



# The Code

Professional standards of practice and behaviour for  
Community Healthcare Assistants working for Caretakers SW  
Ltd





## Introduction

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The code contains the professional standards that staff working for Caretakers SW Ltd must uphold. Staff working for Caretakers SW Ltd must act in line with the code whether they are providing direct care to individuals or bringing their professional knowledge and experience to bear in other roles such as leadership, training or administration work. The values and principles set out in the Code can be applied to all aspects of roles within the company, but they are not negotiable or discretionary.

The standards set out in the Code are not just our standards but are the standards expected by clients, their families, commissioners, the NHS and the wider health community.

Employees of Caretakers SW Ltd commit to upholding these standards. This commitment to professional standards is fundamental to being part of a healthcare professional working for Caretakers SW Ltd. We can take action if employees fail to uphold the Code, and in serious cases, this can include disciplinarys and/or dismissal.

The Code sets out common standards of conduct and behaviour for those employed by Caretakers SW Ltd. This provides a clear, consistent and positive message to clients, their families, commissioners, the NHS and the wider health community about what they can expect of those who provide services on behalf of Caretakers SW Ltd.

Staff employed by the company can work in diverse contents and have different levels of autonomy and responsibility. However, employees are expected to exercise professional judgement and are accountable for their work.

The Code should be useful for everyone who cares about providing high quality and safe care;

- Clients, and those who care for them, can use it to provide feedback to Community Healthcare Assistants (HCAs) about the care they receive
- Staff can use it to promote safe and effective practice in their place of work
- The management team should support their staff in upholding the standards in their professional Code as part of providing the quality and safety expected by clients and regulators
- Trainers and educators can use the Code to help HCAs to understand what it means to be a professional healthcare worker and how keeping to the Code helps to achieve that

The Code contains a series of statements that taken together signify what high quality and safe practice looks like. It puts the interests of clients first, is safe and effective, and promotes trust through professionalism.



## **Prioritise People**

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You put the interests of people using or needing care services first. You make their care and safety your main concern and make sure their dignity is preserved and their needs are recognised, assessed and responded to. You make sure that those receiving care are treated with respect, that their rights are upheld and that any discriminatory attitudes and behaviours towards those receiving care are challenged.

### **1. Treat people as individuals and uphold their dignity**

To achieve this, you must:

- 1.1 Treat people with kindness, respect and compassion
- 1.2 Make sure you deliver the fundamentals of care effectively
- 1.3 Avoid making assumptions and recognise diversity and individual choice
- 1.4 Respect and uphold privacy, dignity, confidentiality and the rights of the individual

### **2. Listen to people and respond to their preferences and concerns**

To achieve this, you must:

- 2.1 Work in partnership with people to make sure you deliver care effectively
- 2.2 Recognise and respect the contribution that people can make to their own health and wellbeing
- 2.3 Encourage and empower people to share in decisions about their care
- 2.4 Respect the level to which people receiving care want to be involved in decisions about their own health, well-being and care
- 2.5 Respect, support and document a persons' right to accept or refuse aspects of care
- 2.6 Recognise when people are anxious or in distress and respond compassionately and politely

### **3. Make sure that people's physical, social and psychological needs are assessed and responded to**

- 3.1 Pay special attention to promoting well-being, preventing ill health and meeting the changing health and care needs of people
- 3.2 Recognise and respond compassionately to the needs of those who are in the last few months, days, hours of life
- 3.3 Act in partnership with those receiving care
- 3.4 Act as an advocate for the vulnerable, challenging poor practice, discriminatory attitudes and behaviour relating to their care



#### **4. Act in the best interests of people at all times**

To achieve this, you must:

- 4.1 Balance the need to act in the best interests of people at all times with the requirement to respect a persons' right to refuse or accept care
- 4.2 Make sure that you get properly informed consent before carrying out any personal care or action
- 4.3 Tell colleagues, your manager and the person receiving care if you have a conscientious objection<sup>1</sup> to a particular procedure and arrange for a suitably qualified colleague to take over responsibility for that persons' care

#### **5. Respect people's right to privacy and confidentiality**

As a HCA, you owe a duty of confidentiality to all those who are receiving care. This includes making sure that they are informed about their care and that information about them is shared appropriately

To achieve this, you must:

- 5.1 Respect a person's right to privacy in all aspects of their care
- 5.2 Make sure that people are informed about how and why information is used and shared by those who will be providing care
- 5.3 Respect that a person's right to privacy and confidentiality continues after they have died
- 5.4 Share necessary information with other health and care professionals and agencies only when the interests of patient safety and public protection override the need for confidentiality
- 5.5 Share with people, their families and their carers, as far as the law allows, the information they want or need to know about their health and care sensitively and in a way that can understand

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<sup>1</sup> The refusal to perform a role or responsibility because of personal beliefs (including political, religious or moral beliefs)



## **Provide High Quality and Effective Care**

You assess and provide help and support without too much delay, to the best of your abilities and competencies. You communicate effectively, keeping clear and accurate records and sharing skills, knowledge and experience where appropriate. You reflect and act on any feedback you receive to improve your practice.

