

Section 5: Embedding the Code of Ethics in Practice

The Code of Ethics is first and foremost a means for CLD practitioners to reflect on, guide and govern their own practice. Section 4 of the package provides materials to assist practitioners to use the Code in this way.

However, CLD practitioners work in the context of employing agencies ranging from small community organisations operating at very local level to large public sector bodies. “Ethical practice” needs to be developed in the specific and varied organisational contexts that CLD practitioners work in.

All employing agencies seek to hold their employees accountable, and have a responsibility to do this; for example, any employer in receipt of public funding needs to account for its use. For competent and ethical CLD practice to flourish, employers need to do this in ways that are compatible with, and make use of, the CLD Code of Ethics; and to understand that the Code sets out principles to assist practitioners to develop ethical practice, not a set of instructions.

This means that as CLD practitioners committed to the Code of Ethics we need to consider, as well as our practice with constituents, our role and influence with our employer, and with partner agencies that have an impact on the context for our work. This section of the package provides a framework for reflection, discussion and planning for action to embed the CLD Code of Ethics in practice.

Managers and decision-makers at all levels in organisations that employ CLD practitioners need to understand the principles of the Code of Ethics in order to create the context for competent and ethical CLD practice. Senior managers with responsibility for CLD have a key part to play in embedding the CLD Code of Ethics in practice, so this part of the package in particular is designed to be relevant to them.

A Framework for Embedding the CLD Code of Ethics in Practice	
Area for attention	Key considerations
Agency policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Does your organisation have relevant statements about standards of behaviour? ● Are there any issues about how these relate to the CLD Code of Ethics that need discussion or clarification? ● In terms of formal commitment to supporting the Code of Ethics, at what level in your organisation should the decision be made (e.g. senior management or board? Departmental/corporate/political?) ● How can you help to ensure that the agency you work for supports practitioners to use the CLD Code of Ethics to guide practice?

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Communications and awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Who are the practitioners within your organisation that the Code is directly relevant to? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – In other teams, services or departments as well as your own? – Full-time, part-time, sessional, voluntary? ● Is your organisation communicating with them about the Code? ● What would be the best way for this to happen? ● Can you help to make it happen? ● What would be the best way for your organisation to communicate with CLD constituents (people involved in community organisations, in youth activities or in community-based learning) and partners about the Code? Can you help to make it happen?
Recruitment and CPD	<p>Based on your understanding of how things work in your organisation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is understanding of and commitment to the CLD Code of Ethics explored in the recruitment process for relevant staff? Which posts are included in this? ● Is commitment to the CLD Code of Ethics included in the contract of employment for relevant staff? ● Is consideration of the CLD Code of Ethics included in the induction of relevant staff? ● Are staff supported to reflect on their own practice? How could the Code of Ethics be used (more/more effectively) to assist with this? ● How is consideration of the Code of Ethics included in CPD plans, events and activities? ● Are practitioners supported to prepare for consideration of the Code at CPD events, and to use learning from events in their day-to-day practice? ● Are there useful ways that discussion and learning about the Code of Ethics can be incorporated into regular team meetings, management group meetings etc? ● What can you do to help ensure that your agency's CPD activities help practitioners to make use of the Code of Ethics? And that its recruitments processes include consideration of the Code?

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Agency culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What does your employer do that supports commitment to the Code of Ethics? ● What does your employer do that hinders commitment to the Code of Ethics? ● Are there ways that the Code of Ethics could be used to develop improved mutual understanding between different groups of practitioners across the professional groupings or in different services or agencies? ● Are there ways that you can influence your employer to give stronger or more effective support to the Code? ● Who provides leadership for embedding the CLD Code of Ethics into practice? What's your role in this? ● Is there a culture that supports individuals to challenge unethical practice? Do you challenge unethical practice?
Monitoring, evaluation, accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What happens if a practitioner in your agency behaves in a way that's inconsistent with the Code? ● Does the agency have a way of knowing whether practitioners are taking account of the Code and making themselves accountable to it? ● Are there ways you can promote commitment to and understanding of the Code by CLD practitioners and managers at all levels in your agency and those employed by partners? ● Do CLD constituents and stakeholders have opportunities to comment on whether CLD practitioners are working in ways that reflect the Code of Ethics? Can you help create better opportunities for them to do this?
Making it happen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Is a focus on developing ethical practice built into improvement planning for CLD in your organisation? ● Who in the organisation has responsibility for this? ● If it's you – how can you make sure it happens? ● If it's not you – can you influence whoever does have responsibility? ● Are you clear about your own role in developing ethical practice?