

Autonomy and Choice in Domiciliary Care (England) Policy

Policy Statement

Every service user has the right to freedom and choice over how they wish to live their lives and to live with as much independence as is possible.

This policy describes this care service's approach to the autonomy and independence of its service users in line with its underpinning values and purpose and to comply with its registration conditions.

It is written in line with Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014, particularly 9: Person-centred Care, 10: Dignity and Respect, and 11: Need for Consent.

The Care Service's Understanding of Autonomy and Choice

The care service understands autonomy to be the freedom to choose and the right to live an independent life. It understands autonomy, as it applies to people receiving care and support in their own homes to cover basic choices such as the following.

1. Choice of how they want to be called or addressed.
2. Choice of how they want the service to be provided.
3. Choice in terms of being responsible for their medicines or of being supported to take them.
4. Choice of what to eat and drink if the service extends to providing meals.
5. Choice of times for receiving the service in line with their needs.
6. Choice in relation to the arrangement of their own environment.
7. Choice of who they wish to have with them when receiving the service.
8. Choice in term of who they seek advice from over their care and support needs.
9. Being in control of access to their accommodation.
10. Being in control of how their carers as "guests" in their house should use their premises and facilities.

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The care service also recognises its legal and moral duty to protect and care for service users, some of whom are vulnerable and may not always be capable of making choices that are in their best interests. It will, however, ensure that such service users are enabled to exercise as much choice as possible, eg having access to people and services that help them to express and exercise whatever choices they can make.

The service will also ensure that where people are unable to choose because of lack of mental capacity it will ensure all decisions taken on their behalf are in line with their best interests under mental capacity / incapacity law.

The Care Service's Approach to Respecting People's Autonomy

The care service's approach to autonomy is to ensure that its service users have as much freedom of choice in their service delivery within any conditions that are placed from the service's duty of care to both its services user and staff to keep them safe from any form of harm.

The Care Service's Responsibilities

The care service will do the following.

1. Respect people's independence, privacy and rights and their sense of dignity.
2. Always work within the limits of their contractual relationships and agreements made with their service users and commissioners where applicable.
3. Always work to the care plan that has been agreed with the service user.
4. Seek permission from service users in respect of gaining access to their premises and using any facilities to carry out their work.
5. Inform service users and their relatives and friends of how to address any concerns and complaints if they consider the care service is not respecting their rights to choose and be independent.
6. Ensure transparency in its care record -keeping and respect service users' rights to access their personal information in line with data protection laws.

Care Staff Responsibilities

Care service staff should remember the following.

1. Always be aware of and respect service users' rights to make their own decisions.
2. Avoid being overprotective or patronising to service users.
3. Never attempt to bully or use force to coerce service users to do anything that they do not wish to do.

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4. Remember their duty to protect service users and to ensure that they do not cause harm in any way.
5. Always respect every service user's rights to:
 - a. choose how they wish to be addressed
 - b. say how they want to use their time with their carers
 - c. say when they wish to receive their care
 - d. keep their environment as they see fit
 - e. choose who they wish to have in their house
 - f. manage their personal affairs in their own way
 - g. control access to their accommodation and how it is used
 - h. choose what they want to eat and drink (where applicable)
 - i. self-administer their own medication unless they seek support.

If for any reason a member of staff sees the need to limit or restrict any of these choices and freedoms, the reasons should be discussed with the service user and representatives, care service manager and a suitable entry written into the service user's care records.

Training

All staff receive training in person-centred care and support from their induction onwards, which includes recognition of service users' rights to be independent, an understanding of the risks that might be involved and how best to manage any risks that are identified.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Policy review date: _____

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