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Supervision of Staff

The key to effective supervision of staff is quality of the relationship between the supervisor and the homecare assistant supported by a comprehensive set of policies and procedures which are there to guide and assist the Homecare Team in implementing service delivery to standards of excellence and quality demanded by our clients and practiced by myhomecare.ie on a daily basis. In addition to clinical and medical training our supervisors receive on-going management, Leadership and personal development training which are carried out in small groups.

All myhomecare.ie staff receive supervision and support from their supervisor or nurse manager on a regular basis. Myhomecare.ie recognises that some staff are required to work by themselves for significant periods of time without close or direct supervision in the community, in isolated work areas and out of hours. Myhomecare.ie have a lone working policy in place. The purpose of this policy is to protect such staff so far as is reasonably practicable from the risks of lone working. All staff receive instruction on lone working. Staff are invited to contact their supervisor if they feel their safety is compromised. A risk assessment will be completed and the appropriate action will be taken.

All myhomecare.ie Homecare Assistants have their supervisor phone number who they can contact out of hours. If they feel they are at risk or in cases of an emergency. An example of this is as follows:
A homecare assistant attended a client's home out of hours where she found the client unconscious on the floor. The Homecare assistant followed the emergency procedure as covered in her basic first aid awareness course.

1. Checked area around was safe
2. Checked client for response, client was unresponsive.
3. Check for breathing by placing face above mouth.
4. The client was breathing but was unresponsive.
5. Called emergency services.
6. Put client in recovery position.
7. Ensured client was comfortable.

Once the client is receiving the appropriate medical attention the homecare assistant will contact the homecare nursing manager. The homecare manager will arrange a case conference to discuss the client's care. An incident report form is completed. A review is carried out of the incident and procedures followed to ensure that there was adequate support in place. There further action to be taken or training identified. Myhomecare.ie has an after counselling service in place.

All myhomecare.ie staff will receive regular support and practical advice from their supervisor/ nurse manager as required. This is provided through spot checks and shadowing.

Also, if the homecare assistant identifies a risk in relation to any of the following:

- Management of challenging behaviour
- Lone Working
- Access to client's home
- Elder abuse
- Manual Handling
- Deterioration in memory
- Deterioration in general appearance

(This list is not exhaustive)

The Supervisor or Nurse manager will shadow and assist the homecare assistant to the client's home where a risk assessment will be carried out and the an appropriate plan of care will be put in place and the relevant HSE representatives will be notified. At myhomecare.ie all our policies and procedures are in compliance with statutory regulations and relevant employment legislation. All our policies and procedures have been drawn up in accordance with the latest Guide to Labour Law issued by the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment. These policies and procedures were audited in July 2010 by the National Employment Rights Authority and we are delighted to confirm that to date we have not had any issues in relation to the employment of homecare staff.

The myhomecare.ie employee handbook and in the myhomecare.ie homecare assistants code of practice clearly states: It is prohibited for staff to bring anyone to the Service User's home while on duty, with the exception of mentoring / supervisory/ management of staff from the agency, please see employee handbook page 10.

Myhomecare.ie has policies in place to prohibit staff from smoking in client's homes or consuming alcohol at any time while on duty and will not permit any member of staff who is under the influence of alcohol or otherwise has diminished capacity to work or attempt to work on behalf of the HSE.

All employees receive instruction on our smoking, alcohol and drugs policies at their induction training. They also receive training on our disciplinary procedures if any of our policies are violated. Infringements by employees will be dealt with under organisation disciplinary procedures please see employee handbook page 24 and 25.

However, myhomecare.ie reserves the right to use any stage in this procedure, or omit any stage of this procedure if the misconduct is serious enough to justify it.

Smoking in the client's home, consuming alcohol at any time while on duty or arriving at work under the influence of alcohol is strictly forbidden and warrants immediate dismissal. The behaviour will be fully investigated and each employee is informed that all details relating to their conduct will be recorded on their employees personnel file

The myhomecare.ie employee handbook and in the Myhomecare.ie Homecare assistants code of practice clearly states : Myhomecare.ie operates a no-smoking policy to comply fully with the provisions of the Public Health (Tobacco) (Amendment) Act 2004.

European legislation has confirmed that the right to clean air overrides the right to smoke. Any individual found smoking inside an enclosed workspace is liable to disciplinary action.

Myhomecare.ie has a contingency plan in place in the event that a worker does not turn up for work:

All clients are provided with a care plan which indicates the procedure the client should follow in the event that an employee does not turn up for work. The client is requested to contact their homecare nursing manager when an employee does not arrive at work and the contact details for the homecare nursing manager are provided in the care plan.

The homecare nursing manager will then contact the employee to investigate the reason why they did not arrive at work. Further to this investigation the homecare manager/supervisor will contact the client to provide an up-date on the situation. Depending on the reason why the employee did not attend work i.e. they are delayed in traffic, they are sick etc. the homecare nursing manager will immediately implement an action plan in order to ensure the client receives the necessary care.

If the employee is sick and cannot attend work the homecare nursing manager will search the company TSS employee database which has a large pool of fully registered homecare employees and will select appropriate registered homecare staff who can attend to the client's needs. The homecare nursing manager will only select homecare staff who have previously worked for the client.

Once the employees are selected the homecare nursing manager will contact them to establish their availability , in many cases the homecare employees will have indicated their availability previously so this process can be quickly implemented. Once an appropriate homecare employee has agreed that they are available to care for the client the homecare nursing manager will contact the client to confirm that they are happy with the alternative arrangements and homecare employee.

Upon agreement with the client the homecare nursing manager will contact the homecare employee and will explain in details the client's medical condition, mobility, duties involved and next of kin, they will also be asked to reference the care plan within the clients home.

As part of our induction programme all employees are instructed the policy and procedure in relation to cancelling a booked shift as per the employee handbook.