



SERVICE GUIDE



Awarded good quality service
by the Care Quality Commission



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INTRODUCTION

A1 Home Care wishes to ensure that you are able to gain the best care/support from our services. In December 2019 A1 Home Care had an announced inspection by the Care Quality Commission and was awarded a good quality grading, our service was found to be good in every area inspected. A copy of our Inspection Report can be supplied on request enquiries@cqc.org.uk

or

read on the Care Quality Commission's web site. <https://api.cqc.org.uk/public/v1/reports/f0f259e6-a3b1-4784-84d8-2741c0dd4fa5?20200213130000>

To assist you this document will provide a range of information that you may require or refer to. In addition, any of our Policies and Procedures can be seen by contacting or writing to our office. This document can also be supplied in large print, brail or by arrangement can be read out to the potential Service Users if requested.

A1 Home Care provides an emergency on-call service outside of office hours to provide reassurance to our Service Users and their families. Our staff will be operating locally throughout the area providing an efficient and reliable service which will be backed up by our office personnel in conjunction with our live computerised administration system.

Office Hours: **8.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Thursday**
8.00am to 5.00pm Friday

TELEPHONE: 01245 354774

FOR EMERGENCY ONLY

An admin fee of £10.00 per call will be charged for calls made to this number between 23.00 – 07.00 hrs.

Out of Hours/On Call:
17.30hrs to 08.30hrs Monday to Friday and all day Saturday and Sunday

Tel: 01245 354774 (option 2)

Please note: The above mobile telephone number is to be used for 'Emergencies' only or urgent information that needs to be passed on outside of the normal office working hours. Please refer to our Domiciliary Price List re 'Emergency Call Out fees'.

CONTACT DETAILS

Address Details: A1 Home Care Limited
Unit 16 - 18 Robjohns House Business Centre
Navigation Road
Chelmsford
Essex
CM2 6ND

Telephone: 01245 354774

Email: enquiries@a1homecareltd.co.uk

Website: www.a1homecareltd.co.uk

Registered Company Name: A1 Home Care Limited

Certificate Number: 1560003933

REGISTERED PERSONS

Registered Individual

The registered individual is Mr Patrick O'Callaghan who is the CEO, Managing Director and owner of the Company. Patrick believes that each and every individual deserves the very best quality of care available and with A1 Home Care Ltd, that's what he wants you to receive.

Registered Care Manager

The Registered Care Manager is Nicky Cook. Nicky is responsible for Domiciliary and Community Care Support Teams and the daily duties/tasks that keep the Company fully compliant and working within the Care Standards and guidelines. Nicky compliments and heads the full management team that make A1 Home Care one of the most quality driven Companies offering care provision in the Essex area. Nicky has a considerable amount of experience working with the elderly and those with Specialist and Complex care needs.

SUMMARY OF STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

A1 Home Care Ltd was established in June 2007 by Company Director Patrick O'Callaghan.

Through his own personal experiences Patrick recognised the real need for good quality care in the community and set up a domiciliary care company with the aim of providing personal care and support to Service Users and their families. He wanted to ensure that help and support was tailored to the individual needs of service users so that they could remain as independent as possible within their own homes.

In November 2013 Nicky Cook took over the position of Registered Manager and with over 25 years experience working in the care industry dealing with elderly and vulnerable adults. Nicky has also gained a Diploma in Customer Service and has worked with Patrick to build the business in to one of the most reputable and well respected care providers in the Chelmsford area.

There is of course, many other people who have helped to make the Company successful including a professional and dedicated team of office staff. There is a large team of qualified care staff who are passionate and committed to the job they do, delivering good quality care and support to our Service Users to help them maintain dignity, respect and independence.

Our aim is to encourage our Service Users to put trust in us to provide the care that they need at the same time offering reassurance and support to their Families.

A1 Home Care believe "it is your choice, your care"

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Service Users:

To actively discuss and provide a care service tailored to meet the needs & expectations of individual ServiceUsers in their own home and reassurance for their family/friends/representative:

- To ensure that information is provided to Service Users which will enable them to make an informed choice and to provide an open channel and established procedure for complaints and compliments;
- To continuously seek and value the contribution made by informal carers, families and professionals;
- To regularly review and update our services provided, by way of agreed meetings with the Service Users/Family/Representative and to include Professional input if required.
- An Annual Quality Questionnaire will be forwarded to our Service Users/Family/Representative and Professionals to enable us to maintain and continually improve upon a high level of care;
To provide a safe and quality assured care/support service.

