



# **CLINICAL PASSENGER/OBSERVER POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

## **DOCUMENT INFORMATION**

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## Contents

DOCUMENT INFORMATION .....	2
1. Introduction .....	4
2. Scope.....	4
3. Equality Statement.....	4
4. Aim.....	5
5. Roles and Responsibilities.....	5
5.1 Trust Board.....	5
5.2 Chief Executive.....	5
5.3 Executive Director .....	6
5.4 Director of Patient Care and Service Transformation .....	6
5.5 Chief Operating Officer .....	6
5.6 Managers and Supervisors .....	6
5.7 All staff .....	7
5.8. Scheduling Department.....	8
5.9 Clinical Passengers/Observers.....	8
5.10 Duties of Education and Training Department .....	9
5.11 Risk Team.....	9
6. Definitions.....	9
7. Criteria for Clinical Passenger/Observer shifts/placement for Trust employees (outside their usual working area).....	10
8. Suitable and sufficient risk assessment on Clinical Passengers/Observers .....	13
9. Health and Safety.....	13
10. Management.....	14
11. Training.....	14
12. Equality and Diversity.....	14
13. Monitoring.....	14
14. Consultation and Review .....	15
15. Implementation (including raising awareness) .....	15
16. References .....	15
17. Associated documentation.....	15
Appendix 1: Review Table .....	16
Appendix 2: Confidentiality Agreement .....	16
Appendix 3: Ambulance Clinical Passenger/Observer Application Form.....	16
Appendix 4: Ambulance Clinical Passenger/Observer Briefings.....	16
Appendix 5: Clinical Passenger/Observer Placement Agreement Form.....	16
Appendix 6: Code of Conduct.....	16
Appendix 7: Trust's Generic Risk Assessment Form.....	16
Appendix 8: Responsibility Matrix – Policies, Procedures and Strategies .....	16
Appendix 9: Equality Impact Assessment Form Section One – Screening .....	17
Appendix 10: Equality Impact Assessment Form Section Two – Full Assessment.....	17
Appendix 11: Ratification Checklist .....	17

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 This policy has been designed by South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (hereinafter referred to as the Trust) to manage both external and internal ad hoc observer placement requests falling outside of agreed contractual placement obligations. The Trust frequently receives requests for Clinical Passengers/Observers to accompany ambulance staff to experience their unique working environment. This has been facilitated and accepted as good practice as a means of increasing awareness of the difficult and demanding role of the modern ambulance service. However, it has now become necessary to review this practice for the following reasons:

- The increase in requests and escalation of demand for placements
- The risk to Clinical Passengers/Observers when conveyed in the Trust's vehicles, particularly in emergency situations
- The legislative duties upon the Trust, particularly in regard to ensuring the health and safety of Clinical Passengers/Observers as per the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The duty of care placed upon the Trust by allowing such practices
- Moral, ethical and confidential considerations.

1.2 Patient confidentiality, Clinical Passenger/Observer health and safety and staff welfare and well-being have been taken into account during the development of this policy.

## **2. Scope**

2.1 This policy applies to all departments within the Trust and all SCAS staff and non-SCAS personnel over the age of 18 who make a request to become a Clinical Passenger/Observer at the Trust, this includes any requests for ad-hoc shifts and placements and any initial training and/or on-going development.

## **3. Equality Statement**

3.1 The Trust is committed to promoting positive measures that eliminate all forms of unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of age, marriage and civil partnership, disability, race, gender, religion/belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and pregnancy/maternity or any other basis not justified by law or relevant to the requirements of the post. The Trust will therefore take every possible step to ensure that this procedure is applied fairly to all employees regardless of the afore mentioned protected characteristics, whether full or part time or employed under a permanent or a fixed term contract or any other irrelevant factor.

3.2 By committing to a policy encouraging equality of opportunity and diversity, the Trust values differences between members of the community and within its existing workforce, and actively seeks to benefit from their differing skills, knowledge, and experiences in order to provide an exemplary healthcare service. The Trust is committed

to promoting equality and diversity best practice both within the workforce and in any other area where it has influence.

3.3 Where there are barriers to understanding; for example, an employee has difficulty in reading or writing, or where English is not their first language, additional support will be put in place wherever necessary to ensure that the process to be followed is understood and that the employee is not disadvantaged at any stage in the procedure. Further information on the support available can be sought from the HR Department.

