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## HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

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### 1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 The Directors of MOONSTONE CARE recognise their responsibility to ensure that all reasonable precautions are taken to provide and maintain working conditions that are safe, healthy and compliant with all statutory requirements and codes of practice. MOONSTONE CARE adheres fully to *Regulations 12 safe care and treatment — Safe Working Practices of the Standards for Domiciliary Care Agencies*, published in accordance with the **Social Care Act 2008**, which relates to the degree to which staff and service users are protected by the organisation's policies and procedures.

### 2. Legal Requirements

- 2.1 The legal requirement to have a health and safety policy is a direct obligation arising from the **Health and Safety at Work etc, Act 1974**. It requires that every employer with five or more employees must prepare and revise as often as necessary a written health and safety policy for the workplace and must explain the arrangements for putting that policy into force. This policy and any revision must be brought to the notice of employees. The failure to have a written health and safety policy can result in the issue of an improvement notice ordering the matter to be attended to within a fixed period. Non-compliance can result in prosecution and a fine.

### 3. Aim of the Policy

- 3.1 This policy is intended to set out the values, principles and policies underpinning the approach to safe working practices by managers and staff of MOONSTONE CARE.

### 4. Health and Safety at Work Policy

- 4.1 The Directors of MOONSTONE CARE are committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its staff, so far as is reasonably practicable, and of all other persons who may be affected by our activities including service users and their relatives. Each Manager will take the following steps to ensure that its statutory duties are met at all times.

- a) Each employee should be given such information, instruction and training as is necessary to enable the safe performance of work activities.
- b) All processes and systems of work should be designed to take account of health and safety and will be properly supervised at all times.
- c) Adequate facilities and arrangements will be maintained to enable employees to raise issues of health and safety.
- d) Competent persons should be appointed to assist in meeting statutory duties including, where appropriate, specialists from outside the organisation.
- e) This document will be regularly monitored to ensure that its objectives are achieved. It will be reviewed and, if necessary, revised in the light of legislative or organisational changes.

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**5. Duties on the organisation**

5.1 The Directors of MOONSTONE CARE recognise their responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work, etc Act 1974 and the **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999** (MHSWR) to ensure that all reasonable precautions are taken to provide and maintain working conditions which are safe, healthy and compliant with all statutory requirements and codes of practice. Employees, service users, contractors and visitors are expected to abide by safety rules and to have regard to the safety of others at the organisation.

5.2 MOONSTONE CARE policy will be, so far as is reasonably practicable, to:

- a) make a risk assessment of every service user's home before a member of staff is allocated to that home
- b) negotiate appropriate risk management measures to reduce any identified risks or hazards to an acceptable level
- c) communicate agreed risk management measures to care staff involved and ensure regular monitoring of risk levels
- d) provide and maintain equipment in such a way that it is safe and healthy to use
- e) assess, monitor and carry out portable appliance testing (PAT) on electrical and work equipment.
- e) provide any relevant and appropriate protective equipment or clothing required by staff to perform their role safely
- f) arrange for the safe and healthy use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances
- g) provide the information, instruction, training and supervision required to ensure the health and safety, at work, of employees and others
- h) control and maintain the organisation's offices in a safe condition, with appropriate risk assessments and management as above
- i) provide a safe means of access to and exit from the place of work
- j) maintain a working environment that is safe, healthy and equipped with adequate facilities and arrangements for welfare at work
- k) conduct, record and implement the findings from regular risk assessments performed in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- l) in the event of any accident or incident (such as a near miss) involving injury to anybody to make a full investigation and to comply with statutory requirements relating to the reporting of such incidents
- m) appoint a health and safety officer.

5.3 The health and safety officer for MOONSTONE CARE is:

Tutu A. Idris - Manager

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**6. Duties on Managers and Supervisors**

- 6.1 Managers & supervisors of staff must take all steps necessary to ensure the health & safety & well being of persons under their supervision, ensuring that actions are initiated to correct any short falls regarding health & safety matters, and that these concerns are communicated to the Directors.
- 6.2 Managers should be fully competent and trained in carrying out risk assessment in the work place. They are responsible for ensuring that staffs receive health and safety training via induction before working unsupervised in service user's homes.