The Carers/Support Staff:

1. To recruit and select staff following a robust and fair recruitment process including an enhanced DBS check (Disclosure and Barring Service) complying with all relevant employment legislation and verifying identification, right to work in UK and qualifications
2. To provide staff with comprehensive training, including Health and Safety and mandatory training, across all functions, also providing extra training for staff working on specialised services
3. To provide friendly, efficient, passionate, empathetic and competent care/support assistants that will-meet the very specific needs of our Service Users.
4. To ensure that the skills of staff are regularly assessed through the Company's Performance Management Programme.

SERVICES PROVIDED

A1 Home Care provides care and support to a wide range of people. Service Users range in age from young teenagers (from 12 years of age) to the elderly, some with very complex needs. All our Service Users are living within the community and in the safety and security of their own homes. Our services range from providing 24 hour care to a minimum call of just 30 minutes.

No one service is the same and all services are tailored to individual needs. These may include:

- All Personal Care (e.g. strip wash, bathing, showering dressing etc)
- Medication (written consent to be obtained)
- Preparation of Meals
- Shopping
- Continence Management
- Domestic Chores (e.g. laundry, bed changes, cleaning etc)
- Companionship/Sitting Service/ days out
- Short or Long Term Care/Support
- Awake/Sleep-in Care
- 24 HOUR CARE (not live in care but split hours covering 24 hours with community-based staff with split shifts)
- Live in Care – A1 is partnered with a live in care provider so can put you in touch with a trusted live in care specialists.
- Escort (care whilst going out on special events such as Weddings, Family gatherings etc)
- Support to access the community for Doctors, Hospital appointments etc

SERVICES USERS WE PROVIDE FOR:

- Young Teenagers to Elderly adults
- Physical Disabilities
- Learning Disabilities
- Mental Health
- Neurological Impairments
- Brain Injuries
- Sensory Impairments
- Dementia/Alzheimer's
- Stroke Sufferers
- Palliative Care
- Accident Injury Rehabilitation

CARE ASSISTANT'S QUALIFICATIONS

All A1 Home Care staff undertake a Skills for Care Induction Course and are suitably trained by a professional and qualified trainer in the following skills as set out by the National Minimum Care Standards.

These include:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Understand Your Role | 9. Awareness of mental health, dementia and learning disabilities |
| 2. Your Personal Development | 10. Safeguarding Adults |
| 3. Duty of Care | 11. Safeguarding Children |
| 4. Equality and Diversity | 12. Basic Life Support |
| 5. Work in a Person-Centred Way | 13. Health and Safety |
| 6. Communication | 14. Handling Information |
| 7. Privacy and Dignity | 15. Infection Prevention and Control |
| 8. Fluids and Nutrition | 16. Autism awareness |
| | 17. Learning disabilities awareness |

Other areas of training which our Care Assistants are strongly encouraged to undertake include:-

- Stroke awareness
- Dementia/Alzheimer's
- Catheter/stoma care
- Peg Feeding/Care management
- Epilepsy training
- Challenging behaviour
- Communication/Person Centred Planning
- Risk assessing

All staff are encouraged to gain a Qualification and Credit Framework Diploma (Level 2) in Health & Social Care. A1 Home Care work closely with outside accredited agencies in order to ensure that staff obtain qualifications that will enhance and develop their role within the services we offer in the Domiciliary Care setting.

All A1's Care Assistants are required to wear a corporate style uniform/tunic and, at all times, carry an identification badge, which includes their photograph, for security purposes.

PPE will be provided by the company in line with guidance NHS England.

DELIVERY OF CARE – THE PROCESS

In the context of this Guide the **Service User** refers to the person who will be receiving care or support from A1 Home Care.