## **4. Aim**

4.1 The aim of this policy is to set out the arrangements, processes and management of SCAS employees and non-employees of the Trust applying and being accepted to become a Clinical Passenger/Observer.

4.2 The objectives of the policy are to ensure that the Trust has clear and defined arrangements for:

- the application process to become a Clinical Passenger/Observer, including the process for approving applications
- the placing of a Clinical Passenger/Observer on a placement; and the review of this placement
- ensuring that the placement is time specific
- ensuring that the learning needs of Clinical Passengers/Observers is achieved
- the management and control of risks to Clinical Passengers/Observers
- the carrying out of risk assessments on the placements of Clinical Passengers/Observers
- the regular review of these risk assessments.

## **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **5.1 Trust Board**

5.1.1 The Trust Board will ensure that there suitable and sufficient arrangements and adequate resources for the application process and management of Clinical Passengers/Observers at the Trust; and also for ensuring the health and safety of Clinical Passengers/Observers whilst they are on placement at the Trust.

### **5.2 Chief Executive**

5.2.1 The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for:

- the effective implementation of this policy within the Trust and for ensuring that there are suitable and sufficient arrangements for the application process and management of Clinical Passengers/Observers at the Trust
- ensuring the allocation of enough resources to maintain efficient and effective health and safety arrangements to ensure the health and safety of Clinical Passengers/Observers

- ensuring that policies are reviewed to secure compliance with existing legislation and any changes to this legislation.

### **5.3 Executive Director**

5.3.1 Executive Directors are responsible for the effective implementation of this policy within their directorates and for ensuring that there are adequate resources available to fulfil the requirements of this policy.

### **5.4 Director of Patient Care and Service Transformation**

5.4.1 The Director of Patient Care and Service Transformation is directly accountable to the Chief Executive and will advise and assist the Trust Board in fulfilling its duties under the relevant statutory legislation. In particular, the Director of Patient Care and Service Transformation is responsible for:

- ensuring that workplace health, safety and welfare procedures are constantly reviewed
- ensuring that there are arrangements for liaising with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
- ensuring that the Trust Board are kept abreast of relevant new legislation and guidance in order to ensure on-going compliance with the law.

### **5.5 Chief Operating Officer**

5.5.1 The Chief Operating Officer has direct responsibility for implementing the policy including:

- coordinating and ensuring the implementation and continued development of risk management in relation to Clinical Passengers/Observers within the Operational environment
- identifying and interpreting new legislation and Government guidance in to relation Governance, Health and Safety and Risk with regard to Clinical Passengers/Observers
- advising the Chief Executive, Directors and Board on matters of risk in relation to Clinical Passengers/Observers
- coordinating and obtaining assurances from each of the Executive Directors in relation to risk management and controls with regard to Clinical Passengers/Observers
- receiving and monitoring all risk and adverse incident reports about Clinical Passengers/Observers, via the Health, Safety and Risk Group and using this information to identify any trends and to produce statistical data for the Trust Board in order to provide a satisfactory resolution.

### **5.6 Managers and Supervisors**

5.6.1 The responsibilities of Managers and Supervisors (including Clinical Operations Managers, Team Leaders, Clinical Mentors) are:

- to attend any training to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities outlined in this policy

- to bring this policy to the attention of their staff and ensure that this policy is implemented effectively within their area of responsibility
- to carry out or arrange for the carrying out of suitable and sufficient risk assessments on the placements of the Clinical Passenger/Observer within their area of responsibility; and any revisions to these assessments using the Trust's generic risk assessment form in Appendix 7
- to make arrangements to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that all identified controls and further controls identified by the assessment and any subsequent reviews are put into place
- to inform the Clinical Passenger/Observer of the hazards and risks associated with their placement and the control measures, including any safe systems of work, put in place to protect them; and how to avoid such problems and what they should do if problems occur
- where applicable and appropriate, to supervise the work of the Clinical Passenger/Observer within their area of responsibility to ensure their health and safety and that they abide by any safe systems of work or safe operating procedures
- to encourage their staff and any Clinical Passengers/Observers within their area of responsibility to report all incidents connected to their placement using the Trust's Incident reporting system, Datix
- to arrange for the investigation of any matters/reported incidents involving Clinical Passengers/Observer within their area of responsibility
- to contact and confirm the placement with the Scheduling Department
- to brief the Clinical Passengers/Observers with regards to their behaviour, code of conduct, health and safety, procedures, patient confidentiality and privacy; and insurance liability prior to the commencement of their shifts
- to complete and sign the relevant sections of the forms in Appendices 2, 3 and 5 (Confidentiality Agreement and Ambulance Clinical Passenger/Observer application form and Clinical Passenger/Observer Placement Agreement Form respectively)
- where applicable and appropriate, to inform the Clinical Passenger/Observer of the information in the Ambulance Clinical Passenger/Observer Briefing outlined in Appendix 4.

