

RELATIVES, FRIENDS AND CARERS

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Policy Statement

This organisation is committed to involving relatives, friends and representatives as part of the partnership working that inevitably results from formulating a package of care; however, no assumption should be made regarding the sharing of information with or the involvement of relatives, friends and representatives in the care planning process. Consent to share any written or verbal information must be expressly provided by the resident, with any deviance from this being recorded in the care plan, assessment of need or pre-admission assessment. This ensures that staff know exactly who can be involved in the sensitive discussions around the resident and their needs. This document outlines the policy of this organisation in relation to involving relatives, friends and representatives in our dealings with residents.

The Policy

This organisation recognises that the services it provides to a resident are only one part of the network of care and support on which the resident depends. We will always strive, therefore, to cooperate with and assist any relatives, friends and representatives whom a resident identifies to us. We believe that each resident should be able, in ways and at a level decided by them, to maintain relationships with relatives, friends, and representatives, and that those parties should be consulted and involved in any aspect of the assessment, care and support of a resident that the resident wishes. We view relatives, friends and representatives as partners in caring for residents and, subject always to the principle that the needs and wishes of the resident remain paramount, we value and encourage their involvement in the life and work of the organisation. We always strive to deal courteously with the relatives, friends and representatives of residents.

Specific Procedures

-  Staff of the organisation will only communicate with relatives, friends and representatives of a resident with the resident's express permission. We will always respect the resident's right to privacy in their affairs, particularly in relation to information about them that is held by or known to the organisation. Subject to those limitations, we will attempt to involve named relatives, friends and representatives in all appropriate areas of a resident's assessment and care
-  Before providing services to a resident we will offer both comprehensive information on the organisation's services and facilities as well as the contract of service to any relative, friend or representative whom the prospective resident identifies to us; written material is offered in an appropriate language, style and format
-  In carrying out the needs assessment or pre-admission assessment of a prospective resident we will consult any appropriate relative, friend or representative, and will fully take into account any information they supply about the resident and about their relationship to the resident, whilst respecting their privacy and other rights. We will be especially sensitive in situations where our staff visit a prospective resident in a property where a relative, friend or representative also resides
-  If appropriate, we will, in the course of carrying out a needs assessment, seek and take into account information about the needs and wishes of any relative, friend or representatives as indicated by the resident
-  We will be responsive to information provided by relatives, friends and representatives during any further assessment or re-assessment of a resident's situation carried out during their period of their receiving services

-  We will take particular care in dealing with the relatives, friends and representatives of residents who come from minority cultures, ensuring that our staff are familiar with and respectful of practices relating to families, kinship and social relationships
-  We will involve appropriate relatives, friends and representatives in creating, reviewing and implementing the resident plan of the resident to whom they are related or connected
-  We will involve appropriate relatives, friends and representatives in all aspects of the day-to-day care that our staff provide for a resident, if this is desired by both parties; consult them in advance, if possible, and involve them in the decision about any change of staff; and will keep them fully informed on issues relating to the care provided
-  We will record the names and contact details of relatives, friends and representatives with whom the resident wishes us to communicate. With the involvement of the resident, we will identify the circumstances in which they are to be informed or contacted about any significant development
-  We will take all possible steps to encourage and facilitate contact between residents and their relatives, friends and representatives, by helping in arrangements if a resident wishes to welcome visitors to the home
-  The relatives, friends and representatives of a resident who have been named by the resident as approved by them will have access to that resident's record whenever they require it
-  We will encourage, enable and empower the relatives, friends and representatives of a resident to make complaints and suggestions about the service and ensure that these are promptly investigated and, where appropriate, acted on
-  We will systematically seek the views of the relatives, friends and representatives of a resident on the services the organisation provides, using consultation processes and surveys, and will incorporate this material into our quality-assurance procedures
-  We will encourage and assist the formation of groups of relatives, friends and representatives both locally and nationally as an aid to expressing views in a way that can lead to improvements in our services
-  We will never act to restrict contact between a resident and their relatives, friends and representatives, except at the request of a resident
-  We will be particularly responsive to the need to involve and cooperate with relatives, friends and representatives at times of the increasing infirmity, terminal illness or death of a resident; will show sensitivity to any special requests made to us regarding rituals, cultural practices or required methods of care associated with dying and death; and will try to respond to the needs of relatives, friends and representatives before and after the death of a loved one. Family, friends or representatives are welcome to sit with their loved ones throughout the night.
-  If a resident expresses a wish that the organisation should cease contact with a relative, friend or representative, that wish will be respected
-  If a resident expresses a wish to cease to have contact with a relative, friend or representative, we will support them, as far as possible, in carrying out that decision
-  If it is apparent or suspected that a resident is suffering any form of abuse from a relative, friend or representative, we will take all necessary steps to protect the resident, including reporting this to the relevant authorities and collaborating in any further investigation and action
-  We will respect the right of a resident, at any stage, to appoint a representative to deal with the organisation on their behalf; furthermore, we recognise that this may be someone other than the relatives, friends and representatives with whom we previously had contact. We will provide information to residents, relatives, friends and representatives about independent advocates who can act on their behalf and about self-advocacy schemes.
-  We encourage continued contact with friends and or family. We recognise our duty of care to our residents and staff and the resident is involved with the planning and any assessment of risk.
-  Our Sexuality Policy lays out our support to residents who wish to continue more intimate relationships with friends.

 We recognise our duty of care to visitors, however visitors are reminded of their responsibility to their own health and safety and that they must not at any time knowingly put themselves or others at risk.

 Where applicable, if the resident asks for a friend to stay in their room with them the visitor is requested to provide their own portable bed and is responsible for it.

 Visitors are informed that when staying overnight, the home cannot be responsible for the safekeeping of any personal possessions.

 See also our Sexuality Policy

Related Policies

Adult Safeguarding

Care and Support Planning

Meeting Needs