

Security of and Access to Service Users' Homes Policy

Policy Statement

This organisation recognises that home care and support workers should ensure the security and safety of service users and their homes at all times when providing personal care.

Aim

The aim of the policy is to ensure that service users are protected and are safe and secure in their homes.

Policy

Care and support workers should ensure the security and safety of the home and the service user at all times when providing personal care.

1. During the initial assessment, when care is planned, the security of the home should be discussed and an agreement reached about how the home care worker will effect entrance to the service user's home. This should be entered in the service user plan.
2. Home care staff should:
 - a. always carry their identification badge and show it to the service user on entry
 - b. always encourage service users to adopt safe home security practices wherever possible, including using door safety chains, even when they know that it is the home care worker at the door, and requesting identification.
3. Staff should never:
 - a. agree to leave a key outside a house, in a safe place or on string by the letterbox
 - b. attempt to effect forced entry to the home.
4. If it is decided that the home care worker should hold a copy of the service user's key, the permission of the service user or their relatives should be made in writing and a suitable entry made to the service user plan. Key holding should never be embarked upon without the express permission of the home care worker's line manager or supervisor or without an entry being made to the service user plan.
5. Staff who hold keys for service users should:

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- a. label the key with a code, never with the name and address of the service user, in case the key gets lost
- b. be careful that they keep the key in a safe place at all times
- c. inform their line manager immediately in cases of the loss or theft of keys.

The local Crime Prevention Officer is: _____

Protocol for Entering a Service User's Home

Home care staff should:

- a. knock or ring the doorbell or call out before entry, even if they hold a key and can let themselves in
- b. always show their identification badge on entry
- c. offer to check that windows and doors are secure before leaving a premises
- d. always check that the door is secure as they leave.

Identity Card Policy

In this organisation identity cards are provided for all care and support staff entering the homes of service users. The cards should:

- a. display a photograph of the member of staff
- b. display the name of the person and employing organisation in large print
- c. display the contact number of the organisation
- d. display a date of issue and an expiry date, which should not exceed 36 months from the date of issue
- e. be available in large print for people with visual disabilities
- f. be laminated
- g. be renewed and replaced within at least 36 months from the date of issue
- h. be returned to the organisation when employment ceases.

Procedures in the Event of Inability to Gain Access

The following procedure should be followed in cases where the home care worker attends premises but cannot get in or receive an answer from the service user.

Issue Date	12/03/2022	Review Date	11/03/2024	Version	1
Rainbow Direct Care www.rdcare.co.uk					

1. The home care worker should check in their diary that they have the right day/time/address.
2. The care worker should then knock several times and try to raise the service user by calling through the letterbox.
3. If there is still no answer the care worker should try phoning the service user or their relatives, or getting the agency office to do so.
4. If the problem is not resolved by phone the home care worker should report the situation to their line manager or supervisor, who will continue to attempt to contact the service user and/or their relatives.
5. If there is cause for concern as to the service user's wellbeing, the care worker should report this to the agency office and their line manager and/or supervisor, and the police should be contacted, either by the office or by the home care worker themselves.
6. On no account should the home care worker attempt to effect forced entry to the home. In the case of an emergency they should always contact the police or an ambulance and wait for them.
7. If the person appears not to be answering or is out deliberately to avoid receiving the arranged service, this could indicate a need for a review of the service agreement and care plan.

Training

All staff should understand this policy and know how to follow security procedures. Security training is included in the induction training for all new staff. In-house training sessions on security are conducted at least annually and all relevant staff attend.

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