

Morecare Health and Safety Policy

Purpose of Policy

MORECARE's policy is to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all its volunteers and service users. It will provide such information, training and supervision, as its volunteers and service users need to meet this end. The policy will follow compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974).

Responsibilities

- ✓ The Management Committee of MORECARE will hold the overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy. The committee will take collective responsibility for drawing the attention of volunteers to any health and safety matters that may need to be discussed and/or acted upon.
- ✓ A nominated volunteer will monitor the effectiveness of the MORECARE Health and Safety policy. The monitoring will look at the number and type of accidents and incidents occurring and the understanding and knowledge of the policy by volunteers and service users.
- ✓ A nominated volunteer, with the support of the management committee, will investigate potential hazards and dangerous occurrences in any venues where volunteers are operating.
- ✓ A nominated volunteer, with the support of the management committee, will investigate any complaints by any volunteer relating to Health and Safety or welfare at work.
- ✓ The nominated volunteer will make representations to the Management Committee on matters arising out of any investigations.
- ✓ The Committee will ensure that all volunteers have read a copy of the Health and Safety policy.
- ✓ A nominated volunteer will establish and maintain an accident book.

Duties

Volunteers and service users have a duty to co-operate in the operation of this policy by:

- ✓ Working safely and efficiently and without endangering the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues or the general public
- ✓ Familiarising themselves with the policy statement and general health and safety arrangements
- ✓ Informing named first aiders of any aspects of their medical history which they feel may be relevant in case of accident
- ✓ Using proper procedures for cleaning up body fluids
- ✓ Using appropriate care in the use of dangerous substances.
- ✓ Logging all accidents in the accident book by contacting the duty phone co-ordinator
- ✓ Bringing to the notice of the Management Committee any potentially dangerous circumstances that the volunteer and service user are unable to put right

Reporting Arrangements

- ✓ An accident book will be set up and maintained by the duty co-ordinator. This will serve as a register for all accidents and injuries. The register will include the
 - date of the accident
 - name, address and occupation of the person injured
 - nature of the injury
 - place where the accident occurred and brief description
 - name of person recording the incident and names of any witnesses
- ✓ MORECARE will, in line with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1985, report any fatal accidents, major injury, dangerous occurrence, accidents causing incapacity for more than 3 days and work related diseases to the local authority's Environmental Health Department.
- ✓ A written record of the accidents will be kept for at least 3 years.

Training

- ✓ A nominated volunteer will undergo suitable training in the field of Health and Safety and advise volunteers of job safety and accident prevention
- ✓ The Management Committee will recommend any training that may be necessary.

Compliance with Regulations

Electricity at Work Regulations 1991, Workplace (Health and Safety)

Regulations 1992, Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations

1992, Working Time Regulations 1998 The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH)1988

MORECARE will ensure the maintenance of equipment and systems:

- ✓ Guidance on how to use equipment will be available to all volunteers and service users. It is the responsibility of volunteers and service users to ensure that they are familiar with the instructions for operating equipment before doing so.
- ✓ MORECARE will not accept any liability for accidents resulting from the misuse of equipment or using incorrect equipment for a given task.

Hired premises

- ✓ Stairs, Corridors and workplaces will be adequately lit and kept clear of obstruction.
- ✓ Furniture, furnishings, fittings, walls, ceilings, kitchens and toilet areas will be cleaned regularly.
- ✓ Rubbish will be stored in suitable receptacles.
- ✓ Floors will be kept clear of all obstacles which might impede access or egress.
- ✓ Premises will be effectively ventilated and maintained at a temperature of at least 16c degrees.
- ✓ Dangerous substances will be stored safely in locked facilities.
- ✓ Fire escapes will be clearly marked and unobstructed. Appropriate up to date fire extinguishers will be available to deal with small fires. Fire alarms will be clearly audible and regularly tested.

Volunteers' Vehicles

- ✓ Volunteers' vehicles need to be in a roadworthy condition and carry particular items suitable for the prevailing weather conditions.
- ✓ Volunteers should ensure that no substances hazardous to health are carried in their vehicles when on Morecare duty

Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992.

- ✓ Volunteers should not put themselves at risk by attempting to lift or support clients or heavy objects. Any assistance offered should be in line with the handling policy
- ✓ Any volunteer feeling a strain should stop immediately and record the incident in the Accident Book. To continue may result in more serious injury.

Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992

Morecare will ensure that all users of VDUs are enabled to operate in compliance with the above regulations.

Fire, bomb and other emergencies

MORECARE will ensure as precautions in case of fire in hired or borrowed premises

- ✓ volunteers and clients have a safe means of escape, kept free from obstructions and clearly marked
- ✓ management committee members know what to do if a fire starts, especially how to raise the alarm. Fire action instructions must be clearly displayed. There may be a fire drill periodically
- ✓ the fire alarms work and that people can hear them everywhere over normal background noise
- ✓ Morecare policy in case of emergencies is to clear the premises and then call the emergency services

Contractors

The health, safety and working practices of the employees of contracted companies remain the responsibility of their direct employers.

