# Record Keeping Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Type</th>
<th>Record Keeping Policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Director of Operations</td>
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<td>Owner (Dept)</td>
<td>Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Review</td>
<td>February 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# List of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Page No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Policy Statement</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Aims</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Why Keep Records?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Standards for Safe and Effective Record Keeping</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Types of Records covered by this Policy</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Principles of Good Record Keeping</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Storage of Records</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Confidentiality</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Access to Records</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Sharing of Information</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Personal and Professional Standards</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Training</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Links to other The Mungo Foundation’s Policies and Procedures</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Legislative Links</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Appendix 1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal Plan Audit</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal Plan Audit Guidelines</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Appendix 2</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consent to Share Information (a)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Appendix 3</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consent to Share Information (b)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. **Policy Statement**

Good record keeping is an integral part of social care practice, and is essential to the provision of safe and effective care and support. It is not an optional extra to be fitted in if circumstances and time allow. This policy covers both written and electronic records.

Recording information about people who use services provided by The Mungo Foundation is necessary to satisfy all relevant parties that we are providing a high quality service. Interested parties include:

- Families of people who use The Mungo Foundation’s services;
- Social Care & Social Work Improvement Scotland (formerly the Care Commission);
- Local Authority Commissioners and Funders;
- Partnership Workers such as Care Managers, Social Workers etc…

This policy will cover:

- The functions of record keeping;
- The required standards for safe and effective record keeping;
- The types of records covered by the policy;
- The principles of good record keeping;
- Storage of records;
- Confidentiality of records;
- Access to records;
- Sharing of information;
- Personal and professional standards expected;
- Training requirements;
- Data Protection Act 1998.

2. **Aims**

Good communication and record keeping is essential to ensure and provide evidence that a high quality service is being provided. The Mungo Foundation’s employees are required to compile and keep numerous records and reports and these records must be accurate and up-to-date. No-one can underestimate the importance of good record keeping; it is an essential part of the role of a social care worker.
Good record keeping will enable staff to comply with all legal and regulatory (Social Care & Social Work Improvement Scotland etc…) requirements and ensure the service we provide to people is transparent; and, that if and when incidents or accidents occur, we have a paper trail of evidence. This is essential to ensure causes of incidents/accidents can be identified and measures put in place to prevent a reoccurrence and also as a protective mechanism for staff who will be able to provide a record of their role in any situation which may arise.

3. Why Keep Records?

The function of record keeping whether at an individual, team or organisational level is to:

- Manage the day-to-day operation of a project, service area or department within The Mungo Foundation;
- Help improve accountability;
- Evidence how decisions related to people who use our services were reached and who was involved in the decision making process;
- Support effective service delivery;
- Support effective care, support and communication between the people who use our services and staff teams;
- Make continuity of care and support easier;
- Provide documentary evidence of services delivered;
- Evidence the promotion of individual rights and choices;
- Ensure outcomes are able to be identified easily;
- Help to identify and manage risk;
- Provide evidence of regular monitoring and evaluating of the service provided;
- Promote better communication and sharing of information between The Mungo Foundation and partner agencies;
- Provide evidence for internal (Service Manager) and external (Social Care & Social Work Improvement Scotland/Local Authority) audits;
- Enable project resources to be allocated effectively;
- Aid a project in its forward planning;
- Help to address complaints or where appropriate legal processes.
4. Standards for Safe and Effective Record Keeping

The following standards must be met to ensure The Mungo Foundation’s record keeping is both effective and safe:

- Policies and procedures for recording and handling information about the people who use our services are in place including confidentiality and data protection;
- Record keeping systems are maintained and regularly monitored (see Appendix 1);
- Staff are trained in the operation of recording systems and understand the scope of their authority to access information;
- Staff understand and work in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998;
- The people who use our services are aware of their rights to access information and are enabled to exercise these rights;
- There are policies and procedures for sharing information with external agencies who use our services are made aware of this on admission (see Appendix 2);
- Records are written in a clear, concise and impartial manner and are dated and signed by the author.

