# MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

**C****aretakers Southwest Ltd**

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**Policy Statement**

This organisation provides its care staff with a schedule of visits, which provides for some flexibility insofar as each set of work tasks always needs to be completed fully and to the satisfaction of the Service User. This can sometimes result in the schedule being disrupted or delayed.

This organisation also operates on the basis that a degree of trust must be placed in staff to carry out their work satisfactorily, and that it encourages transparency and honesty in their use of time. It expects staff to communicate any difficulties that they experience, e.g. in travelling and in obtaining entry to a Service User’s home.

The organisation’s policies on Missing Persons, and Service User Home Security address the main contingencies in which visits might not be competed as scheduled or result in delays; these can disrupt the rest of the worker’s schedule.

In all of these instances the care worker is expected to contact their supervisor, line manager or office at the earliest opportunity and to discuss appropriate ways of proceeding.

# The Policy

This policy makes clear this organisation’s expectations with regard to the completing of work sheets used to record the making of a call or visit to a Service User’s home, and the accountability of staff with regards to their conduct using social networking sites. The policy includes how this organisation monitors staff working patterns, and the actions that it takes if it discovers that staff have been falsifying records, e.g., by recording that they have made a visit when, for some reason, it has not been made. The need for such a policy has arisen because of a (hopefully small) number of publicised incidents in which domiciliary care workers have been known to have falsified time or work sheets.

# Scope with Regard to Timesheets, Visits and Journeys

The policy applies to all care staff who have a schedule of visits and who need to record accurately the fact that:

* The visit has been made
* The duration of the visit
* Journey time(s) between visits.

**Electronic Call Monitoring**

It is an integral part of our monitoring policies that we explicitly include electronic call monitoring as part of the process. Electronic data monitoring is a routine part of Adult Social Care and is often part of contractual arrangements between providers and local authority or health service commissioners. For the purposes of clarity, electronic monitoring covers the following;

* Telephony systems to include mobile phones, all business lines operating from an office base, any phone data downloaded to an electronic mobile device.
* Off the shelf or bespoke, individual systems operated by, or on behalf of the business, which is used to electronically track and validate service provision e.g. staff visits, time sheets or schedules e.g. CM 2000, Quickplan oricare etc
* Any off the shelf, or, bespoke individual system used in calculation of wages, salaries, mileage etc as part of staff payroll services.

The data collected from any electronic monitoring system/device is used, handled, shared and stored subject to the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Staff, during their induction training, are made aware of the use of any such devices and where appropriate are trained in its use.

Service users are informed during their assessment of the purpose and use of any system and its use is covered in their contractual arrangements with the organisation.

Where the use of any electronic system is part of the local authorities or health service contract, this will be covered within their contract.

Any updated versions of such electronic systems will be installed by the provider or local authority or health service commissioners: whoever is the provider of the system

# The Use of Time Sheets

The time- or work sheets that the organisation asks a care worker to complete on a daily basis provide a tool to enable the business to exercise its accountability for the service that it provides to its users and to its commissioners.

To complete the time sheet, the organisation requires the care worker to record the times of arrival at, and departure from the Service Users place of residence, obtaining the Service User’s signature or that of someone else in the household wherever possible. If this is not possible then the space should be left blank. The organisation will try to obtain specimen copies of “authorised” signatures from Service Users or representatives in advance to help with the checking.

The line manager will collect time sheets on a weekly basis and carry out a check, in order to assess and validate that visits have been made as planned, and to take note of any issues indicated by the records. The manager might make spot checks by telephoning a sample of Service Users to make sure they have received the visits as planned and to discuss any quality issues that have arisen.

When making their supervisory visits to Service Users’ homes to comply with the New Fundamental Standards, the manager will also check care plans and records held in the home to verify that the visits have taken place as planned. Managers will also use review meetings as a means of monitoring.

The organisation expects that its care staff will be able to account for any significant discrepancies or departures from the agreed schedules. It will use staff meetings and supervision to discuss any workload difficulties that might be experienced.

However, the organisation expects honesty and transparency, and will take disciplinary measures if it discovers that there has been deliberate falsifying of time sheets and that care workers have failed to carry out their agreed work schedules. This could result in a worker’s dismissal.

In addition, if it has been proved that care workers by their misconduct for example, not making calls when they have recorded them have caused harm or possible harm to Service Users, the business will be legally required to refer them for possible inclusion on the DBS barred list, which would bar them from future care work. In some cases, the business might need to refer the matter to the police if it believes the care worker might have committed a criminal offence.

**Related Policies**

Appraisal

Code of Conduct for Workers

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and (DBS) Referral

Internet, Email and Mobile Phone (Acceptable Use)

Supervision

**Related Guidance**

* Employee Handbook
* Code of Conduct for Healthcare support workers and social care workers <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Documents/Standards-legislation/Code-of-Conduct/Code-of-Conduct.pdf>

**Training Statement**

All staff, during induction are made aware of the organisations policies and procedures, all of which are used for training updates. All policies and procedures are reviewed and amended where necessary and staff are made aware of any changes. Observations are undertaken to check skills and competencies. Various methods of training are used including one to one, on-line, workbook, group meetings, individual supervisions and external courses are sourced as required.