

## How we handle information

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### Policy statement for keeping data and information

#### 1. Service user information

**Who is a service user?** A 'service user' is anyone who uses our services.

We only hold limited data and information on service users where there is a need. Where we have had no contact from a service user for a **period of 6 months**, their file will be consider 'Inactive'. If after a **further 6 months** we have had no contact from the service user, their file will be shredded using a professional confidential waste company and electronic records will be permanently deleted. This means that no service user file will be kept for longer than **12 months after the last point of contact**.

If a service user makes a request for their file to be destroyed sooner than that, then we will act on their request immediately. However, this request must be in writing.

#### 2. Financial information

Ddiverse will keep all financial records and information relating to Ddiverse as an organization **for a period of 7 years**. **After 7 years** all records and information will be shredded using a professional confidential waste company.

Information will be stored securely. This is in line with both:

- The Information Commissioners Office (ICO) rules which states information should be kept for 6 years
- HMRC requirements which is to keep financial records for a period of 7 years to cover all HMRC Enquiry time limits after the 6 years.

#### 3. Ddiverse employee information

The GDPR 2018 stipulates that data and records should only be stored for as long as they are useful, so it's up to the employer to determine how long those records are useful for. However it is recommended that personal information of employees, including contact details, appraisals, reviews, sickness etc. is kept for at least 5 years.

**Ddiverse will keep individual staff records or a period of 6 years**. All Information will be stored securely. **After 6 years** all records and information will be shredded using a professional confidential waste company.

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### What do we mean by 'Service user confidentiality'?

The GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) came into force on 25 May 2018. The regulation replaced the Data Protection Act 1998.

At Dhiverse, confidential means confidential to staff employed by Dhiverse, on a need to know basis. All Dhiverse staff sign the 'Managing Service User Information Guidelines'. Your information will be held securely and will not be divulged to anyone else other than for the reasons stated below.

Confidentiality cannot be assured where the following situations apply:

- If Dhiverse is obliged to disclose confidential information by a court order
- If a service user gives us information concerning abuse of a child
- If, by keeping confidentiality, a service user might suffer severe injury or abuse
- If, by keeping confidentiality, someone else might suffer severe abuse

Should any of the above arise then the Dhiverse representative should, where possible, advise the service user that they might need to break confidentiality, however it may be that the service user does not wish action to be taken; does not wish to become involved in an investigation and/or does not want confidential information to be shared with other individuals and agencies. In such a situation the Dhiverse representative should inform the service user that they have a duty to discuss the disclosure with an appointed person within Dhiverse and that the appointed person/s will decide whether the situation requires confidentiality to be broken. The appointed persons are the CEO or a person which this responsibility has been delegated to.

### How service user files are handled

Managers and the CEO will have access to service user files at all times. Other Dhiverse staff and volunteers are allowed access to a service user file for purposes of supporting the service user when support staff are unavailable and for reporting/safeguarding purposes as agreed with the CEO or delegated person.

All service users, who have a file, have the right to view their file.

Hard copy files must be maintained in line with the Information Governance policy and must be stored securely at all times on Dhiverse premises.

All computer records will be password protected and compliant with Dhiverse's IT security policy. No service user file should ever leave the Dhiverse office without the knowledge of the Office and Information Manager, CEO or delegated person.

Information held on a Dhiverse service user's hard copy file and electronic file is kept to a minimum, only relevant and factual information is recorded. If a service user provides copies of letters, forms etc. from e.g. NHS, HMRC, DWP for the purposes of support, this information will be shredded at the point it has been acted on and is no longer needed.

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### The Rights & Responsibilities of a Service User

#### When using our services, you have a right to:

- Be provided with information about our services
- See our Organisational Policies
- Ask for a meeting with your support worker.
- See your file if one is held.
- Be assured of individual confidentiality as described above
- Expect and receive a non-judgmental, discrimination-free and prejudice-free service from Dhiverse.
- Give feedback on any of our services
- Make a complaint or compliment
- Participate in service user consultation forums and relevant focus groups
- Receive in your preferred format

#### When using our services, you have responsibility for:

- Participating in your support assessment (where a support assessment is necessary) so we can identify the best and most appropriate support for you
- Working together with your support worker to carry out the actions identified in your support plan, if a support plan is required
- Engaging in the actions identified in your support plan
- Keeping your appointment or where possible letting us know at least one day before if you have to cancel or change an appointment time
- Ensuring maximum benefit from the service and support by attending meetings and events without being under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- If participating in a support group, agreeing to and abiding by the agreed group rules. Listening actively in groups and respecting others when they are talking
- Respecting the rights and safety of our staff; volunteers and other service users
- Providing feedback that may result in improvements to our services
- Ensuring any complaint about our service is made within a reasonable time frame so we can respond to it effectively
- Advising us of any changes to your circumstances which may affect the support we are giving
- Advising us of any change in your contact details and preferred method of contact.

#### If you require this leaflet in a different format or you need further information please



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