

NORTHERN IRELAND FEDERATION OF HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS

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9 November 2007

Privacy Advisory Committee
Code of Practice Consultation
C/o Ward 25
Downpatrick Hospital
Ardglass Road
DOWNPATRICK
BT30 6RA

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Code of Practice on Protecting the Confidentiality of Service User Information

The Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations (NIFHA) represents 43 housing associations which provide over 30,000 homes for people in need, as well as additional support services and facilities for people who may have physical and/or mental health problems.

The Federation would broadly welcome this code of practice with regard to confidentiality for service users, especially in cases where individuals may be vulnerable. We would recommend this code of practice as comprehensive and wide ranging. However, NIFHA would also like to make the following points which should be taken into consideration:

1. Any measures introduced must be practical for both staff and service users and should not cause any detriment within existing operations.
2. There may be a need to explain the terms of confidentiality to the service user and give assurances how this is achievable should be written into any subsequent procedures.

The Federation would be grateful that our comments will be taken into consideration and we would be happy to participate in further discussions in order to clarify any of the points raised.

Yours sincerely



DONALL HENDERSON
HOUSING POLICY AND RESEARCH MANAGER

Representing and promoting housing associations in Northern Ireland

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