Sometimes a person may disagree with what is written about them, for example when they believe that it is not factually accurate. When appropriate, information should be corrected or deleted or a comment added at the bottom stating the person disagrees with the recording. If there is a disagreement about changes then this should be noted on the file and the matter referred to a manager for review. If there is no agreement; mediation between the two parties could take place or ultimately the person should be able to use the complaints procedure if they wish.

5. Types of Records covered by this Policy

The Data Protection Act 1998 defines a health record as “consisting of information about the physical or mental health or condition of an identifiable individual made by or on behalf of a health professional in connection with the care of that
individual”. The records maintained by The Mungo Foundation’s staff come under the scope of this legislation.

The principles of good record keeping apply to all types of records, regardless of how they are held. These can include:

- Handwritten records/computerised recordings e.g. daily care notes, support plans, risk assessments etc…
- E-mails both internal and external;
- Letters to and from partner agencies;
- Letters to families/friends of people who use our services;
- Incident reports and statements;
- Photographs;
- Videos;
- Text messages;
- Photographs/DVDs of people who use The Mungo Foundation’s services.

6. Principles of Good Record Keeping:

- Handwriting must be legible;
- All entries to records should be signed and dated by the person completing the record;
- Your records must be accurate and recorded in such a way that the meaning is clear to the individual concerned, their family/friends, colleagues, other health professionals etc…;
- Where appropriate, the person or their family/friend should be involved in the record keeping process;
- Records must be factual and not include unnecessary abbreviations, jargon, meaningless phrases, opinion or speculation;
- You must use your judgement to decide what is relevant and what should be recorded. If you are unsure seek advice from a Line Manager;
- Records must provide clear evidence of the arrangements you have made for future and ongoing care and support;
- Records must identify any risks or issues that have arisen and evidence of the action taken to deal with them;
• You have a duty to communicate fully and effectively with your colleagues, ensuring that they have all the information they need about the people you support;
• All records in the personal plans (also known as care/support plan) must be reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis that is appropriate to the needs of each person we support and each project;
• Records in diaries/communication books etc…must be of a non-sensitive nature as they are generally not locked away and contain information relating to more than one person;
• You must not alter or destroy any records without being authorised to do so;
• In the unlikely event that you need to alter a recording you have made, you must put one line through the record then sign name/initials and job title on the original document/record. You should make sure that the alterations you make, and the original record, are clear and auditable. Do not score out, write over or remove original entry;
• Additions to existing records must be signed and dated by the writer;
• Electronic communication must have a name attached to the e-mail and also the project’s electronic signature;
• Records should be readable when photocopied or scanned;
• Records must be able to provide an evidence trail in the event of an incident occurring. This will provide a protection both for the people who use The Mungo Foundation’s services and also staff working in the projects;
• Records of incidents should be documented as soon as possible after the event;
• You should not use coded expressions of sarcasm or “humorous” abbreviations to describe the people you are supporting, colleagues etc…;
• You must not falsify records;
• Written consent must be obtained from an individual before their image is used in a photograph or DVD;
• You should not take or keep photographs of any person, or their family that are not relevant to the person’s support package.

7. Storage of Records

All records and information must be stored appropriately, safely and securely and meet the needs and wishes of the people concerned but must also comply with legislative and regulatory standards. Managers must develop storage systems appropriate to their project; listed below is guidance regarding storing records:

• Personal (care/support) plans for people using housing support services must be stored in the person’s own flat;

• In care homes they should, where appropriate, be stored in a locked/lockable space in the person’s own room;

• If personal plans are all stored centrally, they must be securely locked away with direct access limited to members of the staff team;

• All medication and finance records must be stored in a lockable space at the project;

• Staff records e.g. supervision minutes, personal development plans, sickness/absence and/or return to work interview forms etc…must be stored individually and centrally in a locked space in the project office. Direct access to these records will be limited to senior staff;

• Team meeting and any other meeting minutes must be stored centrally but made easily accessible to all members of the staff team. Minutes can be pinned to a notice board unless they contain confidential information regarding the people who use the service etc…;

• All confidential electronic communication must be password protected. Managers must use their managerial e-mail address rather than the generic project e-mail to send and receive confidential information. All information stored on a computer must be backed up on a weekly basis by the Project Manager.

