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Last Amended: 19/03/2018

CC04 - Changes in Health State Policy and Procedure

Category: Care Management   **Sub-category:** Care Practice

Policy Review Sheet

Last Reviewed: 06/03/19 **Last Amended:** 19/03/18

Next planned review in 12 months, or sooner as required.

Note: The full policy change history is available in your online management system.

Business Impact:	Low	Medium	High	Critical
		X		
Changes are important, but urgent implementation is not required, incorporate into your existing workflow.				

	Reason for this review:	Scheduled review
	Were changes made?	Yes
	Summary:	Policy converted to new QCS format. This policy sets out to explain the expectations as service user health conditions change. It refers to a timely access to other health and social care professionals as well as the expectations in relation to the competence of staff and how changes are observed and responded to.
	Relevant Legislation:	• The Care Act 2014 • Equality Act 2010 • The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 • Mental Capacity Act 2005 • Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Legislation • General Data Protection Regulation 2016 • Data Protection Act 2018
	Underpinning Knowledge - What have we used to ensure that the policy is current:	• CQC, (2012), *Health care in care homes*. [Online] Available from: http://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/health_care_in_care_homes_cqc_march_2012.pdf [Accessed: 16/03/2018] • Skills for care, (2015), *Care Certificate*. [Online] Available from: http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Learning-development/Care-Certificate/Care-Certificate.aspx [Accessed: 16/03/2018] • NICE, (2018), *Decision-making and mental capacity - Guidelines NG108*. [Online] Available from: https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng108 [Accessed: 18/10/2018]
	Suggested action:	• Encourage sharing the policy through the use of the QCS App • Ensure the policy is discussed in planned supervision sessions with relevant staff • Ensure relevant staff are aware of the content of the whole policy

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(?) 1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that 4SocialCare Ltd's care and support staff have access to the best practice framework to aid Service User monitoring and appropriate response to change in a timely manner.

1.2 This policy supports other relevant policies and procedures and they should be referred to for further guidance and standards.

These include:

- Diabetes Policy and Procedure
- Choking Policy and Procedure
- First Aid Policy and Procedure
- End of Life Care Planning Policy and Procedure
- Service User Care Planning Policy and Procedure
- Review of Care/Support Policy and Procedure
- Medical Emergency Policy and Procedure

1.3 To comply with legislation and regulations.

1.4 To support 4SocialCare Ltd in meeting the following Key Lines of Enquiry:

Key Question	Key Line of Enquiry (KLOE)
SAFE	S2: How are risks to people assessed and their safety monitored and managed so they are supported to stay safe and their freedom is respected?
EFFECTIVE	E1: Are people's needs and choices assessed and care, treatment and support delivered in line with current legislation, standards and evidence-based guidance to achieve effective outcomes?
EFFECTIVE	E4: How well do staff, teams and services within and across organisations work together to deliver effective care, support and treatment?
RESPONSIVE	R1: How do people receive personalised care that is responsive to their needs?

1.5 To meet the legal requirements of the regulated activities that 4SocialCare Ltd is registered to provide:

- The Care Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Legislation
- General Data Protection Regulation 2016
- Data Protection Act 2018

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2. Scope

2.1 The following roles may be affected by this policy:

- Registered Manager
- Other management
- Nurse
- Care staff

2.2 The following people may be affected by this policy:

- Service Users

2.3 The following stakeholders may be affected by this policy:

- Family
- Advocates
- External health professionals
- NHS

3. Objectives

3.1 To have competent, knowledgeable staff who can deliver safe, effective and responsive care and support.

3.2 For 4SocialCare Ltd to have the means, resources and support available to meet the changing needs of Service Users and to acknowledge and respond sensitively in the unlikely event where needs can no longer be met.

3.3 To provide Service Users with a smooth service where access to services is professional, timely and effective.

3.4 For staff to build professional relationships that enable an ability to be responsive to the changing needs of Service Users whom they know and understand well.

4. Policy

4.1 Staff are vigilant regarding the day-to-day good health of Service Users and promptly report any changes or concerns. Service Users are assisted to seek help and advice from their GP when feeling unwell, or staff will ensure that any health concern is assessed as soon as possible by a medical practitioner.

4.2 Information on the health status of Service Users, details of known health issues and contact arrangements in the event of illness are all clearly noted in Care Plans.

4.3 Mrs Jody-Ann Jones will ensure that staff have the knowledge and ability to signpost and support Service Users with changing health needs.

4.4 A person-centred approach is taken, that is based on individual ability and need. By building meaningful relationships, staff are able to identify subtle and significant health changes and respond accordingly.

