

Good Practice Guidelines for Care Workers

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Care workers play a vital role in the lives of the services users they support. Below are a few underlying principles which will help care workers deliver a good service to the service users and make a real difference in their lives, with whatever tasks they perform.

Communication and Record Keeping

- Always find out how the client communicates before your first visit. If you are not familiar with how the client communicates, never be afraid to ask for help from your manager
- Ensure you always engage the service user in communication and use positive body language to encourage them to communicate. You may be the only person they see the whole day
- Find time to chat with the service user. Although you may be under time pressures don't let them think you will just dash in and out of their home
- Read the care plan/ log book before the start of each shift. There may be changes recorded since your last visit
- Always remember to fill in the log book with the time, date, what was done and any problems encountered/observed. Sign and print your name at the end of every record
- Problems should be recorded in writing but also reported to the manager verbally as soon as possible
- Seek permission from service users before accessing their records and always ensure records are kept safely and securely

Health and Safety

- Check the environment for hazards and remove these before starting work
- Wash your hands appropriately and use all protective equipment provided e.g. gloves and aprons. Never allow yourself to run out of any of these
- Report all faulty equipments and unsafe environments, e.g. trailing wires, worn carpets etc as soon as possible to prevent accidents
- Summon appropriate help immediately when faced with any health emergency at work. Call 999
- Dispose of all waste and rubbish appropriately. For example, pads should be tied up in bags before putting in the bin. Don't leave pads in the kitchen bin; always take them outside to the main bin at the end of your shift
- Wash soiled clothes, linens etc, at high temperatures to kill all germs and bacteria
- Turn off equipment not in use and store appropriately. Ensure all equipment used is cleaned regularly

Ensuring the Care, Protection and Well Being of the Service Users

- Always find out about the clients wishes and preferences, never assume they always want the same things done
- Find out how they want their care carried out and do this within health and safety precautions
- Give the client choices e.g. providing them with options at meal times, with their clothes etc
- Respect their privacy and dignity by shutting doors, curtains etc when assisting with personal care, leaving the room when they are on the phone if it safe to do so
- Promote their independence by assisting them to do as much as they can for themselves
- Look out for signs of abuse or any changes in the client at all times and follow your organisation's policy to report these as soon as possible
- Develop and maintain a good, friendly but professional relationship with the services users so that they can trust you at all times

Personal Development

- Always attend all training arranged by your organisation
- When you feel you need further support in your role, let your manager know as soon as possible
- Seek feedback from the service users and other people you come into contact with at work to enable you make the necessary changes and improvement to your work
- Always engage actively in appraisals and supervisions. These are ways of you also letting the manager know if you have any concerns about your work, but also ways to hear what you have done well
- Read your staff handbook and other care related publications regularly to broaden your knowledge base

Please note that this is a general guide. You should always refer to your organisations policies and procedures.