### **6. Always practise in line with your training and competencies**

To achieve this, you must

- 6.1 Maintain the knowledge and skills you need for safe and effective practice

### **7. Communicate clearly**

To achieve this, you must:

- 7.1 Use terms that people in your care, colleagues and the public can understand
- 7.2 Take reasonable steps to meet people's language and communication needs, providing, wherever possible, assistance to those who need help to communicate their own or other people's needs
- 7.3 Use a range of verbal and non-verbal communication methods, and consider cultural insensitivities, to better understand and respond to people's care and personal needs
- 7.4 Check people's understanding from time to time to keep misunderstanding or mistakes to a minimum
- 7.5 To be able to communicate clearly and effectively in English

### **8. Work co-operatively**

To achieve this, you must:

- 8.1 Respect the skills, expertise and contributions of your colleagues, referring matters to them when appropriate
- 8.2 Maintain effective communication with colleagues
- 8.3 Keep colleagues informed when you are sharing the care of individuals with other health and care professionals and staff
- 8.4 Work with colleagues to evaluate the quality of your work and that of the team
- 8.5 Work with colleagues to preserve the safety of those receiving care
- 8.6 Share information to identify and reduce risk
- 8.7 Be supportive of colleagues who are encountering health or performance problems. However, this support must never compromise or be at the expense of patient or public safety



## **9. Share your skills, knowledge and experience for the benefit of people receiving care and your colleagues**

To achieve this you must:

- 9.1 Provide honest, accurate and constructive feedback to colleagues
- 9.2 Gather and reflect on feedback from a variety of sources, using it to improve your practice and performance
- 9.3 Deal with differences of professional opinion with colleagues by discussion and informed debate, respecting their views and opinions and behaving in a professional way at all times
- 9.4 Support colleagues' learning to help them develop their professional competence and confidence

## **10. Keep clear and accurate records relevant to your practice**

This applies to the records that are relevant to your scope of practice. It includes but is not limited to patient records

To achieve this, you must:

- 10.1 Complete records at the time or as soon as possible after an event, recording if the notes are written sometime after the event
- 10.2 Identify any risks or problems that have arisen and the steps taken to deal with them, so that colleagues who use the records have all the information they need
- 10.3 Complete records accurately and without any falsification, taking immediate and appropriate action if you become aware that someone has not kept to these requirements
- 10.4 Attribute any entries you make in any paper or electronic records to yourself, making sure they are clearly written, dated and times, and do not include unnecessary abbreviations, jargon or speculation
- 10.5 Take all steps to make sure that records are kept securely
- 10.6 Collect, treat and store all data and research findings appropriately

## **11. Be accountable for your decisions to delegate tasks and duties to other people**

To achieve this, you must:

- 11.1 Only delegate tasks and duties that are within the other person's scope of competence, making sure that they fully understand your instructions
- 11.2 Make sure that everyone you delegate tasks to is adequately supervised and supported so they can provide safe and compassionate care
- 11.3 Confirm that the outcome of any task you have delegated to someone else meets the required standard



## **Ensure Safety and Wellbeing**

You make sure that patient and public safety is not affected. You work within the limits of your competence, exercising your professional 'duty of candour' and raising concerns immediately whenever you come across situations that put patients or public safety at risk. You take necessary action to deal with any concerns where appropriate.

### **12. Recognise and work within the limits of your competence**

To achieve this, you must, as appropriate:

- 12.1 Accurately identify, observe and assess signs of normal or worsening physical and mental health in the person receiving care
- 12.2 Ask for help from a suitably qualified and experienced professional to carry out any action or procedure that is beyond the limits of your competence
- 12.3 Take account of your own personal safety as well as the safety of people in your care
- 12.4 Complete all necessary training as required

### **13. Be open and candid with all clients about all aspects of care, including when any mistakes or harm have taken place**

To achieve this, you must:

- 13.1 Act immediately to put right the situation if someone has suffered actual harm for any reason or an incident has happened which had the potential for harm
- 13.2 Explain fully and promptly what has happened, including the likely effects, and apologise to the person affected and, where appropriate, their advocate, family or carers
- 13.3 Document all these events formally and take further action (escalate) if appropriate so they can be dealt with quickly

### **14. Act without delay if you believe that there is a risk to clients safety or public protection**

To achieve this, you must:

- 14.1 Raise and, if necessary, escalate any concerns you may have about client or public safety, or the level of care people are receiving in your workplace or any other healthcare setting
- 14.2 Raise your concerns immediately if you are being asked to undertake duties that are beyond your role, experience and training
- 14.3 Tell someone in authority at the first reasonable opportunity if you experience problems which may prevent you from working within the Code, or other standards, taking prompt action to tackle the causes of concern if you can



