

# NORTHERN IRELAND POLICING BOARD

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## SELECTED MEDICAL PRACTITIONER CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

## **NIPB SELECTED MEDICAL PRACTITIONER (SMP) CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**

<b>Version Number</b>	<b>Version Date</b>	<b>Summary of Changes</b>	<b>Changes processed by:</b>	<b>Changes approved by:</b>	<b>Date of Implementation</b>	<b>Document Location</b>
1.	November 2024	New document formatted and amended November 2024	PPIB Directorate	Resources Committee	January 2025	CM: 618877

### **Alternative Formats**

This documentation can be made available in alternative formats such as large print, Braille, disk, audio tape or in an ethnic-minority language upon request. Requests for

alternative formats can be made to the Northern Ireland Policing Board using the following contact information:

Data Protection Officer

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2 – 4 Cromac Avenue,

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## What is a conflict of interest?

According to the General Medical Council (**GMC**) a conflict of interest occurs when a medical professional's interests (financial or otherwise) compete with their professional responsibilities, and there's a risk (real or perceived) that the medical professional will prioritise these interests above the care of patients. Conflicts of interest may arise in a range of situations and can include:

- direct financial interests
- indirect financial interests
- other direct or indirect personal or professional interests<sup>(1)</sup>

It is essential that conflicts of interest are effectively managed to ensure the integrity and impartiality of the assessment process and to maintain public confidence. The Northern Ireland Policing Board (the **Board**), as a public body, is committed to following the Nolan Principles (see Appendix A) and expects the same standards to be applied by its Selected Medical Practitioners (**SMP**).

## Required action by Board Officials and the SMP

As an SMP acting for the Board you will be asked to assess a claimant for Ill-Health, Injury on Duty or Death Benefits and address the questions referred under the relevant

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<sup>1)</sup> General Medical Council: [identifying-and-managing-conflicts-of-interest-final-version\\_pdf-105396078.pdf](#)

Regulations. Your decision should be reached on the basis of the evidence provided and must be fair and impartial at all times.

The below steps will be taken by both Board Officials and you, as an SMP, in order to ensure that conflicts of interest are identified at the earliest opportunity and managed effectively.

#### Duties to be undertaken by Board Officials

- In the first instance, upon receipt of an application from PSNI Attendance Management (**AM**), Board Officials will review the MRC1 form (serving officers) or the MRC2 (former officers) to check the SMP choice at points six and seven.
- Board Officials will then review the application to ensure that the chosen SMP has not assessed the officer/ former officer in the last two years. Please note where an SMP has treated the officer/ former officer, the Board does not consider this to be a conflict of interest. Treatment is regarded as:
  - Vetting.
  - Reviewing for driver medicals; and
  - Reviewing for firearms eligibility.
- Where Board Officials identify that the SMP has previously assessed the officer/ former officer, they will make contact with same and request that a different SMP is selected.

## **Duties to be undertaken by SMP**

Where it comes to your attention that you have previously assessed<sup>2</sup> an applicant you must immediately notify the Manager of Police Pensions and Injury Benefits (**PPIB**) Directorate or in their absence, the SMP Liaison Officer as this gives rise to a conflict of interest. In such circumstances the SMP appointment will be terminated and a different SMP will be appointed to carry out the assessment at their earliest convenience, unless exceptional circumstances apply (see section on Exceptional circumstances).

If you believe that you *may* have assessed an applicant, or if there is any ambiguity, please speak with the PPIB Manager in order to decide next steps.

Any other interest that may influence your judgement should be declared at the earliest opportunity or as the conflict arises.

## **Exceptional circumstances**

Where an applicant whose condition is terminal has specifically requested the SMP who previously assessed them, the Board would view this as exceptional circumstances and permit the assessment to proceed with the requested SMP.

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<sup>2</sup> *Treatment* descriptions included under *Duties to be undertaken by Board Officials* are not considered to be an assessment in line with the work of the SMP

## **Review and updates**

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with evolving ethical standards and regulations.

Further information on Conflicts of Interest by the GMC can be found at:

[identifying-and-managing-conflicts-of-interest-final-version\\_pdf-105396078.pdf](#)

## **APPENDIX A**

### **THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE (THE NOLAN PRINCIPLES):**

<b>Selflessness</b>	Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.
<b>Integrity</b>	Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.
<b>Objectivity</b>	In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
<b>Accountability</b>	Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.



<b>Openness</b>	Holders of public office should be as open as possible about the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest demands.
<b>Honesty</b>	Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
<b>Leadership</b>	Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

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## DOCUMENT TITLE

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Selected Medical Practitioner  
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