



SUPPORT SERVICES

REGISTERED NUMBER CIC 11373253
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WORKING ALONE POLICY & PROCEDURES

Title of Policy: Working Alone

Effective Date: October 2019

Review Date: October 2020

Policy Number: 2

Policy Authorised by: Nicola Williams

Introduction

Allsorts Support Services CIC will be referred to as the organisation throughout this policy.

The organisation will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that employees and volunteers who are required to work alone or unsupervised for significant periods of time are protected from risks to their health and safety. Measures will be adopted to protect anyone else affected by solitary working.

Solitary working is not illegal, but it exposes employees and others to certain hazards. The employer's intention is either to entirely remove the risks from these hazards or, where complete elimination is not possible, to reduce them to an acceptable level. The organisation has developed policies and procedures to control these risks and protect employees, and employees should know and follow them.

The person responsible for the implementation of this policy is the Founder/Director Nicola Williams and the employee is essential to its success.

Definition of Lone Working

Staff in establishments where:

- Only one person is working on the premises
- A person is working separately from others within the same premises

Staff working away from their base

- Visiting or working with members of the public or services users
- Carrying out duties in the public domain which carry an element of risk

Arrangements for securing the Health and Safety of Employees

The Organisation will be responsible for assessing the risks of working alone, and record on an Organisation Risk Assessment Form and for devising safe working practices ensuring that the risks are minimised. These assessments will include the identification of hazards from, for example, means of access and/or egress, environment, service user's home, in the community, substances etc.

It is also important to emphasize that the individual who is working alone has a personal responsibility to ensure that they take all necessary steps to minimise risk.

Procedure for Out of Hours Lone Working

The Organisation will arrange local procedures for Out of Hours lone working.

Training

The Organisation will arrange any staff learning and development to include personal safety as part of the organisation introduction training.

The focus of training is the management of personal safety and prevention of incidents.

Reporting of Incidents

The Organisation requires that all incidents are reported by the individual concerned immediately following the event, using the Organisation's Incident Reporting Procedures.

Responsibilities of Management

- To ensure that this policy is implemented by all members of staff and volunteers
- To ensure that adequate monitoring is undertaken to identify the efficiency of the policy

To ensure that every member of staff and volunteer who comes into contact with service users, members of the public, or work alone is trained as a minimum in:

- Personal Safety, De-escalation techniques and Break-away techniques and to ensure that the training is mandatory
- To ensure that all incidents are reported and recorded using the Organisation's established systems
- To ensure that staff making occasional home visits follow this policy
- To ensure that all staff are trained in all relevant and related policies e.g. Violence to Staff, Harassment etc
- To ensure that Risk Assessments as detailed in this policy are conducted and reviewed where necessary, including for all staff whose work takes them out into the community
- To ensure that local arrangements are reviewed regularly
- To provide adequate resources, staffing and equipment to implement measures required under the risk assessment to allow safe working

Responsibilities of Management

- To make sure all members of staff are aware of the procedure for Out of Hours and Lone Working that are operational within the organisation
- To ensure that appropriate clinical, environmental and activity based risk assessments are undertaken as detailed in this policy and that such assessments are shared with the whole team
- To ensure that staff comply with safety measures and procedures determined by these risk assessments
- To ensure the provision for regular review and discussion of reporting policies and guidelines at local level with the work team
- To provide clear guidelines about the types of incident that should be reported. This includes verbal as well as physical aggression from whatever source, and incidents that were potentially dangerous but were resolved (near misses)
- To communicate clear procedures for incident reporting to all staff and volunteers
- To provide support on a regular basis for staff who encounter aggression through supervision, peer review or Resolve
- To require and facilitate sharing of information between different community teams, and between hospital wards and community teams, when staff safety may be compromised
- To ensure staff are aware of how to identify risks on the patient record where this is available

Debriefing

The Management must ensure that a debriefing session is organised following any untoward incident or any incident which was potentially dangerous (near miss). It is important that members of staff receive support following such incidents and that the lessons learnt from the experience are shared with other members of staff to prevent these incidents occurring again. The process of debriefing also encourages members of staff to take responsibility for ensuring that they take on board the benefit of others' unfortunate experiences.