1. Enquiries:

All enquiries are followed up either by our Registered Care Manager or a member of our Senior Management team. Initially this may be conducted over the telephone in order for us to understand the level of support you require and for us to provide you with information concerning our services, our charges and how we operate. If you then decide to use our services, a visit will be arranged by the Registered Care Manager or one of her Senior support team to determine your individual care or support needs, produce a personal care plan and to assess whether we are able to meet your needs.

2. Assessment:

Our Registered Care Manager will conduct an assessment of your care or support needs. Where possible we prefer that both the person receiving care and their family and/or representative **are** present. We may also need consent, information from other professional sources, i.e. G.P, District Support, Occupational Therapist or a previous service or support provider.

The purpose of conducting our own assessment is for us to gather information that will help us to provide a care and/or support package that meets the Service User's individual needs and to also explain to the Service User, their family and/or representative in detail, the processes involved in the care or support we provide and to answer any questions or concerns.

During the assessment we will take personal details relating to:

- Individual profile, personal details
- Next of kin details, Emergency contact details
- G.P. details, other support network details and Health Care Professionals
- Reasons for the assessment: Service User's needs, social/life history/experiences, daily/weekly routines, religious and cultural beliefs etc. so we can gain as much information as possible prior to starting the service and our care staff attending
- Risk assessment of home environment and all equipment
- Health Profile: special requirements, medication, dietary requirements, mobility, information regarding health
- General Information: invoicing details
- The potential Service User's wishes and concerns

Where care or support is to be provided to Service Users within their own home a 'Health & Safety risk Assessment' will also be carried out; this is designed to safeguard and protect both the Service User and A1 Home Care's staff.

If the Service User wishes the Care Assistant to transport them in the Care Assistant's vehicle the Company will conduct a risk assessment of the Service User regarding travel before anything is put in place.

On completion of the Service User's assessment a Personal Care Plan, outlining the Service User's identified needs will be prepared.

3. Assessment Review:

Once all the information gathered from the Service User's initial assessment is collated a further meeting/telephone call by the Registered Manager/Deputy Manager will be arranged to discuss and review the proposed care and support package. The Service User, their family and/or Representative should be present.

During this assessment review, we will discuss the following:

1. Service User's Agreement
2. Individual Personal Plan
3. Health / Financial / Medication / Manual Handling & Emergency Risk Assessments
4. The Care Plan
5. Informed Consent Form
6. Contract of services and estimated weekly cost for care
7. Terms & Conditions of Business
8. Data tag for our staff clocking in and out

The completed Forms are then retained in our secure office ~~filing cabinets~~, the information recorded will be used to set up a customer profile within our electronic system and once agreed this information will be used by Care Assistants, support workers etc who will have easy access to all relevant information via their password protected mobile electronic handheld devices allowing them to carry out each care visit with the correct up to date information at hand.

Once the initial assessment has been completed and it has been agreed to start the package, all details of the Service User, their medical history and care requirements etc, including the Care Plan will be entered onto our electronic system.

4. Service Provision:

Once the package has been agreed A1 Home Care will then make provision for Care Assistants to support the service. We cannot always guarantee continuity of Care Assistants that are provided to a service, but we will do our best to meet individual requests where we can.

Our priority will be on ensuring that the Care Assistants introduced to the service can provide, as far as practicably possible, a consistent service. It will, of course, be necessary to have sufficient flexibility within the teams to cover staff holidays and sickness and we will do our best to ensure that staff arrive at the allocated times. The Company makes a commitment to Service Users and/or their Representative to provide a care assistant(s) and our aim is to arrive at the pre booked time or within 60 minutes either before or after the allocated and agreed visit time. Unfortunately, due to circumstances outside of the Company's control such as increased traffic, roadworks or staff having to remain with other service users in emergency situations, exact visit times can sometimes be delayed but we will endeavour to advise service users if this is the case.

If the visit is being moved backward or forward for any reason in advance of the day of the visit we will advise the service user of this.

Our policy is to always monitor our live electronic care system to ensure that visits have been fulfilled. We have alerts in place to advise us of any visits that have not been clocked into by the care assistant, If we are alerted to such an incident, we will contact the member of staff immediately to see what the situation is and inform you of any issues.

If a care assistant cannot attend their next visit for any reason or are going to be over the Company's 60 minute leeway, we have fully trained office staff that can step in temporarily to cover the unattended visit.