## **5.7 All staff**

### **5.7.1 The responsibilities of staff are:**

- to make themselves fully aware of the policy and to abide by it
- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and any other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work
- to co-operate with the Trust in relation to the completion of any risk assessments done in relation to the placement of a Clinical Passenger/Observer
- to report any incidents in relation to Clinical Passengers/Observers using the Trust's incident reporting system, Datix
- where applicable, to supervise the Clinical Passengers/Observers whilst they are on placement.

## **5.8. Scheduling Department**

5.8.1 The responsibilities of the Scheduling Department are:

- to receive and process applications and requests from staff and non-staff to become Clinical Passengers/Observers
- to authorise placements
- to send a Clinical Passenger/Observer Placement Agreement Form in appendix 5 to successful applicants; and advise them of the start time and agreed date of the placement/shift/plan, this will be done not less than a fortnight before the date of the placement
- to manage the process of Clinical Passenger/Observer shifts and ensure that all relevant personnel are kept informed interested parties informed
- to ensure that all appropriate forms are fully completed and held securely in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- to produce and maintain an up-to-date record of Clinical Passengers/Observers
- to ensure that the personal details of the Clinical Passengers/Observers are kept on file in a secure place and, in the case of an emergency, made available
- to inform successful internal Trust applicants of this policy and to provide a copy of this policy to successful external applicants.

## **5.9 Clinical Passengers/Observers**

5.9.1 The responsibilities of Observers/Clinical Passengers are:

- to make a written request to the Scheduling Department to become a Clinical Passenger/Observer
- to complete the relevant sections and sign the documentation in appendices 2, 3 and 5 (Confidentiality agreement and Ambulance Clinical Passenger/Observer application form and Clinical Passenger/Observer Placement Agreement Form respectively) and return them to the Scheduling Department so that they can process the request as appropriate
- to disclose any health issues that could affect the health and well-being of staff, patients and the public they could come into contact with
- to provide, prior to the commencement of the placement, some means to verify their identity such as a University identity card, or a valid passport or a photocard driving licence
- to provide written support from a recognised Health care manager or course lead who will confirm the clinical need and clinical skills for the Clinical Passenger/Observer shift and their current job role and course of study
- to take all reasonable steps to ensure their own and other's safety who may be affected by their acts or omissions
- if they are a non-employee of SCAS, to inform whoever is supervising them whilst they are on placement of any incidents that occur during their

placement so that their Supervisor can report the incident on the Trust's Incident reporting system, Datix

- whilst on placement, to ensure if they are required to perform any clinical treatment, they do so within their accredited clinical skills. They **must** practice in a manner which would be accepted by their regulatory body
- to ensure that whilst they are on placement and where appropriate, they wear any personal protective equipment provided to them
- to ensure that, whilst they are on placement and where applicable, they comply with the Trust's Uniform policy
- to wear, where applicable, Trust uniform and if this is not applicable then suitable clothing and footwear must be worn
- to ensure that whilst they are on placement abide by:
  - The confidentiality agreement outlined in appendix 2
  - The requirements of the Ambulance Clinical Passenger/Observer application form in appendix 3
  - The Code of conduct outlined in appendix 6.
- To provide, upon request, an evaluation of their Clinical Passenger/Observer shifts with the Trust (so that the Trust can ensure that best practise is being followed and educational requirements are being met).

5.9.2 If the Clinical Passenger/Observer fails to follow the instructions they are given then the placement will be terminated immediately and the Clinical Passenger/Observer will be asked to leave the SCAS premises/vehicles immediately at a safe place – there will be no requirement or expectation to take the Clinical Passenger/Observer back to the location where they commenced their observational shift.