4.5 Care Plans are reviewed and updated in accordance with 4SocialCare Ltd policy, to ensure that they are consistent with the current level of care needs and support.

4.6 Communication systems function and are fit for purpose in advising colleagues of the changing healthcare needs of Service Users, to support safe, competent continuity of care.

4.7 4SocialCare Ltd will have measures and systems in place to determine changing dependencies of Service Users and to access support agencies if the Service Users' needs outweigh the capabilities of 4SocialCare Ltd.

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5. Procedure

5.1 Service User Involvement

A pre-assessment is completed before the commencement of any care package. From this, staff can identify key essential information such as a Service User's ability to communicate. This is vital for staff to ensure that they are able to determine if a Service User can communicate their changing health needs.

Over time, staff will build up professional relationships with Service Users and/or their families which will enable a more meaningful and pro-active person-centred approach to be taken in supporting a Service User to express how they are feeling.

Where Service Users are unable to physically communicate a changing health need, staff will refer to other communication methods such as non-verbal signs, communication boards, behaviour assessment tools etc. Staff should refer to the Service Users with Communication Difficulties Policy and Procedure.

A Care Plan will be produced and updated to reflect the Service User's abilities, needs, wishes and preferences for communication. Staff will discuss the Care Plan process with Service Users and talk to them about their health care needs.

5.2 Service Users will be made aware of how the system for referrals works within 4SocialCare Ltd and will be supported to access the GP.

Staff will ensure that any requests made to see a GP or healthcare professional are completed in a timely manner and that the Service User is updated on progress.

Service Users and/or their family members will be provided with information that clearly details what services are inclusive of fees within the care contract and agreement, whilst having an awareness that this could be subject to change.

The sharing of any information between health and social care professionals will be conducted in line with legislation (staff should refer to 4SocialCare Ltd's Confidentiality Policy and Procedure) and with the permission of the Service User.

5.3 Changes in Health Status

Changes in daily health status will be identified by the following means:

- The Service User alerts staff to a change in their health
- Through direct observation during care and support delivery
- Through formal reviews
- Raised by family or those known to be close to the Service User
- Routine diagnostic monitoring
- As reported by a visiting healthcare professional

In all cases, staff are required to document the change in health status and how it was noticed as well as ensuring relevant care records and/or risk assessments are updated to reflect the changes.

Through the local handover process, new staff attending to the Service User will be aware of the change of health need and will support the Service User using the updated care planning contents.

Dependent on the change noted, staff should discuss this with a senior member of staff and consider seeking support from the Service User's GP.

5.4 Care Planning

Care Plans will show a thorough assessment of current health status.

Details of any signs and symptoms that may suggest that a Service User is unwell are documented in the Service User care records.

Where a new health condition presents (such as an infection e.g. urinary, chest etc.), a Care Plan will be produced to identify how this will be managed.

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5.5 Service Users should be provided with the opportunity to express their views and wishes about what action they would like staff to take in the event of a changing health need and who this is shared with. For example, some Service Users may not wish to attend hospital or leave the home. Consideration by staff should also be made to promote Service Users to complete an Advance Care Plan where applicable.

5.6 Where new medication is prescribed to meet a changing health need, staff will follow the suite of 4SocialCare Ltd's medication policies and procedures available, in particular, paying reference to:

- The allergy status of a Service User, ensuring there are no contraindications before commencing a new medication
- The management of analgesia which is in addition to existing prescriptions of analgesia (e.g. the contents of cough and cold medication may contain paracetamol that the Service User already has a regular prescription of)

5.7 Any decisions made by 4SocialCare Ltd on behalf of a Service User with limited capacity will be made in their best interests, following the principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and the associated codes of practice.

5.8 Appointments

In the event of an unplanned medical appointment, staff will ensure that relevant family contacts are informed in accordance with the Service User's wishes around the sharing of information.

Any health changes, care changes or medical appointments and their outcomes will be reported across the care team to ensure consistency of care via local handover procedures.

Staff will respect the Service User's right to choice and offer the opportunity to attend these appointments. However, if they decline and have the capacity to do this, staff will record this outcome and cancel the appointment on their behalf. Where a Service User declines to attend an appointment and is proven to lack capacity as per the Mental Capacity Act, alternatives such as home visits should be considered and a management plan and best interest decision will be put in place in conjunction with the multidisciplinary team involved in their care.