Lone Working

Definition and Purpose

The definition of a lone worker is any individual who, in the process of carrying out their activities on behalf of MORECARE, may find themselves alone or in an area isolated from colleagues. This will include:

- ✓ Those on home visits or driving
- ✓ Volunteers doing tasks from home
- ✓ Those active out of hours
- ✓ Volunteers doing tasks separately from others

MORECARE recognises that volunteers are required to work by themselves for significant periods of time in the community, in isolated work areas and outside office hours. Thus the purpose of this policy is to protect volunteers, as far as reasonably practicable, from the risks of working in these circumstances, and to reduce the number of incidents or injuries to volunteers relating to lone working. MORECARE will provide such information, training and supervision, as its volunteers need to meet this end. Volunteers should inform a household member or the telephone co-ordinator when undertaking Morecare activities.

Principles

MORECARE takes seriously the welfare, health and safety of all volunteers

- ✓ MORECARE believes that violence towards volunteers is unacceptable and that volunteers have the right to be able to perform their tasks without fear of abuse or violent acts. No volunteer should consider violence or abuse to be an acceptable part of their job, and MORECARE aims to take steps to manage those people who harass, abuse or assault its volunteers.
- ✓ There are a number of different situations wherein volunteers are required to work alone and it would be impractical to address each individually. Each co-ordinator will prepare a procedural document which sets out practical systems to protect lone workers. These should be read in conjunction with this policy – see Morecare Packs
- ✓ This policy is designed to support and strengthen any existing lone working policies already operating through joint working in partner agencies, for example the Health Centre

Responsibilities

MORECARE recognises that it has an obligation under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999), for the health and safety and welfare at work of its volunteers. The Management Committee of MORECARE will hold the overall responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of this policy.

- ✓ The designated Health and Safety officer and the co-ordinators will be delegated responsibility for ensuring compliance with it, and for reporting associated security management issues to the Management Committee
- ✓ They will have responsibility for identifying hazards, assessing the risks and implementing practical measures to avoid or control the risks. They will also be responsible for ensuring that all volunteers are aware of the policy, promoting and supporting it and sharing learning from any incidents with the wider management team – see Morecare Packs
- ✓ All volunteers undertaking lone working have a responsibility to make themselves familiar with procedures, to follow them and to take reasonable steps to protect their own health and safety and that of others. This includes the reporting of incidents or concerns to the relevant line manager and ensuring that their whereabouts, contact details and time of expected return are known when undertaking lone working.

Procedures

Co-ordinators where lone working either happens or is being considered will carry out risk assessments, bearing in mind that personal safety is likely to be the highest additional risk factor

High-risk activities may include:

- ✓ Working with vulnerable adults
- ✓ Visiting clients in their own homes
- ✓ Volunteers handling cash and/or banking
- ✓ Tasks with people who have a history of known risks e.g. violence and/or aggression
- ✓ Tasks within isolated areas

- ✓ Tasks within known high risk areas;

The risk assessment will provide an indication as to whether the work can or cannot be done safely alone. If the risk assessment indicates unacceptably high levels of risk then the work should not be undertaken, unless further safe working arrangements are implemented, for example, meeting in a public place or to have two people working together.

Factors to consider when carrying out the risk assessment include:

- ✓ Does the activity need to be carried out alone?
- ✓ Should the activity be specially authorised before lone working can begin?
- ✓ Does the environment present a special risk to the lone worker?
- ✓ Is there a record or history of violence, aggression, verbal and physical abuse or racism at the location?
- ✓ Is there a potential risk of violence/aggression?
- ✓ Are there drug, alcohol or mental health issues to be considered?
- ✓ Does the task being undertaken with the person have the potential to cause them to become angry?
- ✓ Can one person adequately control the risks of the activity?
- ✓ What training is needed to make sure volunteers are competent in safety matters, and have they received it?
- ✓ How will the person be supervised?
- ✓ Are people especially at risk in the lone working situation due to their gender, disability, age, race, religion or sexuality?
- ✓ Are new, inexperienced or younger volunteers especially at risk if they work alone?
- ✓ What happens if a person becomes ill, has an accident, or if there is an emergency?
- ✓ Are there systems in place for contacting and tracing those who work alone?
- ✓ Will the task be taking place out of hours?

Details of the risk assessment should be recorded on paper or a retrievable electronic database.

If lone working is considered necessary, procedures will be in place to monitor lone workers to ensure that they remain safe, these may include:

- ✓ reducing the risk of recurrence of similar incidents by learning about any unforeseen risks, deviations from policy or protective factors. Learning can then be cascaded through the organisation. Reporting incidents is therefore of great importance
- ✓ Regular contact between the lone worker and a manager or colleague, whether by telephone or face to face
- ✓ Use of mobile telephones and code words to alert colleagues to danger
- ✓ Procedures designed to raise the alarm if contact is lost with a lone worker

FINALLY

If a crime has been committed, or any person feels threatened or in danger, then the police should be called immediately, either by the volunteer at risk or their colleagues, and full co-operation is to be given to them. In the event of an incident involving a volunteer, the relevant co-ordinator should immediately ensure that the volunteer receives any necessary medical treatment and/or advice. He or she and the volunteer's colleagues should offer listening support and the availability of any confidential counselling should be made clear to the volunteer whenever appropriate.

Reporting Arrangements

- ✓ All volunteers should familiarise themselves with the accident and incident reporting procedures in use within their team.
- ✓ Volunteers should report all incidents to the duty co-ordinator at the earliest opportunity.
- ✓ Volunteers should also report 'near misses' where they feel threatened or 'unsafe' even if this was not a tangible event or experience

Failure to report an incident may put others at risk.

Training: The Management Committee will ensure that all volunteers being asked to undertake lone working have access to training in personal safety and that this is updated at appropriate intervals.