## **5.10 Duties of Education and Training Department**

5.10.1 The Education and Training Department will authorise an honorary contract for any placement of four weeks or more for non-employees.

## **5.11 Risk Team**

5.11.1 The Risk Team will, upon request, assist with the carrying out of risk assessments on Clinical Passengers/Observers on placement at the Trust.

## **6. Definitions**

**Ad-hoc observer shift** is a request for a 1 day observer shift.

**Placement** – any request covering a period of time, over and above 1 shift that sits outside of the Trust's contractual obligations as a defined placement provider.

**Clinical Passenger/Observer** is a SCAS employee and/or non-SCAS personnel who undertakes an ad hoc observer shift and/or a placement within the Trust.

## **7. Criteria for Clinical Passenger/Observer shifts/placement for Trust employees (outside their usual working area)**

7.0.1 This section may apply to staff employed in the following areas; Clinical Coordination Centre, non-emergency Patient Transport Service, Student Paramedics, Community Responders, Corporate staff, Military, other Emergency Service personnel & Fire Corresponders (although this list is non-exhaustive).

7.0.2 Clinical Passengers/Observers will demonstrate clear development outcomes to their respective line managers. This may be highlighted within Trust Appraisals. The following resources are identified as possible placement/observer areas:

- Emergency and Urgent Ambulance
- Solo Response Vehicles
- Specialist Paramedic Teams
- Non-emergency Patient Transport Ambulance
- Clinical Co-ordination Centre (CCC)
- Hazardous Area Response Team (HART).

The above list is **not** exhaustive and observer/placement requests may be declined at any time due to the current demands on the Trust and capacity.

### **7.1 Criteria for Clinical Passengers/Observers – Non Trust employees**

7.1.1 Clinical Passengers/Observers undertaking a defined placement will demonstrate a clear development outcome to their line managers. The following resources are identified as possible placement/observer areas:

- Emergency and Urgent Ambulance
- Solo Response Vehicles
- Specialist Paramedic Teams
- Non-emergency Patient Transport Ambulance
- Clinical Co-ordination Centre (CCC)
- Hazardous Area Response Team (HART).

7.1.2 Clinical Passenger/Observer or Placement requests will be considered providing they fit into the following criteria:

- You are on a recognised clinical course of study whereby an observer shift is a requirement of the course.
- You are a registered Nurse / GP / Doctor / Military / Medic or other healthcare professional requiring a one-off shift, to further advance your career/development.

7.1.3 Clinical Passengers/Observers will always be supervised by predetermined and appropriate Trust Employee.

7.1.4 The following are **NOT** valid reasons to apply for an observer shift:

- To obtain work experience from a school or college
- To gain experience of a shift in order to help with a University application / healthcare course
- Currently working within a healthcare setting, although in a non-clinical role
- Working in a clinical role within a healthcare setting but not on a recognised clinical programme of study which requires a Clinical Passenger/Observer shift and not requesting a shift to advance their career/development
- Applications under 18 years of age.

The above list is **not** exhaustive and observer/placement requests are handled on a case by case basis and may be declined at any time due to the current demands on the Trust and capacity.

## **7.2 Application process**

7.2.1 Clinical Passenger/Observer and placement requests must be made in writing to the Scheduling Department.

7.2.2 The person making the application for a Clinical Passenger/Observer placement must complete and sign the documentation in Appendices 2, 3 & 5 and submit to the following for initial authorisation:

- Section 5 - Line Manager or Clinical Operations Manager or Head of Operations
- Section 6 - Line Manager or Planning Manager
- Written confirmation from a recognised healthcare manager or Course Lead to confirm the clinical need for a shift and to confirm the Clinical Passenger/Observer's current job role/course of study.

7.2.3 The Trust reserves the right to make or withdraw final authorisation of the placement without providing a reason.

7.2.4 The following must be considered before authorisation is given:

- Reasons for the placement
- Benefits to the Trust
- Benefits to the observer
- Part of a recognised Course of Study
- Number of times applicant has requested placement
- Time extensions may be allowed in exceptional circumstances.

7.2.5 All applications will then be sent to the Scheduling Department for placement authorisation.

7.2.6 The Scheduling Department will send the Clinical Passenger/Observer Placement Agreement form (Appendix 5) to the applicant with the start time and date agreed not less than two weeks before the date of placement.

