

# Autscape Participant Confidentiality Policy

## 1. General principles

- 1.1. Autscape recognises that committee members and other volunteers have access to information about individual Autscape participants during the course of their activities.
- 1.2. Autscape committee members and other volunteers with access to personal information will not disclose to anyone, other than Autscape committee members and individuals authorised by the committee, any information considered sensitive, personal, financial or private without the knowledge or consent of the individual.
- 1.3. There may be circumstance where committee members or other volunteers would want to discuss difficult situations with external advisers in order to gain a wider perspective on how to approach a problem. Either the committee's consent must be sought before discussing the situation or alternatively, a discussion may take place with external advisers provided those advisers have no involvement in the situation and that names and identifying information remain confidential.
- 1.4. Where there is a legal duty on Autscape to disclose information, the person to whom the confidentiality is owed will be informed that disclosure has or will be made.

## 2. Why information is held

- 2.1. Most information held by Autscape relates to the attendance of individual participants at Autscape.
- 2.2. Information is kept to enable the Autscape management committee to distribute information, collect registration fees, organise Autscape and meet the needs of participants.
- 2.3. Aggregated information which does not identify individual participants may be provided to external organisations such as funders.

## 3. Access to information

- 3.1. Information is confidential to Autscape as an organisation and may be passed to management committee members or other individuals authorised by the committee to carry out specific functions.
- 3.2. Where information is sensitive, i.e. it involves disputes or legal issues, it will be confidential to the management committee.
- 3.3. Participants may have sight of Autscape records held in their name. The request must be in writing to the Chair and be signed by the individual. Records will be provided within 40 days. A minimal fee, in accordance with the Data Protection Act, may be charged.
- 3.4. When working with confidential documents, committee members and other volunteers with access to participant information must ensure they are kept private. This also applies to information on computer screens.

#### **4. Storing information**

- 4.1. General information about participants is kept in a secure database with access limited to those committee members and other volunteers who require access in order to organise Autscope. Similar information may also be stored electronically on individual computers and transmitted by email and other means by committee members and other volunteers authorised by the committee.
- 4.2. Files containing confidential information should be labelled 'confidential' and stored responsibly.

#### **5. Duty to disclose information**

- 5.1. There is a legal duty to disclose some information including:
  - 5.1.1. Child abuse will be reported to the appropriate Social Services Department
  - 5.1.2. Drug trafficking, money laundering, acts of terrorism or treason will be disclosed to the police.
- 5.2. With due regard to participant's rights to confidentiality and autonomy, the committee **may** in exceptional circumstances decide to disclose information to the appropriate authorities where they believe an illegal act has taken place, or that a participant is at risk of harming themselves or others.
- 5.3. If such a disclosure is made, the participant concerned will be informed of this disclosure.

##### **5.3.1.1. Data Protection Act**

- 5.4. Information about individuals, whether on computer or on paper, falls within the scope of the Data Protection Act and must comply with the data protection principles. These are that personal data must be:
  - Obtained and processed fairly and lawfully.
  - Held only for specified purposes.
  - Adequate, relevant and not excessive.
  - Accurate and up to date.
  - Not kept longer than necessary.
  - Processed in accordance with the Act.
  - Kept secure and protected.
  - Not transferred out of Europe.

##### **5.4.1.1. Breach of confidentiality**

5.4.1.2. Participants who are dissatisfied with the conduct or actions of Autscope committee members or other volunteers in relation to confidential information should make a formal complaint to the Autscope management committee.

- 5.5. Autscope committee members and other volunteers authorised by the committee to have access to confidential information who breach confidentiality may face disciplinary action. Former committee members or other volunteers breaching confidentiality may face legal action.

#### **5.5.1.1. Whistleblowing**

5.5.1.2. Where a management committee member has concerns about the use of Autscope funds or other matters of legality or ethics, he or she may contact external agencies for advice outside of the usual grievance procedure. However the consent of the Chair, or preferably, the entire committee should be sought whenever possible. Such requests for advice should not breach the confidentiality of individual Autscope participants without the consent of the management committee.