Our top priority is to insure our service users and staff safety and welfare at all times!

5. Review Meetings:

The Registered Manager will agree how often the service should be reviewed. Normally the first review will be 3 months from the start of the service and then reviewed 9 monthly thereafter. The Registered Care Manager or another appointed Senior member of staff may carry out these review meetings by telephone.

The purpose of the reviewing meetings is to review the service and to make any changes if necessary including any changes to staffing, the Service User Agreement, support plan etc.

6. Changes to the Service Provision:

If significant changes occur, outside of the normal review periods, which have a bearing on the service provision of the Service User, the Service User, family member and/or representative must inform the Registered Manager as soon as possible. Changes may include, medication, financial arrangements etc.

Any changes will be recorded on all the relevant documentation within our electronic system to ensure that Care Assistants know and therefore act on the changes.

7. Quality Assurance

To enable A1 Home Care to monitor and provide a quality service we actively seek feedback from Service Users, their families and/or Representatives at regular intervals/review meetings. We also undertake spot checks of the Service to ensure that service provisions are being met.

Annual surveys are also conducted to obtain the views and opinions of Service Users, their families and/or Representatives through Quality Service Questionnaires.

COMMUNICATION

All communications whether by the Service User, friends, family members and/or representative of the Service User **must** communicate any issues, however minor, via care staff and the office.

Care Staff are encouraged **not** to give Service Users their personal telephone numbers or contact details.

Out of hours **emergency** calls must be made by using the Out of Hours number at the front of this Guide. The Company's out of hours on call telephone is manned by one member of staff and their priority is to make sure that all Service User visits are covered. Please be patient when trying to get through on this number.

We also require confirmation by email where possible for any additional visits that are booked.

Please note: Call cancellations and/or amendments to times etc. **must** be communicated via the office.

RECORDS

Records will be updated by Care Assistants of the activities they have undertaken and any other incidents that have arisen during a visit to a Service User. The nature of these records and where they are kept will have been agreed before the service began. Service Users are encouraged to become involved in the process of documenting the service so that they understand what, how and why things are recorded, this information is all kept in our electronic system and communicated to staff via the Care Assistants mobile handsets.

We strongly discourage gossiping and Care Assistants are only required to report facts in order to maintain effective lines of communication between Care Assistants and/or the office.

Details and records of Service Users or the agreed service provisions are retained, confidentially, on the Service Users' personal file within our electronic system for the period of their care package, this system is pin and password protected for security.

MEDICATION

Only suitably qualified and experienced staff, who are competent to carry out the task of administering or assisting with medication are allowed to do so, with prior agreement obtained from and information documented by the Registered Manager and overseen by A1 Home Care's Qualified Support. Details of medication are input into Medication Forms/Medication charts that are held within the Care Assistants mobile handset, the electronic information is used by Care Assistants to ensure that the correct medication is given and documented, this information is then sent automatically via the mobile handset link to our office where any errors/issues are highlighted and dealt with immediately, this saves time.

The Registered Manager will document any and all medication prescribed by the Service User's GP. A1 Home Care must be advised of any change of medication or additional medication in order to have the correct medication details at hand when the Care Assistant visits a Service User and logs into their mobile device to ensure that the correct medication is given and documented.

FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

All details re the handling of money must be detailed on the Assessment Forms/Financial Transaction Forms.

CHANGES TO SERVICE PROVISION

Visit Cancellation: The Service User, if they want to cancel a visit(s), must give the Company:

Weekday: which includes, Tuesday to Friday evening - a minimum of **24 hours'** notice otherwise the Service User will be charged the full cost of the visit.

Weekends: which includes Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Bank Holidays – notice must be given by 12 noon on the Friday before the weekend and/or Monday.

Bank Holidays: we will require a minimum of 48 hours' notice before the bank/public holiday weekend begins. Non-cancellation of public/bank holiday visits in this period will result in full fees being charged at 2 times the current hourly rate.

Failure to notify our office within the specified times as listed above will result in the full fee for the visit(s) being charged.

In the event of a service user going into hospital any visits left active that have not been cancelled will be charged at the normal charge rate despite if the visit is later cancelled outside of the required cancellation period.