8. Confidentiality

All staff must be fully aware of the legal requirements and guidance regarding confidentiality and ensure their practice is in line with these requirements and The Mungo Foundation’s Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy. When completing
records either on paper or on computer screens, no information should be left where it might be seen by unauthorised staff, people who use the service or visitors to the project.

9. Access to Records

It is important that staff are aware that people have a right to access any information about them and that we enable people to exercise this right. Access to records is a fundamental right, guaranteed by the Data Protection Act 1998. Recording information that can be accessed by the people using the service creates challenges for staff and managers. Staff may be reluctant to record sensitive and/or negative information about someone if that person can access the file. These issues need to be addressed by management through team meetings and supervision.

Projects where people do not hold their own personal file etc…must have a procedure for enabling people to view their records. The procedure should make accessing records as straightforward as possible. The following guidance can be used as an aid when devising a local procedure:

- Find out what the person wants to see, they may wish to see something specific, such as the record of a particular incident, and not their whole file;
- Present the records to the person and offer to take them through it. When necessary, explain how and why the different records are used and be prepared to answer any questions the person may have;
- Give the whole file or copies of the records to the person if requested;
- Ensure a signed record is made if the file or parts of it are given out. This will ensure a paper trail is available in the event of documents becoming lost or misplaced;
- Some records may be difficult to allow access to since they may contain information about other people e.g. diary/communication book. To allow access this may involve photocopying the parts with the relevant information, blanking out sections referring to other people;
- All staff must be aware of the local policy and be able to explain it to the person.
There are rare occasions when it may be decided to deny someone access to certain information in their records, when revealing it would create a serious risk to a client, staff or another person. In such cases, staff can make a judgement to deny someone of their fundamental rights. Such decisions should be:

- Agreed by senior managers;
- Considered in the light of the legal duty under the Data Protection Act 1998;
- Clearly explained to the person concerned;
- Recorded appropriately.

10. Sharing of Information

People who use The Mungo Foundation’s services must be informed that information and records held at the project or in their home may be seen by other people or agencies involved with their care/support package. Information that can identify a person we support must not be used or disclosed for purposes other than their care and support without the individual’s explicit consent. However, you can release this information if the law requires it, or where there is a wider public interest. Under common law, you are allowed to disclose information if it will help to prevent, detect, investigate or punish serious crime or if it will prevent abuse or serious harm to others. This must be explained to every person using The Mungo Foundation’s services and be included in the information packs given to each individual.

People have the right to ask for their information to be withheld from staff, their family or health professionals. We must respect that right unless withholding such information would cause serious harm to that person or others. Staff would normally have access to all records for the people using the service but not every member of staff will need to have access to every piece of information. If information is to be shared with third parties then the consent of the individual must be obtained. This must be recorded and stored in the person’s personal plan. Consent to allow access to information is not set in stone and people may change their minds about allowing certain third parties to see their records. If this occurs this must be recorded to ensure no unauthorised people are able to access information.
If staff are experiencing problems relating to access or record keeping, such as missing records or accessing records; the issue should be reported to someone in authority and this also must be recorded.

