

Smoking and Substance Misuse Policy

Statement and Purpose of Policy

This policy defines Serenta Homecare philosophies and employment requirements in relation to smoking and substance misuse whilst staffs is on duty.

The aim of the policy is to:

- Protect and improve the health of the staff
- Protect and improve the health of Clients
- Protect both smokers and non-smokers from the danger to their health of exposure to second hand smoke
- Set an example to other employers and workforces

The purpose of this document is to clearly state the approach by which the policy is implemented.

The policy is part of a range of policies that together comprise the Serenta Homecare Health and Safety Policy.

Care Workers/Mental Health Support Worker will be encouraged not to smoke at all during duty hours, for Care Workers/Mental Health Support Worker that do smoke it must always be in mind that cigarette smoke clings to clothing which can be offensive when in close contact with the Client

Care Workers/Mental Health Support Worker are permitted to smoke on duty only under the following circumstances:

- Outside between visits taking the above into account
- Smoking is **Not Permitted** in Clients homes.

Clients should refrain from smoking whilst care is provided to protect the health and safety rights of employees.

It is recognised by management those certain aspects of carrying out caring duties can promote stressful circumstances for some Care Workers/Mental Health Support Worker. The management of stress amongst Care Workers/Mental Health Support Worker is recognised as a key responsibility within the service Risk Assessment programme, and it is policy that vigilance be maintained to identify the symptoms of stress so that appropriate action can be taken.

It is accepted that one of the consequences of progressive stress may be increasing reliance on mood altering substances, which can have far reaching implications for the service. Progressive substance abuse can lead to serious deterioration in the physical and mental

health of a staff member and will seriously impair his / her ability to fulfil the required duties.

This policy sets out the arrangements and procedures in place for addressing and managing the abuse of such substances by Care Workers.

All Care Workers/Mental Health Support Worker will be trained to identify as far as possible the causes of stress in their immediate working environment. This training will include corrective and / or preventive action that may be needed to remedy the situation, and may extend to external counselling, as appropriate.

Supervisory and managerial staff will be trained to identify the symptoms of substance abuse within the workplace. These symptoms may include the following:

- Regular / unexplained / prolonged sickness absences
- Deterioration in time keeping
- Changes in appearance / deportment
- Lack of concern over dress tidiness / cleanliness
- Lack of concern over personal hygiene
- Physical changes in appearance (spots / pallor / eyes, etc)
- Changes in mental condition / behaviour / attitude
- Depression / over emotional
- Inability to concentrate / irrational behaviour / deterioration in bodily
- Co-coordinative function

The types of substances commonly abused are defined as follows, according to the mental and physical effect on the body:

- Depressants / pain reducers – alcohol / tranquillisers /barbiturates /
- Heroin and heroin substitutes
- Stimulants – cocaine / nicotine / amphetamines
- Delirants – solvents / lighter fuels / glues
- Mind altering / hallucinogens – cannabis resin / LSD

It is management policy not to employ persons who are perceivably actively engaged in progressive substance abuse. However, due to the gradual and insidious nature of such illness each case of suspected, or proven, substance abuse will be dealt with on individual merits, which may depend upon circumstances. However, in all cases it will be ensured that neither the care services provided by Serenta Homecare, or the health and safety of any client or staff member, are compromised in any way.

The following procedure will be adopted for employees who actively abuse substances, or who are suspected of doing so.

The employee will undergo an initial interview with the Registered Manager with the following objectives.

To ensure that the employee fully appreciates the implications of substance abuse, the risks to his / her physical and mental well-being, the risks to others, and the ability to fulfil his / her duties.

To explain and emphasise Serenta Homecare policy with respect to the employment of persons actively engaged in substance abuse.

To offer the person the opportunity to admit that he /she needs help.

Depending upon the circumstances, the employee who admits a problem and declares a willingness to seek treatment may be offered annual/ sick leave to enable this treatment to be given. The length of annual/ sick leave granted will be discretionary.

Employees who successfully recover from this addiction may be retained in employment. However, Serenta Homecare retains the right to exercise an appropriate Company Disciplinary Procedure, including summary dismissal, in the following circumstances

Where the employee denies help / refuses to seek treatment / continues substance abuse.

Where the employee has lapsed back to abuse within a treatment programme.

All staff members who have been prescribed legitimate drugs by their GPs for existing medical conditions should report this fact to their supervisors to ensure that they are not inadvertently disciplined for taking improper medication.

Document Control

Date Approved: September 2026

Target Audience: All Serenta Homecare Staff

Review Date: September 2028

Author: Fran Beardsmore