DHULIKHEL HOSPITAL'S PROTECTION FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE (PSEA) POLICY

Part 1: Name and effect of the policy

a) The title name of the policy is **Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA).**
b) This policy is will come to **effect immediately and will be revised time to time as per need** and requirement.

Part 2: Objective and Coverage

This policy addresses the safeguarding of individuals especially **women and children below age of 18 from instances of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA**).

This encompasses individuals who are direct or indirect recipients of our services, programs, employs, adults and children residing in the broader communities within which we operate, and anyone who interacts with Dhulikhel Hospital or our representatives.

This policy is relevant to all individuals affiliated with us, whether in an official capacity or otherwise. This encompasses employees' at all organizational levels, directors, officers, staffs, agency personnel, volunteers, interns, agents, contractors, external consultants, third-party delegates, suppliers, and business associates. The policy is in effect at all times, both within and beyond regular working hours, throughout the entire year.

Dhulikhel Hospital adopts a "Zero Tolerance" approach to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and does not permit any partner, supplier, sub-contractor, agent, or any individual engaged by Dhulikhel Hospital to partake in any form of sexual abuse or exploitation against vulnerable or other individuals associated with its work. All individuals possess an equal right to protection, regardless of any personal characteristic, including their age, gender, ability, culture, racial origin, ethnicity, religious belief, and sexual identity.

Dhulikhel Hospital is firmly dedicated to conducting our affairs and interactions with ethical conduct and integrity. We are determined to establish and enforce robust systems and controls to prevent the exploitation and abuse of individuals, both within our own operations and across our network of suppliers and partnerships.

Dhulikhel Hospital is committed to aligning with national and international disclosure obligations, adhering to relevant laws, regulations, statutes, and codes. It embraces the standards of conduct outlined in Section 3 of the ST/SGB/2003/13.

In essence, this policy underscores our commitment to preventing any sexual misconduct or exploitation, emphasizing the prohibition of such behaviors in any form.

Part 3: Meaning and Definitions

Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) represent a grave violation of fundamental human rights, and in many instances, it constitutes a criminal offense. It encompasses any inappropriate behavior with a sexual dimension. This broad definition encompasses various actions, including, but not limited to:

- Offering money, employment, goods, or services in exchange for sexual activities, including sexual favors, or engaging in any demeaning, humiliating, or exploitative conduct.
- Participating in sexual activities with commercial sex workers in regions where our organization is carrying out its programs, regardless of the legal status of prostitution in the host country.
- Involving a child or an adult in facilitating sexual activities for others.

Sexual Abuse:	Sexual abuse encompasses instances of actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual or sexualized nature, which can include inappropriate touching, whether by force or within unequal or coercive circumstances. It also extends to acts such as sexual assault and rape. Additionally, sexual abuse covers actual or threatened non-physical intrusion, like unwanted exposure to explicit content such as pornography, texts, images, and sharing of such materials, passing sexual comments, as well as demands for sexualized photographs, and similar activities.
Sexual Exploitation:	Sexual exploitation refers to any real or attempted misuse of a situation of vulnerability, disparate power, trust, or dependency for sexual or sexualized purposes. This can include offering or promising financial, social, or political advantages as incentives or as a means of coercion.
Sexual Favors:	Sexual favors comprise any acts of a sexual or sexualized nature performed in exchange for something, such as money, goods, services, opportunities, and the like. It also encompasses requests for inappropriate photographs, filming, and exposure to pornography, and related activities**.**
Grooming:	Grooming involves the cultivation of emotional relationships with individuals who are in positions of vulnerability or possess unequal power dynamics, with the intention of manipulating these relationships into sexualized interactions in the future.
Intimidation:	Any actions or behaviors that are intended to instill fear, apprehension, or a sense of threat in others. It encompasses actions that are meant to coerce, manipulate, or pressure individuals into doing something against their will or to create a hostile or uncomfortable environment for them. Intimidation can take various forms, such as verbal threats, aggressive gestures, or other behaviors that make people feel unsafe, frightened, or vulnerable. This can include intimidating behavior towards colleagues, patients, or anyone associated with the institution, and it is considered a serious misconduct that is not tolerated.

