**Health and Safety Guidelines for Contracted Hypnotherapists, NLP Practitioners, Coaches, and Mentors**

**Routes for Change CIC**

**Introduction**

This document outlines the health and safety guidelines for contracted hypnotherapists, NLP practitioners, coaches, and mentors working with Routes for Change CIC. These professionals support 18-25-year-olds and vulnerable people in group settings at community spaces and one-to-one sessions in clinics. Adhering to these guidelines ensures a safe, supportive, and effective environment for both practitioners and clients.

**General Health and Safety Principles**

* **Compliance with Laws and Regulations**: All practitioners must comply with local, state, and national health and safety regulations.
* **Training and Certification**: Ensure all relevant certifications and trainings are up-to-date. This includes first aid, safeguarding, and any specific training related to hypnotherapy, NLP, or coaching.
* **Insurance**: Maintain adequate professional indemnity and public liability insurance.

**Venue Safety**

1. **Community Spaces**
	* **Risk Assessments**: Conduct a risk assessment before using any community space to identify potential hazards.
	* **Emergency Exits**: Ensure all emergency exits are clearly marked and accessible.
	* **Fire Safety**: Familiarize yourself with fire safety procedures, including the location of fire extinguishers and alarms.
	* **Cleanliness and Hygiene**: Ensure the space is clean and sanitary. Provide hand sanitizers and encourage their use.
2. **Clinics**
	* **Sanitization**: Regularly sanitize surfaces, especially in shared areas.
	* **Equipment Safety**: Ensure all equipment (e.g., chairs, therapy tools) is in good condition and safe to use.
	* **Confidentiality**: Ensure client confidentiality by having soundproof rooms and secure storage for records.

**Working with Vulnerable Individuals**

* **Safeguarding Policies**: Adhere strictly to Routes for Change CIC’s safeguarding policies. Report any concerns about a client's well-being immediately.
* **Client Boundaries**: Maintain professional boundaries to protect both the client and practitioner. Avoid dual relationships where conflicts of interest may arise.
* **Mental Health Awareness**: Be aware of the signs of mental distress and have a clear protocol for managing crises, including contact information for emergency mental health services.

**During Sessions**

1. **Group Sessions**
	* **Participant Safety**: Monitor group dynamics to ensure a safe and inclusive environment. Intervene if there are signs of bullying or harassment.
	* **Emergency Procedures**: Ensure all participants are aware of emergency procedures at the beginning of each session.
	* **Comfort**: Provide comfortable seating and ensure the environment is conducive to relaxation and focus.
2. **One-to-One Sessions**
	* **Initial Assessments**: Conduct a thorough initial assessment to understand the client’s needs and any potential health risks.
	* **Session Limits**: Keep sessions within a reasonable time limit to avoid fatigue for both the client and practitioner.
	* **Follow-Up**: Have a follow-up procedure to check on clients’ well-being after sessions.

**Personal Safety and Well-being**

* **Self-Care**: Practitioners should practice self-care to avoid burnout. Take regular breaks and seek supervision or peer support as needed.
* **Health**: Do not conduct sessions if you are unwell. Inform clients and reschedule appointments to prevent the spread of illness.
* **Protective Measures**: In the case of contagious diseases, follow health guidelines such as wearing masks and maintaining physical distance.

**GDPR Compliance**

* **Data Protection**: Ensure all client data is handled in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). This includes secure storage, processing, and sharing of personal information.
* **Consent**: Obtain explicit consent from clients before collecting, storing, or processing their personal data. Ensure clients are informed about how their data will be used.
* **Data Access and Deletion**: Provide clients with the right to access their personal data and request its deletion. Have a clear procedure for handling such requests.
* **Breach Notification**: In the event of a data breach, notify Routes for Change CIC immediately and take appropriate steps to mitigate the breach. Inform affected clients as required by GDPR.
* **Confidentiality**: Ensure all client information is kept confidential and only shared with authorized personnel when necessary and with client consent.
* **Training**: Regularly update training for all practitioners on GDPR compliance to ensure ongoing adherence to data protection standards.

**Incident Reporting and Feedback**

* **Incident Reporting**: Report any accidents, injuries, or near misses immediately using the provided forms and procedures.
* **Client Feedback**: Encourage clients to provide feedback to improve the quality and safety of services.
* **Continuous Improvement**: Regularly review and update health and safety practices based on feedback and new regulations.

**Conclusion**

Adhering to these health and safety guidelines ensures that Routes for Change CIC can provide a safe, effective, and supportive environment for both practitioners and clients. By maintaining high standards, we can better support the needs of 18-25-year-olds and vulnerable individuals in our community.