Responsibilities of Employees

- The onus is on individuals to take their own safety seriously
- Check that you are familiar with staff procedures which relate to employee safety
- Ensure that you undertake the training provided for you by the Organisation in personal safety, the prevention and management of violence and aggression and risk management
- Report any untoward incidents, accidents or near misses to Management immediately
- Familiarise yourselves with the Organisation's policies and all risk assessments available

Guidelines for community staff /volunteers on working alone safety policy

Introduction

These guidelines have been developed to increase the safety of all staff working alone in the community. However, professionals must take all reasonable steps to minimise risks. The policy and guidelines provide a basis for the improved risk management of service users, families and carers

Risk Management

Predicting risk – through assessment and history taking

Managing risk – through joint working, self-reporting and increased communication systems

Recording risk – as per the Organisation incident recording and monitoring

Communicating risk – potential of new information system

Ability to identify when staff members/volunteers are overdue, establishing local protocols for Out of Hours working

Routing Procedures

Assessing Risk

Staff should gain as much information as possible about the service user prior to visiting;

- check clinical risk assessment
- check the service user's record where available
- speak to any other professionals/relatives who know the service user
- prior to initial assessment, every effort must be made to identify if this new assessment poses any danger or risk

Ensuring Known Whereabouts

The Organisation should ensure that the staff member Administrator/buddy/nominated person knows where they are by displaying a full flight plan detailing:

- Service user to be visited
- Locations to be visited (if not service users home address)
- Anticipated time of return (if they're delayed they should contact the staff member Administrator/buddy/nominated person and ask that the flight plan be updated)
- Contacting the Team Administrator/buddy/nominated person if they do not intend to return after their final visit
- Contacting the Team Administrator/buddy/nominated person at least every three hours
- Additionally the make, colour and registration of the car that they are using should be recorded and made available to the Team Administrator/buddy/nominated person

Procedure if Staff have not returned at a given time

If not back within 60 minutes of the specified time: The Organisation's Team Administrator/buddy/nominated person should inform Management who should then:

- Contact the member of staff on their mobile phone and home telephone number
- Where possible make telephone contact with service user on the flight plan
- Arrange for two staff to visit the service user who are not contactable
- Contact the Police to request search using flight plan and car registration information
- Ensure all necessary actions are taken to locate missing personnel
- Complete Incident Report

Communications

Staff should carry mobile phones with them at all times and ensure that they are switched on. If they need to switch the telephones off for any reason, they should inform the Team Administrator when switching off and when they switch on again.

Initial Assessments

Wherever possible, initial assessments/meetings should be held in the Service Users own home.

Joint Visits

Staff should carry out joint visits and / or see the service user at an alternative venue when visiting service users who are:

- New assessments, unless negligible risk has already been identified

- Not known to them and require an urgent visit
- Identified as a risk through clinical risk assessments
- To themselves through neglect or self harm
- To others through threats of violence

Enlisting Police Assistance

If after carrying out the above precautions, staff still have concerns about visiting a service user and a visit is essential, contact the Police.

- Inform the police where and when visiting
- What their concerns are e.g. risks of violence?
- What assistance they require e.g. police escort or an officer in the vicinity
- Ask for an incident number (this can be quoted when assistance is required)

Procedure for staff experiencing difficulty in a service user's home

Staff should try to contact the Team administrator or the Police by phone. Stating their location and if possible what assistance they require. Staff subject to physical danger should only employ “breakaway” techniques as a last resort where de-escalation has failed and a clear escape route is available

- obtain as much information as possible about the service user, their families and the contact location
- give service users information about your role and the planned appointment so that they know what to expect
- be aware of your own safety at all times while travelling and at contact locations
- continually reassess the risks and do not enter any location where you do not feel safe
- follow team procedures for keeping in touch with base, checking out and checking in at agreed times
- follow procedures for “signing off” at the end of your work period

- You must prepare a flight plan for your working day/week and ensure the Team Administrator/buddy/nominated person has this

Whilst travelling:

- Allow adequate time for the journey
- Lock your vehicle whilst driving
- Park as near as practicable to the address to be visited, in such a position as to be able to drive straight off
- Avoid as far as possible, waste ground, isolated pathways and subways particularly at night
- Carry your identification with you and show it when you arrive at your destination
- You must report all incidents to the Management

Please ensure you are aware of who to report to and if any doubt, speak to Nicola Williams.