- 14.4 Acknowledge and act on all concerns raised to you, investigating, escalating or dealing with those concerns where it is appropriate for you to do so
- 14.5 Not obstruct, intimidate, victimise or in any way hinder a colleague, member of staff, person you care for or member of public who wants to raise a concern
- 14.6 Protect anyone you have management responsibility for from any harm, detriment, victimisation or unwarranted treatment after a concern is raised

**15. Raise concerns immediately if you believe a person is vulnerable or at risk and needs extra support and protection**

To achieve this, you must:

- 15.1 Take all reasonable steps to protect people who are vulnerable or at risk from harm, neglect or abuse
- 15.2 Share information if you believe someone may be at risk of harm, in line with the laws relating to the disclosure of information
- 15.3 Have knowledge of and keep to the relevant laws and policies about protecting and caring for vulnerable people

**16. Be aware of, and reduce as far as possible, any potential for harm associated with your practice**

To achieve this, you must:

- 16.1 Take measures to reduce as far as possible, the likelihood of mistakes, harm and any effects of harm if it takes place
- 16.2 Take account of current evidence, knowledge and developments in reducing mistakes and the effect of them and the impact of human factors and system failures
- 16.3 Keep to and promote recommended practice in relation to controlling and preventing infection
- 16.4 Take all reasonable personal precautions necessary to avoid any potential health risks to colleagues, people receiving care and the public





## **Promote Respect, Professionalism and Trust**

You uphold the reputation of your profession at all times. You should display a personal commitment to the standards of practice and behaviour set out in the Code. You should be a model of integrity and leadership for others to aspire to. This should lead to trust and confidence in the profession from clients, people receiving care, families, other healthcare professionals and the public

### **17. Uphold the reputation of your profession at all times**

To achieve this, you must:

- 17.1 Keep to and uphold the standards and values set out in the Code
- 17.2 Act with honesty and integrity at all times, treating people fairly and without discrimination, bullying or harassment
- 17.3 Be aware at all times of how your behaviour can effect and influence the behaviour of other people
- 17.4 Treat people in a way that does not take advantage of their vulnerability or cause them upset or distress
- 17.5 Stay objective and have clear professional boundaries at all times with people in your care (including those who have been in your care in the past), their families and carers
- 17.6 Make sure you do not express your personal beliefs (including political, religious or moral beliefs) to people in an inappropriate way
- 17.7 Act as a role model of professional behaviour
- 17.8 Maintain the level of health you need to carry out your professional role
- 17.9 Use all forms of spoken, written and digital communication (including social media and networking sites) responsibly, respecting the right to privacy of others at all times

### **18. Uphold your position as a healthcare assistant**

To achieve this, you must:

- 18.1 Refuse all but the most trivial gifts, favours or hospitality as accepting them could be interpreted as an attempt to gain preferential treatment
- 18.2 Never ask for or accept loans from anyone in your care or anyone close to them
- 18.3 Act with honesty and integrity in any financial dealings you have with everyone you have a professional relationship with, including people in your care
- 18.4 Make sure that any advertisements, publications or published material you produce or have produced for your professional services are accurate, responsible, ethical,



do not mislead or exploit vulnerabilities and accurately reflect your relevant skills, experience and qualifications

- 18.5 Cooperate with the media only when it is appropriate to do so, and always protect the confidentiality and dignity of people receiving care
- 18.6 Ensure that you do not consume alcohol when on duty, including all on call commitments
- 18.7 If you are a smoker, ensure that you do not smoke during your shift, if this cannot be avoided then do not smoke inside or outside client homes and ensure that you do not smell of cigarette smoke on your person or breath when entering clients homes

### **19. Cooperate with all investigations and audits**

This includes investigations or audits either against you or relating to others, whether individuals or organisations. It also includes cooperating with requests to act as a witness in any hearing that forms part of an investigation, even after you have left the employment of Caretakers SW Ltd

To achieve this, you must:

- 19.1 Cooperate with any audits or training records, registration records or other relevant audits that we may want to carry out to make sure you are fit to practise
- 19.2 Tell us as soon as you can about any caution or charge against you, or if you have received a conditional discharge in relation to, or have been found guilty of, a criminal offence
- 19.3 Tell us if you are, or have been, disciplined by any regulatory body or licencing organisation, including those who operate outside of the professional health and care environment

### **20. Respond to any complaints made against you professionally**

To achieve this, you must:

- 20.1 Never allow someone's complaint to affect the care that is provided to them
- 20.2 Use all complaints as a form of feedback and an opportunity for reflection and learning to improve practice

### **21. Provide leadership to make sure people's wellbeing is protected and to improve their experiences of the health and care system**

- 21.1 Identify priorities, manage time, staff and resources effectively and deal with risk to make sure that the quality of care or service you deliver is maintained and improved, putting the needs of those receiving care or services first
- 21.2 Support any staff you may be responsible for to follow the Code at all times. They must have the knowledge, skills and competence for safe practice; and understand how to raise any concerns linked to any circumstances where the Code has, or could be, broken.



I agree to comply with the standards set out in this Code. I understand that if I breach any standards as set out in this Code, then I will be in breach of my contract of employment and will be subject to remedial action.

Signed:

Date