11. Personal and Professional Standards

All staff must be able to meet the following standards:

- Ensure all records are accurate and up-to-date and that information remains confidential;
- Ensure only relevant, appropriate and authorised people have access to information;
- Be aware of, and know how to use, the information systems and tools that are available at a project;
- Passwords to access information systems must not be shared and records must not be left open to access when not being used;
- Staff should not store and take home personal information relating to people who use the service on computer memory sticks/flash drives;
- Managers must take reasonable measures to check that your organisation’s systems for recording and storing information, whether by computer, e-mail, fax or any other electronic means, are secure;
- The Mungo Foundation has a responsibility to update staff on changes to legislation etc…as they occur;
- All staff have a duty to keep up-to-date with, and adhere to, relevant legislation, case law and national and local policies relating to information and record keeping;
- All staff must be aware of, and develop, their ability to communicate effectively within teams. The way information is recorded and communicated is crucial. Other people will rely on your records at key communication points, especially during handover, reviews, team meetings etc…;
- By auditing records and acting on the results the standard of the record keeping and communication can be evaluated. This will allow areas where improvements might be made to be identified.
12. Training

All staff must be trained in the use of the organisation’s records systems, including:

- The various records and systems;
- Their responsibilities in recording information;
- The Confidentiality & Data Protection Policy;
- Access to records;
- Responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 1998.

This training will take place at a local project level during a new member of staff’s induction period. If issues arise regarding recording skills, formal courses may be accessed; this will be done by the Project Manager in consultation with The Mungo Foundation’s Training & Development Manager.

13. Links to other The Mungo Foundation’s Policies and Procedures

- The Confidentiality & Data Protection Policy;
- Supervision & Appraisal Policy.

14. Legislative Links

- Data Protection Act 1998;
- Human Rights Act 1998;
- Electronic Communications Act 2000;
- Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002;
- Communications Act 2003;
- Counter-terrorism Act 2008.
## Personal Plan Audit

**Name:**

**D.O.B.:**

**Key Worker:**

**Line Manager:**

### Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>Accurate/Up-to-Date (YES/NO/N/A)</th>
<th>Amendments Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Information Sheet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependants Personal Information Sheet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important Contact Numbers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medication Record</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Details</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal History</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of Me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships Map</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contents</td>
<td>Accurate/Up-to-Date (YES/NO/N/A)</td>
<td>Amendments Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things I Like</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things I Don’t Like</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Places Map</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Wishes and Hopes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things that Work/Don’t Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funeral Arrangements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consent to Sharing of Personal Information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consent to use of Restraints e.g. lap straps, bed rails, movement monitors etc</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care Support Plans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care Support Plan Evaluations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contents</td>
<td>Accurate/Up-to-Date (YES/NO/N/A)</td>
<td>Amendments Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving and Assistance Profile/Assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What You Must Know About Me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What You Must Know About How I Communicate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Assessments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Assessment Evaluations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Activity Planner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Care/Support Notes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Summary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare Notes e.g. contact or appointment with GP; care manager, community nurse etc...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notable Marks on Me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epilepsy Care Plan/Protocol</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contents</td>
<td>Accurate/Up-to-Date (YES/NO/N/A)</td>
<td>Amendments Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seizure Recording Sheet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protocol for Administration of Rescue Medication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording Charts e.g. elimination, ABC, Menstrual etc…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Record of Correspondence e.g. family, incoming mail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventory of Belongings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incident Forms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent Incident Recording Forms (VIRF)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Documentation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keyworker Meeting Minutes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Details e.g. Social Care &amp; Social Work Improvement Scotland Complaints, TMF Complaints etc…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Info: Occupancy/Tenancy Agreement/ISA/Service User’s Charter etc:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Personal Plan Audit Guidelines

Purpose
The aim of the Personal Plan Audit is to ensure all projects are maintaining a regular overview of the content of the information contained within people we support’s Personal Plan (Care Support Plan/Personal File). It will also provide the Service Manager with an up-to-date record of a project’s performance in this area. It will also enable external bodies such as Social Care & Social Work Improvement Scotland and Local Authority to have evidence of regular performance monitoring within a The Mungo Foundation’s service.

Frequency of Returns
The documentation must be completed twice a year. If this is not going to be achieved the Project Manager must be informed stating the reasons why the document has not been audited within the required timescale.