**7. Duties on employees**

- 7.1 The successful implementation of this policy requires total commitment from all employees. Each individual has a legal obligation to take reasonable care for their own health and safety, and for the safety of other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions.
- 7.2 It is the policy of the MOONSTONE CARE Agency Limited that, under s.7 of the **Health and Safety at Work, etc Act 1974**, it is the duty of every employee at work:
- a) to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and those of any other person who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work
  - b) as regards any duty or requirement imposed on their employer by or under any of the relevant statutory provisions, to co-operate with the employer, so far as is necessary, to enable that duty or requirement to be complied with.
- 7.3 In addition, no person employed by MOONSTONE CARE shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare in pursuance of any statutory provisions. Failure to abide by this policy will be considered a disciplinary offence.

**8. Training**

- 8.1 All new staff should be encouraged to read the policy on health and safety as part of their induction process. Existing staff will be offered training to National Training Organisation standards covering basic information about health and safety. In addition, all staff will be appropriately trained to perform their duties safely and competently and those staff that need to use specialist equipment will be fully trained and supervised while they are developing their competency.

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## **Health & Safety Guidelines for Care Workers in the Service User's Home**

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### **Introduction**

The Health & Safety at Work Act places a duty on MOONSTONE CARE to provide a safe system of work for all its employees. Full details of system and policies to support are to be found in the MOONSTONE CARE Agency Limited Health & Safety Manual, which is available to all Care Workers for reference on request from the Manager.

Although MOONSTONE CARE may have little control over your working environment whilst you are working in private household, as your employer, it must ensure that you are provided with adequate information, instruction, training and supervision in order to allow you to do your job safely.

You, as an employee, also has a specific duty under the Health & Safety at Work Act to take care of your own and anyone's safety, [this includes the Service Users and their family] who may be affected by your work.

Each year more people are injured as a result of accidents in the home, than at work. You are more at risk of having an accident in a Service user's home, because it may be in need of repair or because you may be unfamiliar with the home or equipment.

The following guidance highlights some of the hazards you may face during your everyday work. Please read them carefully and keep them for references. If you have a query about and Health & Safety issue, then contact the Manager.

### **The Service User**

Your Service User may need help either through illness, age or some other disabilities. Under such circumstances, they may find it difficult or even impossible to organise their homes in a safe manner. Therefore, you must be alert to all potential hazards and must re-establish safety in the home, both for you and your Service User.

Always carry your work out in a safe manner, never cut corners for the sake of speed.

### **Clothing and Footwear**

Always make sure that you are dressed to enable you to work safely and comfortably. If necessary wear protective overalls and rubber gloves, avoiding loose clothing and hanging cuffs or clothing that may get entangled in equipment.

Many accidents occur when Home Care Workers are travelling to and from their Service User's home. Always make sure you have a sensible, well fitting shoe with a good grip and broad heels to prevent slipping. Watch out for defective paving stones and other obstructions that could cause you to trip.

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## **Health & Safety Guidelines for Care Workers in the Service User's Home**

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### **Entrances & Hallways**

Always make sure that the entrance to your Service User's home is kept clear of obstructions and discourage your Service User from cluttering up hallways with furniture and other items. These obstructions may cause a person to trip and could hamper the escape route of persons from the home in the event of fire.

### **Stairways**

Stairways should always be kept clear of obstructions, e.g. toys etc. stairways should always be well lit and have a suitable handrail. Always use the handrail when ascending or descending the stairs and encourage your Service User to do the same. Watch out for such hazards as loose stairs carpets and stairs rod, worn carpet or defective steps.

### **Flooring**

Defective flooring causes most tripping accidents. Watch out for defective or lifting lino-tiles, worn or frayed carpets, loose mats etc. always keep floor from dirt or grease, clear up spillage's immediately. Dry the floor as much as possible, but if a floor is left damp, warn your Service user to prevent anyone from walking on the damp floor and slipping. Never polish under carpets or rugs.

### **Lighting**

Adequate lighting is essential. Try to make sure that all lights work and that they give enough light to enable you and your Service User to move around safely. If there are any areas within your Service User's home, which are poorly lit, contact your Manager.

### **Storage**

Encourage Service Users to store neatly and tidily. Avoid cluttering the floor with items, these present tripping hazards.

Always store household cleaning chemicals in a secure cupboard out of reach of children medicines too, must be locked away from children. If there are unlabelled bottles, make sure your Service user disposes of them safely. Discourage your Service user from hoarding old pills and medicines.

Make sure the shelving is in good condition and secured to the wall to prevent toppling. Never stack goods on free standing wardrobes or cupboards or where they can be shaken loose by vibration. Always make sure that you have a safe means of reaching shelving or cupboards.

Make sure that any equipment or household goods etc. can be reached by standing on the floor. You must not climb on steps ladders or any other object.

