



Royal College
of Midwives

The Board of the Royal College of Midwives

Code of Conduct

Amendment Control

Amendment No.	Amendment details	Date amended	Amended by	Version
	Approved by the RCM Board	7/9/2011		1
1.	Minor changes to presentation	15/5/2012	RCM Board	1.1
2.	Section 1 (organisational values) changed to reflect those determined by the Board on 30/4/2013	30/4/2013	Board Secretary	1.2
3.	Full review and amendments	18/7/2017	RCM Board	2
4.	Full review and amendments	23/4/2020	RCM Board	3
5.	Full review	5/02/2024		4

The RCM Rules require its Board members to fulfill their responsibilities and duties in accordance with the law, the RCM rules and the Codes of Conduct for RCM Board members and Trustees of the RCM Trust.

The RCM Board is responsible for the overall direction and control of the RCM. This includes ensuring that the RCM is efficient, effective, properly managed, supervised and accountable.

The RCM Board provides the organisation with long term vision and ensures clarity of purpose by:

- defining the RCM's mission;
- setting the RCM's strategic goals and objectives;
- upholding the RCM's reputation and values; and





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- supporting and directing the Chief Executive Office to lead the RCM in accordance with the RCM's vision.

The Board is guardian of the RCM's assets and is responsible for ensuring that legal and regulatory requirements are met.

This Code of Conduct applies to Board members whenever they take part in RCM business or represent the RCM and, including when acting in a personal capacity, as their words and/or conduct may reflect on the RCM.

This Code of Conduct therefore applies in respect of Board members' actions in any capacity that may be capable of undermining their role on the RCM Board or public confidence in the RCM or its Board.

Organisational values

1. As a member of the RCM Board, I will act in accordance with the seven principles of public life known as the 'Nolan Principles' (as are set out in the Appendix), for the protection of the public and the rights of RCM members. I will also abide by RCM's organisational values which are:
 - **Accountability** - Everything we do withstands scrutiny.
 - **Integrity and honesty** - We conduct ourselves with integrity and honesty in all circumstances, upholding the highest ethical standards.
 - **Courage** - We stand up for what we think is right, speaking out on behalf of our members and the rights of women and their families.
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- **Objectivity** – We will take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias
- **Innovation** - We continually improve the way we do things, exploring new approaches and embracing change.
- **Inclusivity** - We are inclusive and embrace diversity in all that we do.

2. I will conduct myself at all times in a manner which promotes confidence in the RCM and the midwifery and maternity support professions. More particularly, I agree to the following:

Law, mission, policies

- I will ensure that I have a clear understanding of my responsibilities and the legal and regulatory requirements that apply to the RCM and its operations.
- I will not break the law or otherwise act in a manner that is contrary to relevant legal or regulatory requirements in any aspect of my role.
- I will support the RCM Board's vision and goals.
- I will inform myself of and abide by the RCM's constitution, rules and any and all policies and procedures.
- I will, whether technically bound or otherwise, comply with the Nursing and Midwifery Council's Code insofar as the code is applicable to my professional standing. I will inform the Chair of the RCM Board as soon as practicable if my conduct or professional competence is subject to investigation by a responsible authority or by my employer.





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Conflicts of interest

- I will act in the best interests of the RCM and its members. I will avoid being influenced, or placed under an obligation, by any individual or organisation which might affect, or be perceived to affect, my ability to act impartially and objectively (without bias, fear or favour) as a member of the RCM Board.
- I will declare any professional or personal interests which may conflict with, or be perceived to conflict with, my responsibilities as a member of the RCM Board in accordance with the RCM's rules.
- I will establish and maintain my entry in the RCM's Board members' register of interests in accordance with the RCM's rules.
- I will act according to the requirements and spirit of any rule, standing order or other requirement in relation to my presence or vote in any matter in which I am considered to have an interest (whether personal or financial).
- I will submit to the judgment of the RCM Board regarding my potential, actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

Person to person

- I will treat others equally, fairly, and with respect and form collegial, courteous and appropriate relationships with all I come into contact within my role.