7.2.7 Signed copies of the completed documents in Appendices 2, 3 and 5 will be returned by Applicants to the Scheduling Department who will process the request as appropriate.

7.2.8 Applicants must submit the relevant signed forms (Appendices 2, 3 and 5) not less than four weeks before the proposed placement/observer shift and applications completed and authorised within 2 weeks, where possible.

7.2.9 Each placement period should be no longer than is necessary to achieve the learning outcomes.

7.2.10 Any external placement greater than 1 shift will need to be authorised by the Trust's High Education Team and will be subject to a different process and requirements that sit outside of this policy.

### **7.3 Trust process**

7.3.1 The Scheduling Department will produce an up to date record of Clinical Passengers/Observers and ensure appropriate forms are fully completed and logged, as appropriate.

7.3.2 Every Clinical Passenger/Observer will be briefed prior to their placement either by the Area Manager, Team Leader, Clinical Mentor or appropriate supervisor with regard to:

- Required and expected Behaviours
- Code of Conduct
- Health & Safety procedures
- Patient confidentiality and privacy
- Insurance liability
- Follow reasonable instruction from the supervising member of staff.

7.3.3 Failure to adhere to the above will result in the termination of the placement.

7.3.4 A copy of the Clinical Passengers/Observer's personal details will be kept on file in accordance with GDPR legislation and in the case of an emergency will be made available 24/7 to authorised Trust employees.

### **7.4 Termination of the Clinical Passengers/Observer's placement**

7.4.1 The Clinical Passengers/Observer's placement can be terminated for the following reasons:

- Breach of Code of Conduct
- Inappropriate behaviour
- Breach of confidentiality
- Breach of Health and Safety
- Failure to follow a reasonable instruction from a supervising member of staff.

## **8. Suitable and sufficient risk assessment on Clinical Passengers/Observers**

8.1 Wherever a Clinical Passenger/Observer is given a placement with the Trust it should be supported by the carrying out of a suitable and sufficient risk assessment using the Trust's generic risk assessment form, see appendix 7.

8.2 The assessment should identify hazards and the existing controls in place (if any) to protect the Clinical Passenger/Observer at work from those hazards and from this evaluate the level of risk. The level of risk should be reduced to the lowest level so far as is reasonably practicable. Therefore, it may be necessary to introduce further measures to manage and control the risks effectively. The significant hazards, risks and controls should be recorded on the risk assessment form.

8.3 When carrying out and reviewing the suitable and sufficient risk assessment the possible inexperience and lack of awareness of the health and safety risks that the Clinical Passengers/Observers may have, must be considered.

8.4 The risk assessment should be reviewed periodically to check and ensure that all of the controls that are in place are working effectively.

8.5 The risk assessment should be reviewed and revised following any significant changes to any aspect of the risk assessment. For instance, if there is a change in working practices or changes in work equipment. All revisions and changes to the risk assessment should be recorded.

## **9. Health and Safety**

9.1 By completing Appendix 3 a Clinical Passenger/Observer is agreeing to the Trust's Health and safety requirements.

9.2 Clinical Passengers/Observers with the South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SCAS) have a legal and moral responsibility to take all reasonable steps to ensure both their own and others' safety. The Trust has definitive policy and procedures that must be followed.

9.3 All necessary personal protective equipment will be provided and any other items required to protect the health and safety of the clinical passenger/observer.

9.4 Appropriate appearance/footwear and clothing should be worn which is in line with a professional ambulance service, and its internal policies. Therefore, all Clinical

Passengers/Observers should be made aware of SCAS Uniform Policy, complying where reasonable and appropriate.

9.5 The Trust accepts no liability for injury, loss or damage caused by failure to follow the defined procedures or directions given by Trust personnel.

## **10. Management**

10.1 The Clinical Passenger/Observer shall, at all times whilst on placement, follow any reasonable direction given by SCAS employees. At no time should a Clinical Passenger/Observer be left in a situation where they are solely alone with the patient.

10.2 Failure to follow these instructions will lead to immediate termination of the placement and the Clinical Passenger/Observer will be asked to leave SCAS premises/vehicles immediately.

10.3 If a Clinical Passengers/Observers is required to perform any clinical treatment, they do so within their accredited clinical skills. They **must** practice in a manner which would be accepted by their regulator body.

