

Media Release

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New Code of Practice for UK's Homecare Providers

United Kingdom Homecare Association Ltd (UKHCA), the professional representative organisation for homecare providers, today publishes its new Code of Practice for the nation's domiciliary care agencies.

A national Code of Practice for safe, high quality homecare was one of the fundamental reasons for UKHCA's creation in 1989. Subsequently, the Association's campaign to have statutory regulation of the homecare sector was realised in England and Scotland in 2003 and in Wales in 2004. Homecare in Northern Ireland is expected to be regulated during 2007-8.

UKHCA's Head of Policy, Colin Angel, was responsible for the latest revision and commented:

"Regulation has been a fundamental part of improving home-based care for some of the most vulnerable people in society. However, UKHCA's Code of Practice enables our member organisations to operate above the minimum requirements enforceable by regulators."

The new Code, which comes into effect on 1st May 2007, addresses the most contemporary issues for homecare services, including, but not limited to:

The need to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse and neglect by their family, friends or the people who provide their care;

The rights of people who use care services to make choices about how they lead their lives, and an assumption that they have full mental capacity to take these decisions, unless the contrary can be established;

Non-discriminatory practice, both for people who use services and the staff who provide their care;

The need to inform statutory bodies (generally local authorities) of situations where the care they fund fails to meet a service user's needs.

Endorsing the decision of UKHCA's Board to approve the new Code, Mike Padgham (Chair) said:

“Homecare is at the very heart of social care policy in each UK administration, and this updated version of the Code enables UKHCA’s member organisations to continue to demonstrate their commitment to the highest quality care services.”

Ends.

Notes for Editors

1. The United Kingdom Homecare Association Ltd (UKHCA) is the only national professional association representing homecare providers in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Its mission is “to represent, promote and support its members in the sustainable provision of high standard homecare”. The Association currently represents 1,645 homecare businesses.
2. The Association was established in autumn 1989, to enable homecare providers to subscribe to the attainment of high quality standards. The Association actively campaigned for statutory regulation of homecare services. This goal was reached in 2003 (England), 2003 (Scotland) and 2004 (Wales). Homecare in Northern Ireland is expected to be regulated during 2007-8.
3. Organisations joining UKHCA make a signed declaration that they agree to abide by the Association’s Code of Practice. The most recent update of the Code, published today, is available from www.ukhca.co.uk/codeofpractice.aspx.
4. The Code of Practice is available in the Royal National Institute for the Blind’s ‘clearprint’ format, large print and other accessible formats for people with visual impairment. A Welsh-language version in the same formats will be available shortly.
5. The new edition of the Code of Practice comes into effect on 1st May 2007.
6. UKHCA provides a brief review of the qualitative data available on the homecare sector (An Overview of the UK Domiciliary Care Sector) and a large-scale examination of the homecare sector (“Who Cares Now?”, Versions available for England and Scotland). Both documents can be accessed from www.ukhca.co.uk/researchers.aspx.
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