Bullying:	Any harmful and aggressive behavior that is directed towards an individual or a group of individuals typically involving repetitive actions or behaviors that are intended to cause harm, fear, or distress to others forms such as verbal, physical, or psychological harassment. Actions such as verbal abuse, humiliation, spreading rumors, or any other actions that create a hostile, intimidating, or demeaning atmosphere for others.
Harassment	Any unwelcome and offensive behavior or actions that create a hostile, intimidating, or uncomfortable environment for individuals within Dhulikhel Hospital Any forms of actions, including verbal, written, or physical actions that are persistent and aimed at causing emotional distress, fear, or discomfort to someone. It involves offensive comments, slurs, unwanted advances, or any other actions that infringe upon an individual's dignity, rights, or well-being.
Zero Tolerance:	At Dhulikhel Hospital we uphold a culture of unwavering intolerance for all types of misconduct and mistreatment, including Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying. This signifies that every reported concern receives a thorough response, and if necessary, swift action, such as conducting a thorough investigation and implementing appropriate disciplinary measures, is taken. We are committed to maintaining consistent standards and procedures for all individuals within our organization, regardless of their position or standing, underlining our dedication to accountabilit**y.**

Part 4: Preventive Measures, Awareness, Communication and Training.

Dhulikhel Hospital is dedicated to preventing the sexual exploitation and abuse of individuals, which is achieved through the following measures:

a) **Awareness:** We make certain that all Dhulikhel Hospital personnel, representatives, and associated third parties receive comprehensive information regarding the elevated expectations for their behavior and conduct. Specifically tailored PSEA orientation is provided to them subsequent to their recruitment within the organization. This knowledge empowers them to safeguard individuals from any form of sexual abuse and exploitation in both their personal and professional lives.

b) **Human resource systems**: The Dhulikhel Hospital will ensure that the procedure in place for job candidates will be done through proper PSEA screening. The Human Resource (HR) team and administrative team who are well-trained and well-informed about the PSEA process will take responsibilities for the screening of the candidates. The screening process includes checks for past sexual misconduct and a self-declaration by the job candidates, confirming through any administrative and criminal records. Reference checks will also be conducted during the staff hiring process;

contacting their former employers or the individuals they have listed as references, to verify their records.

c) **Communication:** Dhulikhel Hospital will communicate this policy to all employees, ensuring they are aware of the reporting channels and procedures

d) **Prevention:** Through promoting awareness and best practices, we equip our staff and collaborators with the adapted tools to minimize the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse. This includes essential measures like conducting thorough vetting and background checks as part of the staff recruitment process.

Additionally, the institution will promote Gender, Equity and Social Inclusion (GESI) in each and every recruitment process.

Part 4: Reporting Mechanism and Confidentiality

Employees who experience or witness sexual abuse is encouraged to report incidents promptly and those reports are referred to the appropriate entities for follow-up. Reports can be made to

- Hospital Administrator
- Human Resources Department
- Head of Department of the respective Department
- Immediate Supervisor

Individuals are encouraged and empowered to safely report grievances, including instances of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA). Reports can be submitted by the victim or a third party, such as a witness. The reporting mechanism provides various channels, including but not limited to in-person reporting, email, phone calls, written complaints, and SMS. **Confidentiality:**

All reports of sexual abuse or exploitation will be treated with the utmost confidentiality to the extent allowed by law. Information will only be disclosed to individuals involved in the investigation and those with a legitimate need to know.

Part 5: Investigation, Assistance, Support and Referral

a) **Investigation:**

Upon receiving a report, Dhulikhel Hospital will initiate a prompt, impartial, and thorough investigation. The investigation will be conducted with sensitivity and respect for the privacy of all parties involved.

In house investigation committee comprising Hospital Administrator, Human Resource Department, Head of the respective Department, Immediate Supervisor and other persons as per need will investigate for the reports received.

Grievances and report will be handled as per case to case basis and as per the sensitivity and severity of the case.

However, in cases where the severity or complexity of the matter exceeds the scope of the internal committee, Dhulikhel Hospital is committed to referring such cases to the police and seeking advice from legal advisors for further guidance.

b) Support and Referral Services:

Dhulikhel Hospital is committed to providing support services to individuals affected by sexual abuse. This may include access to urgent medical care, safety, counseling and legal assistance. Dhulikhel Hospital fully supports victims in seeking help from external helplines or organizations. Dhulikhel Hospital in case of need will seek support from local District Administration, Police and Women Welfare Commission of the Nepal government.

Part 6: Disciplinary Actions and Mitigation Process

If the investigation substantiates the allegations, appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken, up to and including

- Warnings,
- Demotion
- Salary Deduction and
- Termination,

in accordance with Dhulikhel Hospital's HR policies and applicable laws. The details have been incorporated in the HR policies of Dhulikhel Hospital.

Part 7: Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and updated as necessary to reflect changes in laws, societal expectations, and organizational needs and donor compliances.

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