In the event of a short notice cancelled discharge from hospital, any visits that have been reinstated will be charged at the normal rate unless the cancellation falls within the required cancellation notice period.

TERMINATION OF SERVICE PROVISION

The Company operates a **7 days** notification system if the Service User, family member and/or Representative wishes to cancel the service provision in its entirety.

The Company reserves the right to charge the Service User the current Standard Rate Charges for a period of up to, but not exceeding, 1 week, if less than 1 weeks' notice is given of the Service Users wish to terminate the care services provided at the said time (moving home, family taking over care, transfer to a nursing or residential home included).

The Company also reserves the right to terminate the service forthwith without notice if the Company's service contract is not signed and returned within seven working days of the commencement of the care service provided.

WITHDRAWAL BY A1 HOME CARE OF SERVICE PROVISION

A1 Home Care may withdraw from the service if the Service User, family member and/or Representative is not complying with its Terms and Conditions of Business. This can include but is not limited to non-payment and/or continued non-payment of invoices or the Service User, family member and/or Representative of the Service User cancelling the service provision repeatedly. An initial warning will be given but if warnings are not heeded 48 hour's notice will be given by the Company of the withdrawal of the service provision and the Care Assistant.

We may withdraw from the service provision or insist that the nature of the service be changed if it is not possible to keep all parties involved safe and free from harm. The Company will also terminate all service provisions if for any reason the service becomes untenable; in this instance the Company reserves the right to charge full fees for up to but not exceeding one week after termination.

In this situation the Service User, family member and/or Representative will be informed, and discussions held. If necessary Social Services will also be informed (even in cases where the Service User is not a Social Services Service User) so that suitable, replacement arrangements can be made. Wherever possible A1 Home Care will ensure that Service User is not left without essential support provisions, unless suitable arrangements have been made.

ADMINISTRATION

Invoices:

Invoices are produced and forwarded to private Service Users on a monthly basis, the period of invoicing will cover all visits completed during the previous month and these will be sent out via e-mail or by post. Social Service Clients will be invoiced on a four weekly basis and the period of invoicing will be for the four weeks previously, these invoices will be sent directly to Essex County Council for payment.

(Social Service Clients may have to pay for part or all of their care visits, this will depend on their eligibility and any means test carried out by Social Services, it will be down to the client to settle any invoices they receive from Essex County Council or Social Services).

Private Service User's payment should be made on receipt of the invoice by one of the following methods: by **cheque** payable to A1 Home Care Ltd. Please ensure that your **name and invoice number** is written on the back of the cheque and placed in the envelope provided with your invoice. Our preferred method of payment is **Direct Debit**, if you would like to set this up please speak to our registered care manager or call our office and ask to speak to the accounts department for instruction on setting this up. All transactions are covered under the Direct Debit Guarantee.

If you have signed up to pay by direct debit you will be notified beforehand of the exact amount that we will be taking each month, and this will then be taken automatically through your bank as agreed in the direct debit agreement.

If a receipt is required, please call the Accounts Department 01245 354774 or email: accounts@a1homecareltd.co.uk

Alternatively, you can pay by a '**Direct Bank Transfer**' directly into our Bank Account:

Bank: Santander
Account: A1 Home Care Limited
Account No.: 10235863
Sort Code: 09-02-22

If the bank refuses payment on a cheque, an administration charge of £20 will be charged by the Company to cover costs for each representation. A1 Home Care reserves the right to charge interest on a daily basis at 8% above the Bank of England Base Rate on payments paid later than 14 days from the date of the invoice.

Any invoice queries should be made, either in writing or by telephone to:

Accounts Department
A1 Home Care Limited
Unit 16 – 18
Robjohns House Business Centre
Navigation Road
Chelmsford
Essex CM2 6ND

Tel: 01245 354774
E-mail: accounts@a1homecareltd.co.uk

The Company has a clear procedure for chasing unpaid invoices which includes a Statement and reminder letters. If invoices continue to be unpaid the Company will then instigate Court proceedings.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

We always aim to provide a high standard of care in all our services.

Our customers' views are important to us and help to ensure our services are consistently meeting people's needs. If you are unhappy with any of our services, it is important that you let us know.