How the Information will be used?
Personal Plan Audits will be used as a basis for a Project Manager’s supervision with a keyworker and Senior Project Worker. This will enable staff performance to be monitored and will be used also during annual appraisals. Service Manager Audits will also cover Personal Plan Audits.

Who Completes the Document?
It is the keyworker’s responsibility to ensure the audit is completed by the specified date. The document can be completed partly by co-keyworkers but it is the keyworker’s name which will be attached to the document and they will be accountable for the accuracy of its contents. Do not leave any sections blank, record N/A in the areas that are not relevant to the specific personal plan. The completed form will be stored in the Personal Plan.

How to Complete the Document
The keyworker and/or co-keyworker will go through the person we support’s Personal Plan; the person we support should be present for this, where possible. A “Yes”, “No” or “N/A” will be recorded in column 2. Column 3 will then detail the required amendments which will be completed within 1 month of the initial audit. If there are sections in Personal Plans which are not covered by the audit then these should be added to the document.
Appendix 2

Consent to Share Information (a)

Introduction
The Mungo Foundation is working to ensure the service you receive is of good quality, effective and delivered to meet your individual needs. Before you consent to share information with 3rd parties someone from your staff team must have gone over this document with you.
We work together with your family or carer, the Social Work Department, Resource Centres and Colleges to help you receive the best service that can be provided.
When people are working jointly to provide services for you they may need to share information about you.
Any information about you is confidential and is kept securely in your personal file or sometimes on a project computer.
Before information about you is shared we need your permission to do so. We will ask your permission and this document will explain what this means prior to asking for your consent.

What do we do with your Information?
People working with you use it to understand your circumstances and provide the best help and services available. We may sometimes need to share your information with other agencies. We also use your information to produce reports and statistical analysis.

How do we Share Information?
The people working with you might use computers, speak to each other or write to each other.

What are the Benefits of Sharing Information?
The reason we gather and share information between named agencies is to ensure that you are provided with an effective high quality service.
Sharing information about you will provide many benefits:

- Reduce the number of times you are asked the same questions.
• Provide easier and quicker access to services, resources and support.
• Speed up decision making.
• To ensure your safety and the safety of others.
• To keep you better informed.

**What Information will be Shared?**
We only share information about you with other people if they need to provide services that will benefit you or if there is a duty to protect your safety or the safety of others. The type of information we will share will include:
- Personal Details e.g. date of birth, next of kin etc.
- Medical Information.
- Information regarding behaviour.

**Sharing Information with your Consent**
You will be asked to agree to information about you being shared and you will be asked to sign a consent form. Your worker will give you a copy of your consent form.

**Sharing Information without your Consent**
This will only happen if there is a legal requirement or duty of care for us to do so, e.g. to ensure your safety or the safety of others or if there is a risk of a crime being committed.

**Questions You Might Ask**

**How do I know what Information will be Shared?**
People involved in providing you with services and/or support will explain why we need to share your information, what information we are going to share and with whom.
Appendix 3

Consent to Share Information (b)

The Mungo Foundation is registered as a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 1998 – Registration Number Z5 88 89 and as such hold personal information about people who use our services.

The information is confidential and will not be disclosed or used by The Mungo Foundation or any member of staff for any other purpose than organising or providing care and/or support to the person named below.

From time-to-time we will need to share the information we have collected with others in order to co-ordinate the care and/or support that we give to people who use our services.

We will only share this information where it is necessary to organise and deliver care or support services or when we are legally obliged to do so, when we do share, we ensure that whomever we share it with treats it with the same level of confidentiality that our own staff do.

We will only share this information when the reason for doing so has been explained to the person to whom the information relates – or a person representing that person and you agree to allow this.

Name: ________________________________  Next of Kin Details

Address: ____________________________  Name: ________________________________

Name: ________________________________  Relationship: __________________________

Tel No: ______________________________  Telephone: ____________________________

Please sign below to indicate that the statements above have been explained to you and that you are willing to allow The Mungo Foundation to share the personal information it holds about you.

Signature: ____________________________  Date: ________________________________

Page 21