5.9 Limitations

4SocialCare Ltd will make all efforts to ensure that changing needs can be accommodated and will work collaboratively with other health and social care professionals to ensure needs can be safely and efficiently met. Consideration will be given to the upskilling of staff and the introduction of equipment into 4SocialCare Ltd which can be put in place for the Service User's benefit.

The following two areas define when 4SocialCare Ltd will not be able to continue to support the Service User:

- The inability of 4SocialCare Ltd to meet the assessed needs of the Service User including changes in their medical condition, personal care, mental health or behaviour for which 4SocialCare Ltd does not hold a current registration and has no prospect of obtaining that registration
- Behaviour which compromises the safety and/or the wellbeing of other Service Users, or the safety of staff

Although rare, in these cases Mrs Jody-Ann Jones will work closely with healthcare professionals and the Service User to find an alternative service that can meet their needs. Staff should refer to the termination of Service User's contract for further details.

5.10 Assessment Tools and Diagnostic Monitoring

There are many tools available to assess and monitor for changes. Where assessment tools are used, they should be from a credible recommended best-practice source and staff should be trained to use them appropriately and know what action to take when they are completed.

Where diagnostic monitoring takes place, staff must be trained to do this competently and know what a normal range is as well as action to take in the event of an abnormal result.

5.11 Training and Education

At all times, staff will work within their realm and scope of competence and only assess needs if deemed competent to do so. If in any doubt staff must contact the Service User's GP for advice and support.

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Staff should have access to the suite of 4SocialCare Ltd's policies, procedures, resources and tools to help them determine the action they should take when responding to a changing health need.

On induction, all new care staff will complete the Care Certificate which will offer the minimum standard of knowledge that will provide professionalism alongside 4SocialCare Ltd's induction that includes working with experienced staff to achieve competence in the role they will fulfil.

All staff will receive training in addition to the mandatory and statutory expectations. This will be dependent on the needs identified by staff, the current Service Users within 4SocialCare Ltd and as defined within a training needs analysis. All achieved training will be documented on 4SocialCare Ltd's training matrix.

Staff are provided with the opportunity to contribute to the training requirements they may have in relation to this policy, such as long-term condition management etc. This will take place in the form of supervisions and appraisals as well as through team meetings.

6. Definitions

6.1 Health Status

- A generic term referring to the health (good or poor) of a person, group or population in a particular area, especially when compared to other areas or with national data. In the context of this policy, this term means the current health of a Service User

6.2 Diagnostic Monitoring

- This term is used to describe equipment that staff use to monitor a person's health, for example, blood pressure machines and blood glucose monitoring equipment

Key Facts - Professionals

Professionals providing this service should be aware of the following:

- Monitoring for changes in the health of Service Users is a fundamental role of any member of care and support staff
- By having positive professional relationships with Service Users, the smallest of changes can be identified and responded to in a timely manner
- There are many assessment tools and pieces of equipment available to support the assessment of change in health status, which staff must be trained and competent to use
- Staff will work collaboratively with other health and social care professionals to ensure that Service Users receive the best treatment and packages of care to meet the changing need

Key Facts - People Affected by The Service

People affected by this service should be aware of the following:

- Service Users have a right to receive a consistent, high-quality service even when needs change
- Service Users have a right to see their GP upon request and staff can support Service Users to access other health and social care professionals
- As needs change, staff will respond to this and ensure the Service User's Care Plan is updated with the Service User's agreement and involvement where possible
- Service Users can discuss any aspect of this policy with a member of staff or Mrs Jody-Ann Jones

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Further Reading

As well as the information in the 'Underpinning Knowledge' section of the review sheet we recommend that you add to your understanding in this policy area by considering the following materials:

Assessing the mental health needs of older people: https://www.scie.org.uk/publications/guides/guide03/carers/

The health needs of people with learning disabilities: issues and solutions:

https://www.bjfm.co.uk/the-health-needs-of-people-with-learning-disabilities-issues-and-solutions

Outstanding Practice

To be 'Outstanding' in this policy area you could provide evidence that:

- Service Users have a Care Plan in place that is current according to need and evidences any changes to health status as they present
- Staff are fully trained in the use of assessment tools and diagnostic monitoring devices
- Health and Social care professionals and Service Users report positively about timely referrals, access to services and collaborative working
- 4SocialCare Ltd responds to health changes by supporting staff with further training and development and/or provision of specialist equipment to minimise disruption for Service Users
- Service Users are involved in their care planning and have the opportunity to complete an Advance Care Plan, so that wishes and preferences are taken into account
- The wide understanding of the policy is enabled by proactive use of the QCS App