If a complaint alerts us to possible abuse or neglect we will tell the Council's adult safeguarding team. The safeguarding team will decide how to investigate and monitor outcomes.

2. Making a complaint

We aim to handle complaints quickly, effectively and in a fair and honest way. We take all complaints seriously and use valuable information from investigating to help us improve the service we provide. We treat all complaints in confidence.

A1 Homecare assures clients and their families that it will not withdraw or reduce services because someone makes a complaint in good faith.

3. Who can complain

Service users and their families, and anyone affected by the way A1 Homecare provides services can make a complaint.

If you are not happy about making a complaint yourself and you do not know someone who can talk or write to us on your behalf, we will be happy to find someone from an independent organisation to act as an advocate for you.

4. Anonymous complaints

We deal with anonymous complaints under the same procedure; however, it is better if you can provide contact details, so we can tell you the outcome of our investigation.

5. Responsibility

The Registered Manager has overall responsibility for dealing with all complaints made about their service.

We will provide as far as is reasonably practical:

1. any help you need to understand the complaints procedure; or
2. advice on where you may get that help.

6. How we handle complaints

The Registered Manager may ask one of the management team to investigate the complaint. That person will have enough seniority and experience to deal with the issues raised by the complaint.

We will acknowledge a complaint within 3 working days and give you the name and contact details of the person investigating it.

We will keep you informed about the progress of the investigation. We aim to have all complaints finished within 28 working days unless we agree a different time scale with you.

When we have finished investigating, we will either arrange to meet with you or call you by telephone to discuss the outcome, we will also write to you with:

1. details of the findings;
2. any action we have taken; and
3. our proposals to resolve your complaint.

7. Time limits

You should complain as soon as you can after the date on which the event occurred or came to your notice. If you complain more than twelve months later, we may not be able to investigate properly. But we shall also consider whether you had good reason for not making the complaint sooner and whether, despite the delay, it is still possible to investigate the complaint effectively and fairly.

8. Further steps

At any stage during the process, if you are not happy with the way the service is dealing with your complaint and Social Services have provided your care you can contact the Local Authority that funds you at:

Social Services
PO Box 297
County Hall
Chelmsford
Essex.
CM1 1YS

Emergency Duty Team:

Tel: 0845 6061212

Once we have dealt with your complaint, if you are not happy with the outcome you can refer your complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) and ask for it to be reviewed. The LGO provides a free independent service.

You can contact them at:

Local Government Ombudsman
PO Box 4771
Coventry CV4 0EH
Tel: 0300 061 0614
Website: www.lgo.org.uk

NB: The LGO will not normally investigate a complaint until the provider has had an opportunity to respond and resolve matters.

A1 Homecare is registered with and regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The CQC cannot get involved in individual complaints about providers but is happy to receive information about services at any time.

You can contact the CQC at:

Care Quality Commission National Correspondence, Citygate
Gallowgate
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 4PA
Tel: 03000 616161
Web site: www.cqc.org.uk
Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

OTHER REPORTING ORGANISATIONS

If at any time you are not happy with the way your complaint is being handled, there are further organisations you can refer this to. It is A1 Home Care's duty to provide you with contact details of the following organisations that you are able to refer your complaint to:

1. Local Government Ombudsman
PO Box 4771
Coventry CV4 0EH
Tel: LGO Advice Team 0300 061 0614
Email: advice@lgo.org.uk

2. General Social Care Council
London Office
Goldings House
2 Hays Lane
London,
SE1 2HB
Tel: 0207 397 5100

3. ESAB Support Team (Essex Safe Guarding Adults Board)
New Bridge House
60-68 New London Road
Chelmsford
Essex
CM2 0PDPP
Tel: 01245 506642
Email: ESACB@essex.gov.uk

4. Essex safe guarding 0345 6037630

5. Essex social care 0345 6037630

A1 HOME CARE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

The Company complies with the standards required of the Care Quality Commission and that of the policies and procedures that underpin its quality and performance. This section contains a summary of the Company's policies that Service Users, their families and/or their Representative may find useful.

