

Working in Clients Homes & Lone Working Policy and Procedure

Statement and Purpose of the Policy

It is Serenta Homecare's responsibility to ensure that all Clients are treated as an individual respecting their values, dignity and beliefs, preferences and needs acknowledging that all employees working in the community are visitors in Service Homes.

1. Scope

- All Serenta Homecare Employees working in or visiting Clients in the community
- All Serenta Homecare Clients

2. Policy

All employees commencing work with Serenta Homecare will undertake induction training.

Serenta Homecare recognises that services provided are intrusive and our employees are guests in people's homes. Employees are there to provide the required service and are only permitted to complete tasks as specified within each individual's care-plans or complete quality monitoring visits.

Serenta Homecare expects all employees to be sensitive to Client's privacy at all times towards i.e.

- Ensuring Confidentiality
- By offering help and assistance in intimate situations as discreetly as possible.
- Only going in rooms in the property that are specific to the care being provided unless express permission is given by the Client.
- Are forbidden to discuss other Clients or employees

Employees are expected to maintain professional boundaries at all times i.e.

- Are to visit the Client only at the times specified by Serenta Homecare
- Are to be mindful of the language used and subjects discussed
- Not to expect gifts or gratuities as per policy gifts, gratitude's, and bequests to employees

3. Entering/Gaining Access to a Client's Home

It is Serenta Homecare expectation that the following requirements are followed by employees visiting a Client in the community:

- Parking courteously

- Where the Client is able to open the door and allow access employees are to knock or ring the door bell, where there is no answer and no other point of entry employees must contact the office to seek information as to where the Client is, the employee must not leave or move onto the next call until instructed to do so by a Senior Member of staff
- Using a key-safe
Treat any access details, key safe numbers or security details to the property as highly confidential as per confidentiality policy
Once employees access the property they are to ensure that the key-safe numbers are rolled on and not left for visitors to read
- Employees are to announce their presence in the property to avoid startling the Client

4. While in a Client's Home

- Employees are to act honestly and respect the Client's home and property there in
- Are to remember that they are a guest to the Client and should be helpful and courteous at all times using the preferred form of address of the Client i.e. Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss or by their first name or a nick name of the Client's choosing. This information will be documented in the Client's care plan.
- Employees are to remain vigilant in the Client's home and report any hazards to the office and document in the daily log notes
- Any accident or incident are to be reported to the office immediately and documented on an incident form.
- Employees are not to complete work in the absence of a client i.e. the Client is not home
- Not to invite any unauthorised visitors into the Client's home without their prior consent

5. Leaving a client's Home

- Employees are to ensure they have documented all tasks completed during the visit including any visitors that are present within the property at the visit time
- Perform a final check of the property i.e.
- Hobs, fires and heaters are turned off unless the Client has requested otherwise (in relation to fires and heaters ensuring it is safe to do so)
- Windows are closed unless the Client has requested otherwise
- Outer doors are secured
- The employee is to ensure that the Client knows they have departed the property

- Keys are returned to their rightful place
- Key safe numbers are rolled and not left for visitors to read

6. Lone Working

The risk of a violent assault occurring in a care environment is statistically quite low, but incidents of verbal abuse or threatening behaviour are becoming part of everyday life for many workers.

There is a legal requirement, which require all employers to have suitable systems in place for monitoring the whereabouts of their employees or at least be able to contact them if required to do so.

Serenta Homecare Managers will meet the legal obligations and provide employees with some practical guidelines to minimise the risks to their employees.

“So far as is reasonably practicable”

The requirement to undertake a suitable and sufficient Risk Assessment of all the hazards, which may be present in any given situation where the risks are foreseeable.

This Policy has been developed to ensure that the Serenta Homecare has:

- Provided safe working practices for employees
- Complied with appropriate legislation

It is the responsibility of the Serenta Homecare Management to ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, its employees are provided with a safe working environment.

Responsibilities of specific persons are:

- Promote and support the aims and objectives of this Policy
- As part of the dissemination of the Policy to ensure that employees are educated as to its purpose and status and ensure that arrangements are in place to bring any revisions to the attention of all employees.
- Ensure that arrangements exist for the investigation of any incident involving a ‘lone worker’
- Ensure that arrangements exist for the provision of safety systems, procedures, or devices
- Promote and support the aims and objectives of this Policy, and accord it equal importance with all other management functions
- Ensure that this Policy is disseminated, implemented, and monitored

- Ensure that any incident is reported in accordance with the Serenta Homecare Incident Reporting Policy
- Investigate, following Serenta Homecare Incident Reporting Policy guidance, any incident involving a lone worker and make recommendations to prevent a recurrence.
- Ensure that employees receive information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to perform their work safely. This should take place on an annual basis and be recorded and all managers should keep records of which employees have received this training, etc.
- Ensure that employees receive, and are trained to use, any safety devices or systems deemed necessary.

