

Missing Persons – Temporary Workers

Version Control Sheet

VERSION	DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/REVIEW	IMPLEMENTED AND AUDITED BY	STATUS	COMMENTS
1	24/11/2022	William King Registered Manager	Active	Policy for Temporary Clinical Worker

Purpose

To provide employees of the Company with an understanding of their obligations and responsibilities when it is believed that a client in the Company’s care and protection has gone missing.

Statement

The Company accepts responsibility for the protection and safety of every client in its care and will respond immediately to any situation of absence where the whereabouts of the client are unknown. Where there is a likelihood that a client may go missing, then appropriate risk management strategies will be considered and implemented.

Procedure and Guidance

Information about the Client

Upon entry into the Service, the client will be required to provide a recent photograph and asked to give full details of any important friends, family members or other key contacts. Details must include address and telephone numbers and will be kept securely on file and readily accessible to members of staff.

When is a Client Missing?

As a domiciliary care provider, the Company is not responsible for monitoring the whereabouts of the client at all times. However if a client is absent without prior notice or explanation when a scheduled care visit takes place, the Company’s staff have a duty of care to try to establish their whereabouts and safety. The Registered Manager or Head of Nursing must be informed of this ASAP.

Missing Clients – an escalating procedure

The client is regarded as missing if their whereabouts are not known. If a client is considered “missing” then this will be regarded as potentially serious and the Company will undertake a series of escalating actions geared towards returning the client to the safety and comfort of their home.

If the Company believes that a client might go missing then key workers and staff are informed and closer monitoring of the client's whereabouts will be undertaken.

Check that the client is not in their Home

The first and most sensible option, where a client's whereabouts are unknown is to undertake a thorough search of the client's home. Any immediate neighbours should be asked if they know of the missing client's whereabouts. Should it be established that the client is not in their home, and his/her whereabouts are unknown, then the procedure will escalate further.

Contact by Telephone

Support Workers will attempt to contact the client by telephone. This may be, for example to:

- The client's personal mobile phone if they have one.
- To the telephone number of the place at which they were last believed/known to be.
- To any other telephone number where contact is considered possible.

If contact is made, and the client is not considered to be in any danger, then arrangements will be made to ensure the client's safe return to their home at an agreed time, either independently, with support from family or friends, or with the assistance of the emergency services.

No contact made with the client directly

It may be the case that efforts to locate the client through the above procedure fail. At this point the client will be considered as seriously "at risk", and further efforts to locate the client will be made with immediate effect. Thorough documentation with a clear precise timeline of interventions must be kept. This includes phone calls, conversations with people etc.

Contact with family, friends and key contacts

Where direct contact with the client has failed, then the Company will attempt to gather information through family members, friends and key contacts.

Search and involvement of the Police

If all efforts to locate the client by telephone have failed, then a search will be undertaken immediately. The search will begin with known locations where the client might be. If it is immediately evident that the client is not at his/her usual "haunts", then he/she will be reported as missing to the Police, the placing authority (where appropriate) and the client's Social Worker. The Company will establish and record the Police contact and reference number and share this with all staff on duty so that any additional information can be passed on without delay or confusion.

Upon the Client's Return

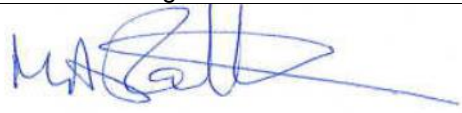
The Company will record:

- The circumstances surrounding the incident
- All action taken by staff
- The circumstances of the client's return
- Any reasons given by the client for going missing
- Any action taken in the light of the reasons

Information will be shared (where appropriate), with the placing authority and, the client’s Social Worker. Where a client goes missing persistently or engages in other risky behaviours, such as frequently being absent from their home to meet with inappropriate persons, the Company, in consultation with the client’s placing authority, will convene a risk management meeting to develop a strategy for managing risks. The strategy should be agreed with the client’s placing authority and, where appropriate, the local Police.

Where this Policy conflicts with the Scottish Local Authority Protocol on Missing persons appropriate to the Home, then the Scottish Local Authority protocol will prevail.

Next Review

Reviewed by:	Miriam Palk presented to UK Clinical & Corporate Governance and Risk Management Committee for renewed approval
Title:	Head of Nursing
Signed:	
Last Review Date:	24.11.2022
Actions:	QR Code, update Temporary Staff Handbook and Clinical24 Scotland Website

Date Approved by UK Clinical & Corporate Governance and Risk Management Committee:

Next Review Date: November 2023