the influence of alcohol or any illicit substances

## Medication Policy

Temporary Locums are only allowed to administer medication without the authority of a senior permanent NHS manager. This is very hard to manage.

**It is the policy of ABC agency that NO TEMPORARY WORKER IS AUTHORISED TO ADMINISTER MEDICATION.**

## Equal Opportunities

**ABC Agency seeks to offer equality to all our Members and will treat any allegations of discrimination with the utmost seriousness. In accordance with these principles Members may not discriminate on the grounds of:**

- 1) Race
- 2) Ethnic Origin
- 3) Nationality
- 4) Colour
- 5) Religion or Belief
- 6) Gender
- 7) Sexual Orientation
- 8) Marital Status
- 9) Disability

## Health and Safety

Under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, it is your duty to:

- 1) Take reasonable care for the health and safety at work of yourself and any other people who might be affected by your acts or omissions
- 2) Co-operate with your employer and others to enable them to comply with statutory duties and requirements
- 3) Not intentionally or recklessly misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare

## The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1992 further requires you to:

- 1) Use any equipment, etc, provided in the interests of safety
- 2) Follow health & safety instructions
- 3) Report anything you consider to be a serious danger
- 4) Report any shortcomings in the protection arrangements for health & safety

When on assignment, it is the client's responsibility to familiarise you with their own Health & Safety policy and procedures, and with locations of fire escapes, first aid contact person etc. At a client's request in writing, Sensible Locums Ltd will undertake to train Members to be supplied in standard workstation safety. We cannot, however, be held responsible for the suitability of workstations used by our clients. If you express concern over the Health & Safety arrangements of your employing client, we will ask the client to investigate and, if possible, to make improvements.

If you refuse to work for a client on Health & Safety grounds, we will attempt to find you other employment without prejudice.

## Record Keeping

Good records are essential to safe and effective patient care and should be:

- 1) Clear, legible and indelible
- 2) Factual and accurate
- 3) Written as soon after the event as possible
- 4) Signed, timed and dated

Records should:

- 1) Be written with the involvement of the patient, client or their carers where possible
- 2) Be written in terms the patient or client can understand
- 3) Be consecutive
- 4) Identify problems that have arisen and action taken to rectify them
- 5) Show care planned, decisions made, care delivered and information shared

Please be aware that full records are essential should any questions be raised about the care and standards of care delivered.

For more detailed information, please see the HPC or relevant professional membership bodies' guidelines.

## Confidentiality

Any patient information obtained by you during the course of your duties is confidential and should not be disclosed to any third party if it is not legitimately in connection with their treatment or any other official investigation.

Please take care with patient records when on assignment to ensure that they are not in undue danger of being accessed by unauthorized individuals.

Patients'/clients' information should only normally be shared with their consent – you should make sure patients/clients understand that their information may be shared with various members of the team providing care. It is a patient's/client's decision what information should be shared with their family or others.

Where a patient/client is considered incapable of giving consent, please consult relevant colleagues. Where a patient/client has withheld consent, disclosures of information may only be made if:

- 1) They can be justified in the public interest (normally where the disclosure is essential to protect the patient/client or someone else from risk of significant harm).
- 2) They are required by law or court order

You should act in accordance with local and national policies if there is an issue of child protection.

## Data Protection

In addition to the above, you should adhere to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

In brief, anyone processing personal data must comply with the eight enforceable principles of good practice.

Data must be:

- 1) Fairly and lawfully processed
- 2) Processed for limited purposes
- 3) Adequate, relevant and not excessive
- 4) Accurate
- 5) Not kept for longer than necessary
- 6) Processed in accordance with the data subject's rights
- 7) Secure
- 8) Not transferred to countries without adequate protection

For further information, please see:

[www.dataprotection.gov.uk](http://www.dataprotection.gov.uk), from which the above guidance is reproduced.

## Computer Use

Where our clients grant you access to their computer systems, these must only be used as authorised and not to gain access to any other data or programs. In general, please ensure that you:

- 1) Keep any passwords safe
- 2) Keep to the client's policies and procedures
- 3) Log off immediately after use

Specifically, you must:

- 1) Observe any local policies and procedures regarding passwords, floppy disks, CD ROMs and data storage/transfer
- 2) Not load or introduce any programs onto the computer
- 3) Not access any information service or bulletin board including the Internet without specific prior authority from your line manager
- 4) Not download any files or connect to any network or other computer equipment without prior authority as above

## Consent

In accordance with HPC and relevant professional membership bodies, you must obtain the consent of a patient before giving any treatment or care.

Consent must be:

- 1) Given by a legally competent person
- 2) Given voluntarily
- 3) Informed

Patients/clients are assumed to be legally competent (that is they can understand and retain treatment information and use it to make an informed choice) unless otherwise assessed by a suitably qualified practitioner.