7. Employees

Have a responsibility to:

- Co-operate with Serenta Homecare in discharging its statutory duty to comply with the Health & Safety At Work Act 1974
- To take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions
- Ensure they do not interfere with, or misuse anything provided for their safety
- Report all incidents in accordance with Serenta Homecare Incident Reporting and Management Policy
- Familiarise themselves with the Serenta Homecare Health and Safety Policy and Incident Reporting and Management Policy.
- It is equally the responsibility of all employees to take care of their own health and safety and to co-operate with Serenta Homecare in discharging its statutory duties.
- Arrangements for safeguarding employees

The following elements within this Policy should collectively help safeguard lone workers:

- Risk Assessment
- Information sharing
- Employee/Client contact
- Notification of Visits
- Notification of Changes to Visits
- Notification at end of visit/end of shift
- Initial Employee Risk Assessment

- Community Risk Assessment
- Emergency Procedure
- Training
- Incident reporting
- Disciplinary Procedure

8. Risk Assessment

The Risk Assessment Process should commence at the first initial assessment process when recruiting. The Serenta Homecare Manager is responsible for ensuring that the recruitment process for people who will work alone embraces appropriate procedures that assist in ascertaining the suitability of the prospective employee to undertake their duties in such circumstances.

Next, and in accordance with the Health & Safety at Work Act and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations, a Risk Assessment should be completed for all 'lone worker' situations faced by his/her employees.

It is, of course, unrealistic to complete a Risk Assessment for each particular scenario, but Managers should, initially, complete a general Risk Assessment for the following six main hazards:

- Physical or sexual assault
- Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour
- Robbery/Theft/Criminal damage
- Road traffic accidents/breakdowns/punctures
- Slips/trips/falls

This Assessment should be reviewed when:

- There is any change to the system making it 'invalid' or
- There is a significant change to number of employees involved or
- After any incident involving a lone worker
- At least annually

Additional precautions required could be one, or a mixture, of the following:

- Working in pairs, where the Risk Assessment indicates a need
- Asking for Police presence
- Diffusion and self-protection technique training

A Risk Assessment can, if desired, be completed, not only for the six generic hazards listed above, but also for specific circumstances including:

- Particular geographical areas
- People
- Weather conditions
- Times of day/night.

9. Information Sharing

It is important that employees have access to good quality information regarding contacts and locations so that they can do their job efficiently and safely.

Where information is obtained which could have an immediate and/or serious effect on the safety of employees, the appropriate Manager or, if out of hours, the On Call Manager must be informed straightaway.

The Manager should ensure that there is an appropriate flow of information to and from other Services, especially where there is a higher risk of assault from a client, relative or Carer Worker/Mental Health Support Worker.

Employees must also be aware that if, at any stage during a visit, they feel unsafe, they should be reporting this to the Manager who should update the relevant records as necessary.

10. Employee/Client Contact

Employees should never give out their personal home telephone number, mobile number or pager number to a client, relative or Care Worker/Mental Health Support Worker.

Employees should ensure, wherever possible, that all Clients, relatives, and carers are aware of the proper channels of communication through which all requests of attendance must come.

11. Logging/out Access Care Planning

One of the most important arrangements of this Policy is the requirement for the Manager to know where their employees are up until the point they go home, so that their movements could be traced if necessary.

Furthermore, all Care Workers/Mental Health Support Worker should not alter their planned itinerary without prior consent from their line manager, this will then be adjusted in people planner so that scheduled alerts are accurate.

Serenta Homecare monitor all Client visits via Access Care Planning, Care Workers are required to log in and out via their individual QR codes or data tags. This enables Serenta Homecare to track visits and monitor the whereabouts of Care Workers/Mental Health

Support Worker. If, however in the unlikely event that a Care Worker/Mental Health Support Worker has not logged in for a scheduled care visit and Serenta Homecare are unable to trace the Care Worker details must be held in their personal files to enable us to notify relevant persons. At any time, the Managers becomes sufficiently concerned for the safety of an Care Worker/Mental Health Support Worker, an escalation procedure must be in place. Based on the seriousness of the situation and the discretion of the caller this escalation could be to the Police. If the Police are happy to act on a 'missing person' with immediate effect, providing Serenta Homecare have made every effort to trace the person concerned, and can justify their cause for concern.

These details should include, for each employee, their:

- Name
- Address
- Home telephone number
- Mobile phone
- Emergency contact
- Car registration, make and model

12. Notification of Visits

As previously mentioned, it is a requirement of the management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations that employers are aware of their employees movements, so far as is reasonably practicable, but without it being too onerous.

The hazards identified on the Risk Assessment Form present a higher level of risk at certain times of day, in certain weather conditions, or in certain places. It is under these circumstances that a higher level of caution needs to be exercised.

The method of notifying visits must be by mutual agreement between Managers and employees

13. Training

Employees working alone should know that their safety comes first. They should not be in situations, which make them feel unsafe.

To assist with completing the Risk Assessments, Managers should be aware of, and arrange as appropriate, training for employees falling within the scope of this Policy. Serenta Homecare provides mandatory training that includes risk assessments, which would be applicable to lone working.

14. Incident Reporting

Employees should make themselves familiar with the contents of Serenta Homecare 'Incident Reporting and Management Policy'.

Employees must complete an Serenta Homecare Incident Report Form for all incidents including near misses.

Managers must fully investigate all Incident Report Forms submitted to them and complete the appropriate action/areas for improvement sections in accordance with the Incident Reporting Policy.

15. Disciplinary Procedure

All employees are to be aware that it may be a disciplinary matter if they persistently fail to follow the guidelines for reporting in.

Document Control

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