Protecting the RCM's reputation





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- I will not, as an RCM Board member or on matters for which the RCM Board is ultimately responsible, communicate by any means (including social media) with the media or in a public forum without the prior knowledge and agreement of the CEO and the Chair of the RCM Board. I will report back to them on such events.
- I will adhere to the RCM's guidelines/policy on use of social media and other relevant policies (artificial intelligence, data protection).
- I will inform the Chair and CEO at once in the event that I have unexpectedly communicated with the media or in a public forum as an RCM Board member or on matters for which the RCM Board is ultimately responsible.
- When I am speaking as an RCM Board member or on matters for which the RCM Board is ultimately responsible my comments will reflect RCM policy, even when it does not align with my personal views.
- When speaking or acting as a private citizen I will uphold the reputation of the RCM.
- I will respect the RCM Board, the confidentiality of its proceedings and the confidentiality of all individuals.
- I will take an active interest in the RCM's public image, noting news articles, books, television programmes etc., about the RCM, about similar organisations or about important issues for the RCM.
- I will not otherwise, through my words or actions, bring the RCM into disrepute.

Personal gain





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- I will not personally gain materially or financially from my role as an RCM Board member beyond what has been allowed by the RCM nor will I permit others to do so as a result of my actions or omissions.
- I will document expenses and seek reimbursement according to RCM's procedures.
- I will accept gifts or hospitality only in accordance with the RCM rules. I will declare and register gifts and hospitality and offers of gifts and hospitality in the RCM Board's Register of Gifts and Hospitality in accordance with the RCM rules. I will use RCM resources responsibly, when authorised, in accordance with RCM procedures.

In the Boardroom

- I will embody the principles of leadership in all my actions and live up to the trust placed in me by the RCM membership.
- I will abide by Board governance procedures and practices.
- I will strive to attend all Board and committee meetings and contribute to Board and committee decision making, including by way of reading papers in preparation for meetings and ahead of decision making. Where I am unable to attend Board or committee meetings, I will send apologies in good time and for good reason.
- I will take into account the views and needs of the RCM members and the public they serve.
- I will accept the authority of the Chair and respect their responsibility to lead and manage the Board.





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- I will participate in discussion in an open, non-judgmental, succinct and reasoned way.
- I will engage in Board decision making according to procedure, maintaining a respectful attitude toward the opinions of others while making my voice heard.
- Before a Board decision is made, I will probe and challenge and respond to the probe and challenge of others appropriately. Once a Board decision is made, I will accept collective responsibility and I will accept a quorate majority Board vote on an issue as decisive and final.
- I will maintain confidentiality of the contents of Board papers and discussions unless authorised by the Chair or the Board to share information for appropriate purposes or if required to do so by law or regulation. I will ensure that any information in any format is stored securely. This applies to meetings and discussions held in person, by telephone, electronic media (including applications such as Office 365, Microsoft Teams and WhatsApp) or through correspondence of any kind.

Enhancing governance

- I will participate in induction, training and development activities for RCM Board members and the evaluation of the Board and Board members.
- I will seek ways to improve Board governance practice.
- I will support the Chair in their efforts to improve their own performance.
- I will support the CEO and, with my fellow Board Members, seek development opportunities for them.
- I will hold officers and executives to account, as appropriate.





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Breach of the Code of Conduct

3. I understand that if it is alleged that I have breached this Code of Conduct I may be subject to such measures as the RCM Board may determine including suspension from attending and voting at meetings of the RCM Board.
4. I understand that if it is determined that I have breached this Code of Conduct I may be subject to such measures as the RCM Board may determine which may include suspension or expulsion from office.
5. The RCM Board will act fairly, proportionately and within reasonable timescales in dealing with any potential breach of this Code of Conduct and in determining any action to be taken as a result of a breach.

Leaving the Board

- I acknowledge the grounds set out in the RCM rules for removal, disqualification and resignation from office and I will leave the Board in accordance with those rules.
- I will promptly notify the Chair of the RCM Board (or the RCM Board if I am the Chair) if I am disqualified, removed, or cease to hold office as a RCM Board member in accordance with the RCM rules.
- If procedures are put in place for the passing of a resolution for my removal from office, I understand that I will be given an opportunity to provide my views to the members and my views will be taken into consideration in the passing of any such resolution. I will accept a resolution passed in accordance with the RCM rules for my removal from office.





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- I will give reasonable notice in writing to the Chair of the RCM Board (or to the RCM Board, if I am the Chair), should I wish to resign from the RCM Board in accordance with the RCM rules, and I will provide reasons for my resignation.
- I will continue to act in accordance with the requirements and spirit of this Code of Conduct and with the RCM rules insofar as they are reasonably applicable following my retirement, resignation or removal from the Board, as the case may be.

Signed: _____
(RCM Board Member)

Printed: _____

Date: _____