Equal Opportunities:

The Company is committed to equality of opportunity with the aim of ensuring that no one, including job applicants, staff members, Services Users, family of Service Users and/or their Representatives are treated less favourably or fairly on the grounds of age, disability, sex, race, religion and belief, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation or pregnancy and maternity. The Company A1 Home Care does not support positive discrimination and the placement of staff will be based on the Service User's wishes and the staff members experience and abilities for the task.

The Company aims to make equality and diversity a part of everyday working practice and will not tolerate discrimination in any form. Any complaint about discrimination very seriously. Any employee or Service Users who feels they have been unfairly treated should raise the matter with the Registered Manager in accordance with the Company's Complaints Procedure. Any complaint received of a discriminatory nature will be dealt with under the Company's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Confidentiality of Information:

Any information obtained by the Company, in whatever form, in relation to the Service User and/or Representative, affairs or finances will be treated in the strictest confidence. Staff members contractual terms help to ensure their commitment to ensuring and maintaining confidentiality and any breaches of confidentiality are taken very seriously.

Sharing personal information between partner agencies is vital to the provision of co-ordinated and continued care for Service Users. A1 Home Care policy is to operate in line with the "Caldicott principle" relating to the "**Basic Principles of Passing Confidential Information**". This policy document is available to Service Users upon request.

No personal information will be shared unless there is a danger to the Service Users or care/support worker and in the first instance this will only be shared with the Registered Manager or Responsible Individual and then acted upon at their discretion.

Information held on our internal office computers or our Care Assistants hand held mobile devices are protected with secure password/code entry.

Clients or their assigned authorised family member can view information regarding the clients care notes and medication given through our secure Open Pass System, this is discussed during initial care set up.

Data Protection:

A1 Home Care is registered with the Data Protection Agency ICO (Information Commissioners Office), The Register of Data Controllers. If a Service User wishes to gain access to information held about them requests must be made in writing and will be dealt with by the company within 40 days from the date of receipt. A1 Home Care will ensure that it is satisfied as to the identity of the person making the request before releasing confidential or sensitive information.

Inspection – Care Quality Commission (CQC):

A1 Home Care is subject to annual inspections from the Care Quality Commission during which Service User files may be reviewed as part of the inspection or regulation process. You may be contacted during this time about the level of your service. You should advise A1 Home Care if you do not wish to be contacted.

Insurances:

Company Insurance: Appropriate Public and Employers Liability Insurance is in place to the value of £10,000,000.

Care Assistant Insurance: It is the responsibility of Care Assistants to ensure that if they use their own car for work it has the appropriate business insurance and Care Assistants are required to produce proof of their valid Driving Licence, MOT and Vehicle Insurance.

Health & Safety:

The Company complies with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and ensures, so far as is practicably possible, the health, safety and welfare of its employees, Service Users and all persons likely to be affected by the Company's operations.

Health and Safety training, including manual handling training, is provided to Care Assistants and Care Assistants have a duty to ensure that they work in a safe way that does not put the person for whom they care, themselves or their work colleagues at risk. Appropriate Health and Safety Risk Assessments are carried out prior to work being undertaken (and ongoing Risk Assessments if necessary) and if potential hazards are identified remedial recommendations will be made by the Company. Care Assistants are encouraged to report and document accidents, incidents or potential hazards immediately.

Safe Moving & Positioning:

In compliance with CQC Regulations all Care Assistants have an up-to-date Moving and Positioning Certificate. A1 Home Care operates a strict "no lifting" policy and all Care Assistants are advised that they should never attempt to move or lift a Service User without appropriate lifting equipment. Care Assistants have the right to refuse if they are asked to move or lift a Service User; Care Assistants should contact the Registered Manager, Office or Senior Care Assistants immediately for advice.

Protective Clothing:

Care Assistants are supplied with appropriate PPE equipment including aprons and gloves and it is the policy of the Company that appropriate PPE is worn by Care Assistants at all times to protect against infection and maintain appropriate hygiene levels.

Safe Handling of Money and Property:

A1 Home Care does its best to ensure the safe handling of money and has the following procedures in place:

- **Payment for the service/contribution:** Care Assistants are not allowed to accept cash payments on behalf of the Company. It is not advised but they may accept a cheque on behalf of the Company if it is given in a sealed envelope.
- **Payment of Service User's bills, shopping etc.:** If it is agreed that during your assessment Care Assistants will handle monies, the Registered Manager shall agree and set up a financial system to record all money transactions.

