

# KOOTENAY BOUNDARY DIVISION OF FAMILY PRACTICE POLICY

**Section:** 4. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

**Subheading:** 1.Communications

**Policy Number:** 4.1.3

**Policy Title:** Internal Communications Guidelines

## **Policy Statement:**

Directors, staff, and contractors, when conducting KBDFP business, will adhere to the following standards of communication:

1. Respect the audience, whether it be colleagues or others
2. Use clear vocabulary, avoiding acronyms and jargon
3. Endeavour to speak from one's knowledge and experience;
4. Express one's own point of view and encourage and make it comfortable for others to do so;
5. Use collaborative language, language that is not disparaging of others;
6. Communicate the decisions of the team in a manner fully consistent with the wording of the minutes
7. Do not discuss the confidential proceedings of meetings outside the meeting room (Confidential matters include differences of opinion, personnel matters, or any item which has been requested to be held in confidence.)

## **Application Guidelines:**

- a) For difficult situations
  - i. Staff and directors should feel safe to express differences of opinion free from interruption and without intimidation.
  - ii. Differences should be supported by facts where possible and/or clearly expressed as opinions.
  - iii. Individuals should practice discretion when expressing differences, where discretion includes confidentiality, using "I-statements", maintaining a level tone and volume
  - iv. Ensure clear agreement (perhaps supported by documentation) when a mutually agreeable result is determined (even if it is to agree to disagree).
- b) For electronic communication (e.g. email)
  - i. Email communication may be used for:
    - feedback regarding draft documents for which comments are specifically requested (more sensitive discussions should be saved for in-person meetings);
    - distribution of materials to be discussed at meetings: agendas, minutes, proposals, reports, and the like;
    - development of documents such as policy and proposals in order to provide opportunities for feedback;

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- decision-making on time-sensitive issues.
- ii. Send e-mails only to those individuals who have a direct role and interest in receiving the information and responding to it.
- iii. Respect the privacy of other recipients of messages. Do not forward documents with the names and addresses of other original recipients. Delete that part of the message before you send it. Include “Confidential” in the subject line when appropriate.
- iv. Use a single work-related address for Division correspondence.
- v. Note that email never “goes away”; it is always retrievable by, and therefore accessible to, someone with sufficient technical know-how.
- vi. Consider private face-to-face or telephone communication for dealing with emotionally laden issues or strong opinions.

**Responsibility:** Board of Directors

**Approved by:** Board of Directors

**Reviewed/Revised by:**

**Reference:**

**Date:** March 22, 2017

**Date:**