

# Connected Fitness

## Code of Ethical Conduct for Personal Trainers

### 1. Introduction

**1.1** Welcome to this code of conduct for personal trainers, clients and members of the public.

**1.2** As a personal trainer, you play a vital role in:

- Helping the health and fitness industry deliver its services
- Protecting clients and the public from harm
- Valuing all aspects of equality and diversity

What you do has a big impact on the quality of healthcare for people who use your service.

**1.3** This code of conduct is necessary because the work you do as a member of the health and fitness industry is very important. The code is a list of statements that set the standard for how you should work on a day-to-day basis.

**1.4.** The code is here to help you, the clients and the public you work with. It is based on the basic principle of protecting the public and mirrors what is required of all team members.

**1.5.** You can use the code to check that you are 'working to standard'. Your client can use it to make sure that the service is meeting the standards and that both public and client safety is assured.

Clients can also use it to help them understand what kind of service they can expect from you and your colleagues.

**1.6.** The statements are based on existing good practice. You'll probably find you are already working to standard in most, if not all of them. If not, the code will show you how you can change the way you work to make sure you are working to standard.

### 2. Working "to Standard"

**2.1** As a personal trainer, you are expected to work to a certain standard. You need to be able to do your job properly, behave properly, and do the right thing at all times. This is essential to protect yourself, clients, and members of the public and others from harm. Clients and their relatives, your employer and your colleagues all expect this, and you should expect this of yourself.

**2.2** But what does this mean on a day-to-day basis? It means that in your work, you should always be of 'good character'. This means that you should always display the characteristics outlined below:

**Accountability** - making sure that you can always 'answer' for your actions or omissions.

Make sure you are happy with the things you do (actions) and the things you don't do (omissions) in your daily work and that you can justify them to clients, members of the public, your superiors, your colleagues and others.

**Awareness** - being honest with yourself and others about what you can do. Know yourself, what you can do and what you can't do. The safety of your clients and members of the public is your first priority.

Always ask colleagues for help if you have any worries or concerns about your abilities.

When you're working to standard on awareness, you'll know yourself well enough to know what you can do. You'll show you understand that people who have had special training can only carry out some procedures and that, in certain circumstances, you may not be best qualified to help. If you feel you're being asked to do something you haven't been trained to do, and that you don't have the skills to do it, you will speak up.

**Integrity** - always do what is right to protect the client or member of the public for whom you provide a service. Always do your best to make sure nothing you or anyone else does, or does not do, will harm the person's mental or physical health or well-being or delay their performance or recovery. At all times we should respect all aspects of equality and diversity. You should be prepared to report issues that cause you to worry.

**Advocacy** - doing your best for clients, members of the public and their relatives. This means being responsible for promoting and protecting the interests of people in receipt of services, many of whom may not be able to protect their own interests. This could involve speaking up for people to make sure that what is best for each individual is always taken into account.

**Sensitivity** - respecting the client / member of the public. Everyone at the gym is an individual with real feelings and emotions. When working with clients, think about how they may be feeling and what the most appropriate response to their situation is.

**Objectivity** - treating all clients and members of the public fairly and without bias. Access to high quality care should be fair and consistent. There should be no discrimination on the grounds of race, disability, sex, age, sexual orientation or religion or belief.

Personal feelings about clients or members of the public must not interfere with the standard of your work. You must provide all clients with a high quality service, which reflects their individual needs. This means that you owe clients a 'duty of care' and they can expect a 'reasonable' standard of care from you. It is expected that you would treat all members of the public like this.

It is also important to maintain clear boundaries when providing services for clients or members of the public. This means that you should always have a 'professional' relationship with your clients. If you have any strong feelings about a client's religious,

social or cultural beliefs, you should tell a superior as soon as possible so they can take appropriate action.

**Consideration and respect** - making sure people are always treated with dignity. Consider and respect people's privacy to make sure that neither you nor they are ever placed in an embarrassing situation. When you're working to standard on consideration, you'll always show thoughtfulness for people's feelings and needs. You'll protect clients to make sure that they are never unnecessarily exposed to embarrassing situations – whether in front of relatives, fellow clients or health professionals.

**Consent** – telling clients and members of the public what you intend to do and listening carefully to what they say about it. Working in partnership with the person at all times is a basic principle that you must keep to at all times.

Always explain what you intend to do with clients and members, even when it is basic advice or routine procedures, and only continue with your planned work once the person agrees to it. If the person or relative has not agreed to what you plan to do, you must not do it. Always check with a senior member of staff if you are in any doubt.

**Confidentiality** - protecting the person's privacy. Confidentiality is essential to protect the interests of clients and members. It is a main feature of any code of conduct and of most terms and conditions of service in a health and fitness environment. So you must make sure that you don't give out personal information about clients or members of the public, or about their condition or treatment, to anyone other than colleagues in the team who need to know the information to help in the delivery of service to the person.

If you do not protect the person's right to confidentiality, you may be breaking data-protection laws. If you feel that a person is at risk of harm, and that you need to speak out, you should tell your supervisor. You should not discuss those in receipt of services with anyone outside work.

**Co-operation** - working effectively with your colleagues and others in the fitness industry as part of a team. Value the part you play in the team and respect the part played by other members of the team. Be mindful of the needs of other team members, especially with regard to equipment, domination of space and the number of clients you have on site at any one time.

**Protection** - making sure you don't put clients, members of the public and colleagues at risk of harm. Make sure clients, members of the public, visitors and colleagues are protected from dangers and risks and that nothing you do, or don't do, results in harm or risk to others.

**Development** - trying to increase your own knowledge and skills by talking to clients, members of the public and colleagues and looking for opportunities to learn.

If you are interested in your work and feel comfortable using the knowledge you need to carry out your job, you will be able to offer a better service to clients and members of the public and you should feel more motivated as a result. This could be by attending a course, shadowing a colleague or listening to feedback from client. You'll continually monitor, evaluate and reflect on what you do at work and try to do it to the best of your ability.

**Alertness** - observing any changes that could affect a clients or member's needs or progress. Always try to notice when a client or member of the public isn't doing what you expect of them and report your observations to an appropriate person. When you're working to standard on alertness, you will notice when clients or members of the public are 'just not right'. You'll notice, for instance, when the client can't move as well as usual, appears less alert or perhaps hasn't eaten. You'll also notice when things in the workplace are not as they should be, relating for example to aspects of service delivery. Reporting these observations will be in the best interests of the people in receipt of your services.

### 3. How this affects you

**3.1.** The code of conduct means that, as a personal trainer, you have a responsibility to work to standard. This means that you must do the following.

- a) Let your manager or a superior know if you feel you are being asked to do something you don't know how to, or something you know isn't in your job description or specification.
- b) Make sure that you obtain consent, before doing anything to a client or member of the public.
- c) Make sure clients, members of the public and colleagues don't come to harm because of something you've done or something you have not done, or because you've been careless or taken risks
- d) Remain polite, professional, smartly dressed, groomed, hygienic and fresh to the highest possible standards
- e) Do not touch clients without their consent even when demonstrating exercises or correcting form
- f) Remain professional on social media when messaging clients
- g) Avoid fraternising with gym members and clients in a social context
- h) Raise issues you are concerned about with Ben Nelson / Dylan Lyness where these relate:
  - How care or service is delivered.
  - The personal health, safety and security of clients and members of the public.
  - Harm and abuse of clients or members of the public.

I agree to this code of practice:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_