It is strictly against the Company's policy for Care Assistants to:

1. Borrow money from a Service User or anyone associated with a Service User;
 2. Lend money to a Service User or anyone associated with a Service User;
 3. Accept cash or gifts;
 4. Be a witness to the Service User's Will and/or be a beneficiary of a Service User of A1 Home Care;
 5. Sell or dispose of goods belonging to a Service User or anyone associated with the Service User;
 6. Sell goods or services to the Service User;
 7. Buy goods belonging to/from a Service User;
 8. Use personal property belonging to a Service User;
- Become involved in gambling syndicates with a Service User i.e. national lottery or football pools;

- Take unauthorised persons (including children) into a Service User's home without the permission of the Service User, their family and/or Representative and the Company's Registered Manager;
- Take responsibility for looking after any valuables on behalf of a Service Users;
- Incur a liability on behalf of a Service User;
- Use loyalty cards except those belonging to the Service Users on behalf of the Service User;

It is the responsibility of the Care Assistant to safeguard property belonging to the Service User. Any accidents/damage to property must be reported to the Registered Manager immediately.

Protection from Abuse, Neglect and Self-Harm:

Abuse can take different forms, and may be physical, verbal, sexual, financial or self-neglect. Responsibilities for safeguarding are enshrined in legislation and the Company takes its safeguarding responsibilities very seriously. It is the responsibility of all of our staff to safeguard the interests of the Service Users, in an environment which is safe, supportive and free from abuse. The only acceptable relationship between our staff and a Service User is one which is professional and which focuses exclusively on the needs of the Service User.

The Company will not tolerate any form of abuse and it is our aim through training, education, continued professional development and open lines of communication that all staff within the Company are committed and competent to undertake their duties and responsibilities in conjunction with other professionals and organisation to ensure the wellbeing of our Service Users at all times.

it is the Company's duty to report and to act on any form of abuse and will supply information to local authorities upon request in all safeguarding enquiries in accordance with legislation.

Security of the Home:

Care Assistants will to the best of their ability maintain the security & safety of a Service User's home whilst attending for the provision of care. Agreement will need to be reached regarding:

- Access and key holding;
- Confidentiality of entry codes and security of doors and windows;
- Alternative arrangements for entering the home;
- Action to take in case of loss or theft of keys;
- Action to take when unable to gain entry;
- Discovery of an accident or other emergency situation;

Appropriate information will be documented on the Service User's Agreement and personal care plan. Relevant information shall also be passed to the Care Assistants involved in the care package.

We recommend that key safe numbers are changed every **6** months. The office must be advised of key safe changes.

Notice of Absence:

You will be notified if, for whatever reason, the Registered Manager should be absent for more than 28 days of the person who has taken over the duties of the Registered Manager.

Independent Advocates:

All Service Users have the right to make an informed choice regarding the care services that they are provided with. If however, due to lack of capacity, Service Users who are unable to make an informed choice they can have an independent advocate who will support them to make decisions, or make the decisions on their behalf. Details of independent advocacy services can be obtained from a number of sources, to include Social Services, the Citizens Advice Bureau and GP surgeries.

CONTACT US

We value and welcome both positive and negative feedback to enable us to help us improve our service. All feedback should be directed to: **Nicky Cook**, Registered Care Manager at:

A1 Home Care Limited
Unit 16 – 18, Robjohns House Business Centre
Navigation Road
Chelmsford
Essex
CM2 6ND.

Tel: 01245 354774
Email: nicky@a1homecareltd.co.uk or enquiries@a1homecareltd.co.uk
Website: www.a1homecareltd.co.uk

Thank You

On behalf of A1 Home Care we would like to thank you for considering us as your care provider and for taking the time to read and review our Care Services Information Guide. If you have any questions or queries that are not answered in this Guide please do not hesitate to contact us.

Patrick O’Callaghan
CEO/Managing Director

Nicola Cook
Registered Care Manager
(Head of Operations)



Your Choice, Your Care



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