The exception to this rule is in the case of an emergency where a treatment is necessary to preserve life and the patient/client is unable to give consent. In all cases, you must be able to demonstrate you are acting in the patient's best interests.

If a patient/client is no longer legally competent, decisions should be based on previous consent/non-consent in a similar situation (providing there is no reason to believe they have changed their mind) or their known wishes. Otherwise, treatment should be in their best interests.

In the case of children (those aged under 16 in England and Wales), the involvement of those with parental responsibility is usually necessary – you should be aware of legislation and local protocol.

It is not usually acceptable to seek consent for a procedure, that you will not be performing yourself unless you have been specifically trained for that area of practice.

All discussions and decisions relating to consent should be

documented in the patient's/ client's records. Where consent is withheld, you should follow the policy in force at your assignment location.

### Caring for Patients in their Own Homes

Please see below for general guidelines relating to assignments carried out in an individual's private home. For further detailed information please refer to the HPC or relevant professional membership bodies' guidelines.

#### General Conduct

- 1) Clients and their families should at all times be treated with dignity and respect and due consideration should be taken of their religion, culture and any other preferences
- 2) Clients should be addressed using their preferred name
- 3) Care and support should be offered in the least intrusive manner possible
- 4) The independence of clients should be supported and encouraged where possible through appropriate communication about, and involvement in, their own care. This independence should only be curbed where it is in the client's best interests and the reasons recorded

#### Attending and Leaving a Home Visit

- 1) You should announce your identity clearly on arrival and not enter a client's home without invitation
- 2) Upon arrival at a home visit, you should check whether your client has any specific needs for this visit
- 3) Please take full care securing a client's home when leaving including, where appropriate, doors and windows and the safeguarding of keys

### Carrying out Assignments

- 1) Medication should be kept in a safe place, known and accessible to the client, or to relatives and other carers where appropriate
- 2) You should not make use of a client's property (including, for example, their telephone) without their express permission
- 3) You should report any accident or emergency situations as soon as possible to the relevant authorities and to your Consultant
- 4) All visits, incidents, observations, care and, where relevant, financial transactions should be logged on records kept securely in the client's home
- 5) Records are kept for one month, or until the assignment is over, and are made available to the client, their relatives and representatives
- 6) If you are unable to attend any specific appointment, please notify not only us but also your client and line manager

### Allegations of Abuse

Sensible Locums Ltd will take seriously any allegations of abuse by staff working through us. If we receive complaints of this sort against you, we may not be able to assign you whilst a full investigation is performed.

Ultimately, if allegations are well founded, we may not be able to offer you work in the future. Where allegations are sufficiently serious, we may need to report you to the HPC/relevant professional body and/or the police depending on the allegation.

Appeals against any decisions made by our staff in these matters can be made to the Director of Sensible Locums Ltd, whose decision will be final.

Should you in the course of duty suspect that abuse is taking place you should inform your line manager immediately. In the case of caring for service users in their own homes, you must report any suspicions of allegations of abuse immediately to the business manager of your ABC Agency Branch. There are strict guidelines to be followed in reporting abuse under the Department of Health guidance "No Secrets" and a full report will need to be made prior to investigation.

### There are many different forms of abuse:

- 1) Physical, including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanction
- 2) Sexual, including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.
- 3) Psychological, including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks
- 4) Financial or material abuse, including theft, fraud, exploitation, and pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits
- 5) Neglect or acts of omission, including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating
- 6) Discriminatory abuse, including racist or sexist abuse or that based on a person's disability and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment

### Whistleblowing

Sensible Locums Ltd operates a "Whistleblowing policy", which encourages a culture of openness within our organisation and aims to prevent malpractice. With the introduction of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 all workers now have legal protection from any form of retribution, victimisation or detriment as a result of publicly disclosing certain serious allegations of malpractice. The policy will apply in cases where a staff member genuinely and in good faith believes that one of the following sets of circumstances is occurring, has occurred or may occur within their line of duty:

- 1) A criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed
- 2) A person has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which he or she is subject
- 3) A miscarriage of justice has occurred is occurring or is likely to occur
- 4) The health and safety of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered
- 5) The environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged
- 6) Information tending to show any matter falling within any one of the preceding paragraphs has been, is being or is likely to be deliberately concealed

Anyone who wishes to raise or discuss any issues which might fall into the above categories he/she should contact their consultant in the first instance who will treat the matter in confidence. It is likely that a further investigation will be necessary and he/she may be required to attend a disciplinary or investigative hearing as a witness.

Where the concern involves the member of Sensible Locums Ltd own staff then the concern should be raised with a Sensible Locums Ltd Director. All complaints will be viewed seriously and treated confidentially. Everyone should be aware that if any disclosure is made in bad faith (for example, in order to cause disruption within the organisation), or concerns information which you do not substantially believe is true, or indeed if the disclosure is made for personal gain, then such a disclosure may constitute gross misconduct for which summary dismissal is the sanction.