

LONE WORKING POLICY

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to identify appropriate procedures in order to assess and reduce the risks, which lone working presents. This Policy should be ready in conjunction with the Health and Safety Policy.

This Policy is designed to alert staff to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation and to describe procedures, which will minimise such risks. It is not intended to raise anxiety unnecessarily, but to give staff a framework for managing potentially risky situations.

Definitions

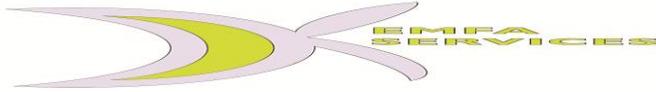
This Policy applies to all staff who may be working alone, at any time, in any of the situations described in the definition below:

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines lone workers as '*those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision*'. This means that Health Care Assistants who work unaccompanied for large periods of time are classed as lone workers. In the domiciliary care field, this can include staff who, work by themselves in the following situations:

- Work outside normal working hours, eg working with people who use services in the evening, at night, during weekends and bank holidays
- Visiting people in their own homes
- Handling cash
- Collecting and delivering prescriptions
- Travelling to quiet rural areas or high risk urban areas
- Using their care as a base

Care Assistance can encounter a number of problems associated with these situations, for example:

- Being accosted by people on the street in quiet areas, during darkness
- Parking in unlit, isolated areas
- Car accidents or car breakdowns
- Hazardous driving conditions
- Theft
- Accidents from using equipment belonging to or used with the Service Users
- Manual handling problems
- Aggressive pets or farm animals
- Sudden illness of the Health Care Assistant
- Will carry out a risk assessment
- Put systems in place to ensure that staff who work alone are safe

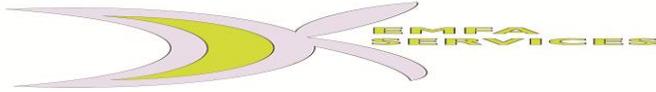


- Record all assessment and safety measures identified to alleviate the risk
- Check that lone workers have no medical conditions that may make them unsuitable for working alone and may take medical advice if necessary
- Regularly evaluate the systems to ensure that they are still valid
- Ensure that if a risk cannot be made safe two workers carry out the task
- Ensure that staff training takes place
- Know where lone workers are whilst on duty
- Ensure lone workers are supervised regularly
- Ensure that the Company is insured to cover lone working

Employee Responsibilities

Employees also have a responsibility under Health and Safety legislation to:

- Take reasonable care of their own and other peoples safety
- Inform the Care Manager of any medical conditions that may impact on lone working
- Have an awareness of their surroundings and the possible threat to their personal safety when working alone
- Be involved in ongoing assessment of risk and identifying safety measures required
- Leave the working environment if there is an imminent danger to their safety
- Undertake and follow training provided to ensure their safety and follow Practice Guidance issued at Induction Training
- Ensure that they take regular breaks to avoid working excessively long hours
- Follow the Organisation's Policies and Procedures set up to protect their safety
- Use equipment in accordance with the training given and not misuse it
- Tell the employer when safety measures are not adequate
- Tell the employer when they have encountered a 'near miss' or have identified additional risks to their safety that were previously unidentified
- Report to the employer any actual accidents or incidents that occur, using proper organisation procedure



LONE WORKING PROCEDURES

Lone Working within Premises

Staff working alone within a department during office hours must:

- Ensure that they are near to a telephone to call for help if needed
- Ensure that keys are secured and not accessible to visitors
- Call someone for help if they become anxious regarding their safety
- Report an incident to the relevant Manager as soon as practical after the event

Staff working alone within a department outside office hours must:

- Ensure that this only takes place with the knowledge and authorisation of the relevant Manager
- Ensure all windows and doors are secured to prevent unauthorised access, especially when leaving the building
- If an incident occurs, it must be reported to the relevant Manager as soon as practical after the event. This may mean notifying the Manager on an out of hours number if necessary

Lone Working Outside the Premises

Staff working alone in the community aware from the office premises must:

- Adhere to the agreed rota arrangements
- Text the person 'on call' at the start and at the end of **each** shift
- In case of emergency the person 'on call' will alert the Care Manager
- If involved in a car accident or breakdown, the Care Manager or 'on call' should be notified, as well as the emergency services
- Ensure identification badges are worn at all times
- Carry an alternative means of communication if possible, eg a mobile phone or personal alarm
- Ensure your vehicle is roadworthy, has enough petrol and has current breakdown cover
- Check directions to destination
- Check risk assessments