10.4 No additional remuneration will be provided by the Trust for completion of a clinical passenger/observer placement.

10.5 An appropriate form of photographic Identity document such as a University Identity card, passport or driving licence will need to be seen by at the commencement of the shift to confirm the observer's identity.

10.6 In the event that the Clinical Passenger/Observer is not identified on the daily control sheet or station log, the Team Leader/Clinical Mentor or appropriate Trust employee should confirm the placement arrangement with the Scheduling Department. Failure to obtain the appropriate authorisation will terminate the placement.

10.7 Any person requesting a placement has a duty to disclose any health issues that may compromise their suitability to attend placement, or the well-being of the patients, public and/or staff.

## **11. Training**

11.1 The Trust will ensure that all individuals who become a Clinical Passenger/Observer will receive the necessary information, instruction and supervision to ensure their health and safety.

## **12. Equality and Diversity**

12.1 An equality and diversity impact assessment has been carried out on this policy and can be found at Appendix 9.

## **13. Monitoring**

13.1 The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored regularly.

#### **14. Consultation and Review**

A consultation exercise on the policy will be carried out with the relevant stakeholders and will be reviewed every three years or sooner if there are any relevant changes to legislation or best practice.

#### **15. Implementation (including raising awareness)**

15.1 The policy will be implemented and communicated to managers and staff within the Trust via the weekly newsletter, *Staff Matters*.

15.2 Emails will also be sent to senior managers and area managers asking them to bring the existence of the policy to their staff.

#### **16. References**

- Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 (Amended 1999)
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013
- Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 1992 (Amended 2002)
- Workplace, (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

#### **17. Associated documentation**

- Health and safety policy and procedures
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) policy
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) policy
- Risk Management Strategy
- Adverse Incident Reporting and Investigation Policy
- Driving and Care of Trust Vehicles Policy
- Infection Prevention, Control & Decontamination Policy & Procedures
- Waste Management Policy
- Security Policy
- Information Governance Policy
- Data Protection Policy.

## **Appendix 1: Review Table**

- This policy is regularly reviewed and updated with information in line with relevant national guidance and legislation.
- A full 'Review Table of Contents' is available on request.

## **Appendix 2: Confidentiality Agreement**

Many of our policies have an 'Internal staff form' attached that is relevant to the document. The 'Confidentiality Agreement' form is included with this policy but for security and accessibility reasons it is only available on our [Staff Intranet](#).

## **Appendix 3: Ambulance Clinical Passenger/Observer Application Form**

Many of our policies have an 'Internal staff form' attached that is relevant to the document. The 'Ambulance Clinical Passenger/Observer Application' form is included with this policy but for security and accessibility reasons it is only available on our [Staff Intranet](#).

## **Appendix 4: Ambulance Clinical Passenger/Observer Briefings**

Many of our policies have an 'Internal staff form' attached that is relevant to the document. The 'Ambulance Clinical Passenger/Observer Briefings' form is included with this policy but for security and accessibility reasons it is only available on our [Staff Intranet](#).

## **Appendix 5: Clinical Passenger/Observer Placement Agreement Form**

Many of our policies have an 'Internal staff form' attached that is relevant to the document. The 'Clinical Passenger/Observer Placement Agreement' form is included with this policy but for security and accessibility reasons it is only available on our [Staff Intranet](#).

## **Appendix 6: Code of Conduct**

Many of our policies have an 'Internal staff form' attached that is relevant to the document. The 'Code of Conduct' guide is included with this policy but for security and accessibility reasons it is only available on our [Staff Intranet](#).

## **Appendix 7: Trust's Generic Risk Assessment Form**

Many of our policies have an 'Internal staff form' attached that is relevant to the document. The 'Trust's Generic Risk Assessment' form is included with this policy but for security and accessibility reasons it is only available on our [Staff Intranet](#).

## **Appendix 8: Responsibility Matrix – Policies, Procedures and Strategies**

A full responsibility matrix for this policy is available on request.

### **Appendix 9: Equality Impact Assessment Form Section One – Screening**

A full Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy and is available on request to the public and internally via our [Staff Intranet](#).

### **Appendix 10: Equality Impact Assessment Form Section Two – Full Assessment**

A full Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy and is available on request to the public and internally via our [Staff Intranet](#).

### **Appendix 11: Ratification Checklist**

A Ratification Checklist for this policy is available on request.