

MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

OUTCOME 7, REGULATION 11 (Safeguarding People who use Services from Abuse)

Name: Anonymous Care Ltd.

Purpose of this Document

This policy makes clear the business's expectations with regard to the completing of work sheets used to record the making of a call or visit to a service user's home, and the accountability of staff with regards to their conduct using social networking sites. The policy includes how the business monitors staff working patterns and the actions that it takes if it discovers that staff have been falsifying records, for example, by recording that they have made a visit when for some reason it has not been made. The need for such a policy has arisen because of a (hopefully small) number of publicised incidents in which domiciliary care workers have been known to have falsified time or work sheets. In addition, networking sites have become a popular social pastime and this policy sets out how Anonymous Care Ltd. expects its staff to conduct themselves whilst using those sites.

Scope with regard to Timesheets, Visits and Journeys

The policy applies to all care staff who have a schedule of visits and who need to record accurately the fact that:

1. they have made the visit
2. the duration of the visit, and
3. journey times between visits.

Policy Statement

The business provides its care staff with a schedule of visits, which provides for some flexibility in that each set of work tasks always needs to be completed fully and to the satisfaction of the service user. This can sometimes result in the schedule being disrupted and delayed.

The business also operates on the basis that there needs to be a certain level of trust placed in staff to carry out their work satisfactorily and it encourages transparency and honesty in the use of time. It expects staff to communicate any difficulties being experienced say in travelling and in obtaining entry to a service user's home.

The business's policies on *Missing Persons, Home Security and Key Holding* address the main contingencies in which visits might not be

competed as scheduled or result in delays, which can disrupt the rest of the worker' schedule.

In all of these instances the care worker is expected to contact their supervisor, line manager or office at the earliest opportunity and to discuss appropriate ways of proceeding.

The Use of Time Sheets

The time or work sheets that the business asks a care worker to complete on a daily basis provide a tool to enable the business to exercise its accountability for the service that it provides to its users and to its commissioners.

To complete the time sheet, the business requires the care worker to record the time of arrival at a house and of departure, obtaining the service user's signature or that of someone else in the household wherever possible. If this is not possible then the space should be left blank. The business will try to obtain specimen copies of "authorised" signatures from service users or representatives in advance to help with the checking.

The line manager will collect time sheets on a weekly basis and carry out a check to assess the visits have been made as planned and to take note of any issues indicated by the records. The manager might make spot checks by telephoning a sample of service users to make sure they have received the visits as planned and to discuss any quality issues arising.

When making their supervisory visits to service users' homes to comply with care standard 21.3, the manager will also check care plans and records held in the home to verify that the visits have taken place as planned. Managers will also use review meetings as a monitoring vehicle.

The business expects that its care staff will be able to account for any significant discrepancies or departures from the agreed schedules. It will use staff meetings and supervision to discuss any workload difficulties that might be experienced.

However, it does expect honesty and transparency and will take disciplinary measures if it discovers that there has been deliberate falsifying of time sheets and care workers have not been carrying out their agreed work schedules. The outcome could result in a worker's dismissal.

Also if it has been proved that care workers by their misconduct — for example, not making calls when they have recorded them — have caused harm or possible harm to service users, the business will be legally required to refer them for possible inclusion on the Protection of

Vulnerable Adults list, which would bar them from future care work. In some cases, the business might need to refer the matter to the police if it considers the care worker might have committed a criminal offence.

Scope of Policy with regards to Social Networking Sites Use

There are various numbers of these sites including

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Myspace
- Flickr
- YouTube

Policy

Anonymous Care Ltd. expects all staff to be familiar with the General Social Care Council's Code of Practice, particularly in regards to the upholding of public trust and confidence in social care services. It is important for staff to remember that these are social sites and that anything regarding work should not be on any of these forums. Where staff need to discuss any matter regarding work, this should be kept within the workplace and discussed in the first place with their line manager. If this does not resolve the issue, the staff grievance procedure is available. It is vital that staff do not involve service users, their families or representatives on these sites as confidentiality and the Data Protection Act could be breached. Flickr in particular can be easily misused. Pictures or videos of service users must remain private eg Birthday Party photos etc. Where any misuse of these sites has been brought to the attention of Anonymous Care Ltd. the disciplinary procedures will come into play where appropriate.

Signed

Date: 01/10/2010

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