

# CSR01 – Corporate Social Responsibility



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# 1 Overview

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We acknowledge that running our business has an effect on society. In particular, we have a responsibility to our customers, our employees and contractors as well as the broader community in which we operate.

We are committed to taking responsibility for our actions and encourage a positive contribution towards improving standards for our customers and employees, minimising our impact on the environment and improving the quality of the local community.

By putting Corporate social responsibility (CSR) into practice, we are committed, wherever possible, to:

- Conducting ourselves responsibly and in an ethical manner
- Creating a positive and supportive working environment
- Supporting local communities
- Improving service levels to customers
- Acting fairly in our dealings with suppliers and other third parties
- Minimising the impact on our environment.

The CSR policy covers operations at our head office in Bardon, Leicestershire, and our operational and clinical service centres across the UK. A full list of our locations can be found on our corporate website. Our CSR policy is aligned with the principles set out in ISO 26000: Social responsibility (<https://www.iso.org/iso-26000-social-responsibility.html>).

## 2 Communication

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We communicate this policy to our staff, customers and other stakeholders by means of our website, publicity materials, internal memos, and through our internal appraisal system.

We provide our staff with training on our CSR strategy and this policy and seek to raise awareness of any negative impacts of our business and methods to reduce them.

## 3 Responsibility

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David Straughan (MD of National Care), who is the firm's nominated officer, has overall responsibility for our CSR strategy and for implementing this policy. He has a key role in ensuring the systems and controls we have in place are effective.

All members of staff have a role to play in complying with our CSR objectives and are encouraged to make further suggestions in relation to initiatives we could undertake. If anyone has a suggestion, they should contact David Straughan or use the "suggestions" boxes found at each of our sites.

We are fully committed to the highest possible standards of openness, honesty and accountability. In line with that commitment, in accordance with our *Whistleblowing Policy*, we actively encourage all staff members who have serious concerns about any real or perceived departure from the high ethical standard that we set to voice those concerns openly. Our Whistleblowing Policy and details for our independently managed hotline can be found in our Staff Handbook.

We are committed to ensuring our policy remains effective. As part of our ongoing commitment, this policy is reviewed at least annually to verify its effective operation. Records of the reviews are maintained and any necessary amendments are made to the policy, as appropriate.

## 4 Our CSR principles

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### 4.1 Our conduct

We aim to adopt the highest professional and operational standards and not to act in such a way as to compromise the integrity of our business.

We actively promote respect between our staff members in their dealings with each other and with clients and other third parties.

### 4.2 Our working environment

We recognise that our staff are our most important resource. We actively seek to offer our staff a positive and healthy working environment and ensure that they have rewarding careers and job satisfaction.

We maintain a Staff Handbook, which sets out the rights and expectations of all members of staff.

We seek to ensure that all staff have access to the training they need both for their own development and to enable them to deliver a high quality service. Our procedures in relation to training and development can be found within Sharepoint.

We consider all staff members to be equal and we aim to create a working environment which is free of unlawful discrimination. In this regard, we maintain an *Equality and Diversity Policy*, available to all via Sharepoint, and are committed to achieving equal opportunities in all our employment policies, procedures and practices.

We respect employee human rights and dignity and recognise the advantages of a diverse workforce. We do not tolerate any harassment of, or discrimination against, employees or potential employees, irrespective of their race, creed, colour, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, disability, age, gender or marital status.

We are committed to being a responsible employer and embedding a culture of ethical employment practices and behaviours. Our people strategy and plan is integral to achieving our CSR principles through the following practices;

- Developing core values that reflect the needs of our employees, customers and community
- Using fair and wide reaching recruitment sourcing to attract good candidates and ensure equal treatment of all applicants

- Promote staff welfare through our commitment to developing and promoting our wellbeing policies, such as mental health support, employee assistance programme and bike to work scheme
- Ensuring our employment offering is fair and equitable, our gender pay gap is significantly below the national average median 4.55%, mean 2.99%

Our maternity and paternity leave policies, shared parental leave policies and adoption leave policies meet the statutory minimum standards. Flexible approaches to returning to work after leave, including part-time and non-standard hours of work, are adopted where viable. Where possible, we also offer staff the opportunity of selecting their working hours, and patterns of work to fit in with existing domestic arrangements.

Management acknowledges the importance of internal communication, especially in a business with multiple service centres and warehouses. Briefing and consultative procedures exist throughout the business at management level to keep managers and their employees informed of general business issues and other matters of interest. Regular staff meetings, memos and newsletters are used both to communicate Company matters to employees and to elicit questions, feedback and requests. The Directors undertake a periodic “road trip” to meet personally with employees at each operational and clinical service centre, with the intention of ensuring that a Director is not a name on the company statutory records but instead a face that all staff know.

### 4.3 Our community

In considering our impact on the community we have resolved to sponsor or otherwise support local charities.

We will allow members of staff time off work to enable them to carry out work in support of the chosen charity and to encourage dialogue with local communities and groups for mutual benefit.

Our ownership structure promotes our charitable aims.

Our shareholders include both:

- corporate shareholders who have access to significant capital that can be invested in the growth and development of our business; and
- charitable shareholders where any increase in the asset value or gain in the value of the business will directly benefit the charities concerned.

Currently, 13% of our share capital is ultimately owned by registered charities.

As a matter of policy, we do not donate money, services or facilities to political parties.

### 4.4 Our customers

We are committed to delivering a high level of service to all our customers. We understand that our business exists in a very competitive market and in order to retain our customers we need to deliver a professional, service user oriented and operationally efficient service.

We recognise that we interact with some of the most vulnerable in our society on a daily basis and have a responsibility to promote their welfare and keep them safe.

We are committed to work in a way that protects them by:

- Having detailed Safeguarding policies for both adults and children
- Appointing a designated Safeguarding Officer
- Providing effective management of staff through supervision, support and training
- Recruiting staff safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made
- Recording and storing information securely and professionally
- Ensuring that we have an effective complaints and whistleblowing measures in place

## 4.5 Suppliers

We are committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination and to promoting equality and diversity in our professional dealings with suppliers and other third parties. Our Equality and Diversity Policy can be found in Sharepoint.

We endeavour to enter into clear and fair contracts with our suppliers. We commit to the timely settlement of suppliers' invoices.

Wherever possible, we aim to support the local economy by contracting with local suppliers.

Our *Supplier Charter* sets out further details of how we interact with our suppliers.

## 4.6 Environment

We are committed to behaving responsibly and to minimising our impact on the environment. We aim to minimise our impact on the environment by:

- Minimising waste and adopting sensible recycling policies in respect of paper, packaging and scrap metal. Where possible, we segregate waste that can be recycled from standard waste
- Encouraging staff to store emails instead of printing, to print documents double-sided to reduce paper, and to only print where strictly necessary. We also seek to purchase energy efficient equipment, and turn off lights and electrical items when not in use.
- Providing safe and comfortable working conditions
- Encouraging staff to walk or cycle to work, or to car share where a car journey is necessary
- Ensuring that heating is turned off or down outside working hours
- Verifying the above points by maintaining certification to ISO:14001 across all sites

# 5 Review

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An annual review of this policy is undertaken to:

- Ensure that it remains up to date, compliant and relevant to the needs of the business and its various stakeholders
- Verify it is in effective operation across the business.