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### **Household cleaning agents.**

Always handle any household cleaning agents with care as many contain powerful chemicals that can either be toxic or highly inflammable. Always wear suitable protective clothing i.e. rubber gloves, overalls etc.

Always read the manufacturers instructions carefully and only use the recommended quantities. Guard against the misconception, that a stronger solution will help get the job done quicker. It is dangerous and wasteful. Never mix different chemicals as they may react violently with each other e.g. bleach mixed with Harpic produces a dangerous toxic gas called chlorine.

Many cleaning chemicals, especially polishes are highly inflammable so should never be used near an naked flame or heat source. Never smoke whilst using household cleaning materials.

Never put household cleaning chemicals in another containers e.g. lemonade bottles. Always make sure that each container is properly labelled and is safely disposed of after use.

Some cleaning chemicals may give off toxic vapour; always make sure there is adequate ventilation in the room where you are using them.

### **Kitchen safety.**

Never leave the kitchen if any frying or cooking is in progress.

Always make sure that pots and pans handles are turned away from the front of the stove so that they cannot be accidentally knocked or reached by children or frail elderly.

Never leave tea towels to dry over ovens or cooking ranges.

Always use gloves or a suitable alternative, when handling hot items, watch out for metal handles that might become exceptionally hot.

Watch out for grease and spillage on the floor, clear away immediately.

Always take care when using sharp kitchen tools, never run with a knife or sharp object in your hand. Always make sure that you have a firm base to cut on and make sure you cut away from your body.

Take care with tin openers; make sure that they do not leave a dangerous jagged edge. Always replace knives and other items to the correct storage place directly after use.

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### **Electrical equipment**

Before using any electrical appliances, check the leads and plugs to make sure they are free from any defect. Watch out for any worn, broken or split leads and loose or badly fitting plugs. Always ask the Service User if a piece of equipment is safe to use. If you are in doubt, do not use the appliance and contact your Manager. Never handle appliances or touch switches with damp or wet hands.

Never attempt to do electrical repairs yourself, ensure that your Service User gets the equipment checked by a qualified electrician or contact your Manager for advice.

Always switch off and remove plugs from sockets after use, never remove a plug whilst the equipment is still switched on and never attempt to remove a plug from a socket by pulling at the lead. Never use a piece of equipment that sparks out crackles or where the plug or socket becomes warm.

Never over load sockets, this cause over heating in circuits which leads to fires.

Never take portable appliances into the bathroom. All bathrooms should have pull type cords in place of switches. If you find a switch in a client's bathroom, notify the Manager.

Always unplug steam irons, kettles etc before filling with water and when emptying the contents.

Never try to dislodge a trapped item in a piece of electrical equipment whilst the item is still plugged in. switch off and unplug first.

Never cover radiant heaters or motors to electrical equipment because airflow is restricted and it may cause a temperature to built up resulting in a fire.

Always advise your Service User to switch off and unplug such items as television sets when not in use, especially at night.

### **Heating appliances**

Great care must be taken with heating appliances, especially where clients may have portable heaters of various kinds.

When using portable heaters, care should be taken not to place them to close to the other objects. Never hang clothes over portable heaters.

Where portable heaters are in use, always advise the Service user that the room should be well ventilated. These types of heaters use up oxygen and can give off toxic fumes.



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Paraffin or oil stoves should be fitted with a cut off device that extinguishes the flame of the heater, if knocked over. Many of the older types are not fitted with this device so great care must be taken at all times. Paraffin and gas bottles for portable fires should be stored in a safe place outside the dwellings. Heaters should only be filled and gas bottles change in the open air. Never attempt to carry or fill a lighted heater.

If you know of a Service user with a Colour Gas Heater, you should notify your Manager immediately.

Open fires should always be guarded to prevent persons and clothing from catching alight. Advise your Service user against hanging mirrors above the fireplace, this can cause persons to stand too close to the fire.

### **Gas safety**

Make sure you know how to turn off the mains supply in the event of a leak or emergency. The on/off lever is normally located close to the gas meter.

If you suspect a leak:

**DO NOT SWITCH ON THE LIGHTS OR STRIKE A MATCH OR LIGHT A CIGARETTE LIGHTER.**

**DO NOT SMOKE.**

**CONTACT THE EMERGENCY SERVICES OR YOUR MANAGER IMMEDIATELY.**

**IF POSSIBLE REMOVE THE CLIENTS FROM THE PREMISES.**

**OPEN ALL DOORS AND WINDOWS.**

Report to your Manager any action you have taken and the outcome of the situation.

