Connecting Care Acceptable Use Policy

1 Assurance Statement

1.1 This policy describes the acceptable use of Connecting Care and the responsibilities of its users.

1.2 Organisations that are signatories to the Connecting Care Data Sharing Agreement ("the signatories") will ensure that users of Connecting Care are sufficiently informed of the policy requirements to be able to comply with the policy. All updates to the policy will be communicated to existing users.

2 Scope of Policy

2.1 Each signatory to the Connecting Care Data Sharing Agreement must have their own policy, or set of policies, that include the acceptable use of their Information Technology assets, email, internet, network and systems/applications/software use. These policies should align to the relevant national standards set out by the Data Security and Protection Toolkit or equivalent national standards.

2.2 This policy is supplementary to the policy/policies of the signatories and covers only the use of Connecting Care.

3 Prohibited Use

3.1 Staff must only access and/or use information in Connecting Care that they are authorised to access and solely for the purposes established within the Connecting Care Data Sharing Agreement; to provide safe and effective care to individuals or to safeguard individuals.

3.2 Staff must follow established procedures for password changes.

3.3 Staff must take all reasonable steps to maintain;

3.3.1 the confidentiality of their access to Connecting Care,

3.3.2 the information within Connecting Care, and,

3.3.3 the security of Connecting Care (i.e. staff must not share their access credentials).

3.4 Personal use of Connecting Care, such as access by staff to information about their self or someone they know in a personal capacity, is strictly forbidden.

3.5 For circumstances where staff may be required to access the records of someone they know, acting in their professional capacity, they should consult their employer's policy and/or seek authorisation from their organisation's Caldicott Guardian or an appropriate senior clinician within their organisation.

3.6 Access to Connecting Care must be by way of individual accounts (each staff member should have credentials that are unique to them).

3.7 It is strictly forbidden to circumvent, attempt or cause to circumvent, established security mechanisms or controls to view, modify, delete or transmit information in Connecting Care.

3.8 It is strictly forbidden for staff members to share their, or another staff member's, usernames or passwords to gain access to Connecting Care.

3.9 It is strictly forbidden to access or use information in Connecting Care in support of any illegal activities.

3.10 Anyone that is found to have made unacceptable use of Connecting Care may be disciplined and/or prosecuted.

3.11 If a staff member has read this policy and is still unsure what is considered to be acceptable or unacceptable use of Connecting Care, they must check with their organisation's Caldicott Guardian or an appropriate senior clinician.

4 Definition of Terms

Caldicott Guardian – A senior person responsible for protecting the confidentiality of people's health and care information and making sure it is used properly. All NHS organisations and local authorities which provide social services must have a Caldicott Guardian.

Connecting Care – a secure system which enables consolidation of information from different health and social care organisations, including information from GP surgeries, hospitals, community and mental health, social services and others.

Connecting Care partner/signatory – An organisation that shares data and/or whose staff access data via Connecting Care and have signed up to the Connecting Care Data Sharing Agreement.

5 Duties and Responsibilities

5.1 Overall responsibility for this Acceptable Use Policy must be determined by each of the signatories, this should rest with the Director (or equivalent) that has responsibility for information risks (e.g. in NHS organisations this would be the individual occupying the role of Senior Information Risk Owner).

5.2 The Connecting Care signatories' Caldicott Guardians will provide advice and guidance on acceptable use of Connecting Care where applicable.

5.3 Employees of the Connecting Care signatories will receive instruction and direction regarding this policy from a number of sources:

- Policy and Strategy Manuals
- Line Managers
- Training courses
- Acceptable Use statement (displayed routinely on screen when accessing Connecting Care web portal)
- Other communication methods (e.g. briefings or newsletters)

5.4 Users of Connecting Care must report any personal data breaches, incidents or near misses pertaining to data in Connecting Care as soon as reasonably practicable to connectingcare.info@nhs.net

6 Monitoring Arrangements

6.1 Access and use will be recorded and may be monitored or audited for the purpose of investigating legitimate concerns.

6.2 This policy will be reviewed at least on a yearly basis, or when required following:

- Legislative changes
- Good practice guidance
- Case law
- Significant incidents reported
- New vulnerabilities
- Organisational changes