### **Fire safety**

There are numerous fire hazards in the home and you must always be on your guard.

Advise the Service User against smoking in bed. If the Service User smokes in the sitting room, ensure a large ashtray is available and that cigarettes ends and ashes are safely disposed of.

Advise the Service user to make sure that plugs have been removed from electrical sockets.

Advise your Service user to check the kitchen before they retire to ensure that all gas rings or electric burners have not been left on. Advise your Service User to close all doors at night, especially the kitchen door, to prevent the spread of fire.

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The most common type of fires in the home are chip pan fires and they can be extinguished by carrying out the following procedures:

- ❑ Turn off the heat.
- ❑ Cover the pan with a lid or damp cloth.
- ❑ Leave until the contents are cool.

**NEVER USE WATER TO EXTINGUISH A CHIP PAN FIRE.**

**OR**

**ATTEMPT TO CARRY A BURNING CHIP PAN OUTSIDE THE KITCHEN.**

Before attempting to extinguish an electric fire, turn off the electricity supply.

**IF YOU DISCOVER A FIRE, ACT QUICKLY AND DO NOT PANIC.**

- ❑ Remove the Service User and yourself from the premises.
- ❑ Contact the emergency services immediately.
- ❑ If a client has fallen and is lying on the floor do not lift them up - dial 999 for an ambulance immediately.

If the Service User does not want you to call an ambulance and to do so would damage your relationship, then telephone your Manager immediately and an ambulance will be called.

Report to your Manager any action you have taken and the outcome of the situation, for example, 'the ambulance has taken the Service User to the Accident & Emergency at the London Hospital in Whitechapel'

### **Lifting and carrying**

Always make sure your path is clear before you carry a load, i.e. that there are no obstructions, doors are open etc. never carry a load that obstructs your field of vision.

Never attempt to lift or carry weight or shopping that causes discomfort or pain in your arms or back.

If your Service user regularly requires heavy items of shopping such as tins of pet food or bottles, use a shopping trolley. If the Service User has not got a trolley, contact your Manager.

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### **Hygiene precautions**

For the sake of your own and your Service User's health and safety, you must maintain a high standard of hygiene at all times.

Always wash your hands after using the lavatory and before and after handling food.

If you have a cut or graze or open wound, always make sure it is covered with a clean waterproof dressing. If you suffer with any dermatitis or have an open wound waterproof dressing, report it to your Manager immediately and before visiting your Service Users.

If you come into contact with any infection, report it to the Manager immediately and before visiting any Service Users.

Always wear your protective clothes, overalls and gloves when cleaning. Keep a separate pair of gloves for cleaning bathrooms, toilets and for washing up. Always make sure you wash your rubber gloves thoroughly in a suitable cleansing agent and rinse well before removing them.

Where you may have to clean up blood or other bodily fluids that may be contaminated with blood, such as urine, faeces etc, always use rubber household and disposable aprons.

### **Cleaning materials**

The Service User must provide all cleaning materials and appliances. They must be of a suitable and safe nature, to allow you to fulfil your duties safely and effectively. If there is no suitable cleaning materials and appliances made available by the Service User, you should advise your Manager immediately. If you are asked to clean a floor without the proper appliances being made available, you should not carry out the tasks by kneeling or bending.

### **Key holding**

If you are authorised to hold a User's keys, it is your responsibility to make sure that the keys are returned to the office, if you are absent from work because of sickness. This must be done at the earliest opportunity and within the time agreed by your Manager.

If you are due to take annual leave you must return all keys to the Manager before the leave starts, unless instructed by the Manager.

### **Hazard reporting**

If you encounter any of the hazards noted in these guidance notes or any factor that may affect the safety of you or your client, make sure the matter is reported to the Manager immediately.

If have an accident at work always report it no matter how trivial it may seem. It is your responsibility to report all accidents and near misses. Ask your Manager for a copy of MOONSTONE CARE Agency Limited procedure for reporting accidents and the Accident Report form you need to complete.

Remember you have a duty to protect the Health & Safety of both your client and yourself, so always be on your guard against hazards in the home.

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### **Accidents**

If you have an accident or a 'near miss' whilst on duty, you must inform your Manager immediately, even if the accident or 'near misses' does not result in your absence from work. You should also fill in the Accident Report form, even if you have not been injured.

### **Incidents**

Any incident or assault that occurs in connection with your work, whether physical, verbal or sexual, must be reported to your Manager who should in appropriate circumstances contact the police.