NursingDirect

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DIGNITY, RESPECT, CHOICE & INCLUSION

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DIGNITY, RESPECT, CHOICE AND INCLUSION POLICY & PROCEDURE

This policy relates to the principles of dignity, respect, and choice, and their essential role in the care provided by Nursing Direct Healthcare Limited (hereinafter referred to as "Nursing Direct"). It aims to promote and maintain the independence and empowerment of the service users supported by the organisation. In doing so, it supports Nursing Direct's commitment to continuous quality improvement and compliance, with the goal of achieving a "Good" or "Outstanding" rating in accordance with industry best practices and the regulatory standards set by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

1. PURPOSE

1.1 To establish a framework of good practice for implementing core standards and promoting a culture within Nursing Direct that empowers Service Users' choice, independence, dignity, respect, and control in line with legislation, rights, and guidance.

1.2 To ensure that every service user receiving care from Nursing Direct is treated with dignity and that their right to privacy is respected, in accordance with Regulation 10 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

1.3 To ensure that Nursing Direct fosters a values-driven culture where dignity, respect, and informed choice are actively promoted. All staff, including Agency Workers, must understand their responsibility to support service users in making informed decisions while maintaining their privacy and dignity. Staff must also be prepared to challenge behaviours or practices that fall short of these standards, recognising that even unintentional actions can make individuals feel disrespected or undervalued.

1.4 To ensure that service users are treated fairly and are not subjected to discrimination, whether direct or indirect, on the basis of any protected characteristic, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Nursing Direct is committed to providing care that is consistently kind, respectful, and compassionate, thereby upholding the dignity of every individual and ensuring full compliance with all relevant regulatory standards.

1.5 To be committed to delivering high-quality, person-centred complex homecare services that are responsive to the unique needs and expectations of each service user. This includes respecting their autonomy and independence, and identifying, recording, and meeting their individual needs and choices.

1.6 To support service users in exercising their rights and making informed decisions, including positive risk-taking, through the assessment of potential risks and their likely impact, as far as reasonably practicable. This includes providing appropriate guidance and support to both service users and staff, including Agency Workers, to promote dignity, choice, and independence.

1.7 To ensure that Nursing Direct has effective policies and procedures in place to support coordinated working across various systems and with external stakeholders and partners, in a manner that enhances the quality of care delivery within the given context.

1.8 To support Nursing Direct in meeting the Key Lines of Enquiry/Quality Statements of safe, caring, effective, responsive and well-led as set out by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

1.9 To meet the legal requirements of the regulated activities that Nursing Direct is registered to provide:

- The Care Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice

2. SCOPE

2.1 The following roles may be affected by this policy:

- All Staff including Agency Workers

2.2 The following Service Users may be affected by this policy:

- Service Users

2.3 The following stakeholders may be affected by this policy:

- Family
- Advocates
- Representatives
- Commissioners

3. OBJECTIVES

3.1 To raise awareness and understanding of legal obligations in ensuring that control, dignity, respect, choice, and empowerment are promoted by staff including Agency Workers.

3.2 To provide a set of practical standards that will enable all staff, including Agency Workers, to work within an expected culture that offers choice, dignity, and respect at every opportunity.

4. POLICY

4.1 Dignity is one of the very foundations of person-centred care. Nursing Direct treats every service user and staff including agency Worker with respect, compassion and equality.

4.2 Nursing Direct is committed to empowering service users to make meaningful choices and maximise autonomy in their lives

4.3 Nursing Direct will actively involve service users, their families, and relevant stakeholders in all care-related decisions, ensuring that care is personalised to reflect each individual's needs, preferences, and goals.

4.4 Staff including Agency Workers will ensure that Service Users are supported to make their own decisions as far as they are able.

4.5 Service Users who lack the capacity to make some choices may require the best interest decision in line with the Mental Capacity Act 2005 (see the Mental Capacity Act 2005 Policy and Procedure).

4.6 Nursing Direct will maintain open and transparent communication channels to facilitate dialogue and feedback from service users.

4.7 Service Users will be treated with dignity and respect which is embodied throughout the policies and procedures at Nursing Direct, as well as actively practiced by the leadership team.

4.8 Nursing Direct will nurture a culture where enablement of choice is a routine, natural practice. If failings in enabling Service User choice do occur, these will be managed by providing staff including Agency Workers support. However, if necessary, disciplinary action may be taken.

5. PROCEDURE

5.1 **The Key Principles of the Care Act 2014 that Underpin this, Policy.**

5.1.1 The Care Act 2014 sets out some 'Key Principles' on how Staff including Agency Workers must work with Service Users. Staff, including Agency Workers at Nursing Direct, will familiarise themselves with these principles and abide by them. These principles are:

- The Service User knows best
- The Service User's views, wishes, feelings and beliefs must always be considered
- The main staff focus must be on the Service User's wellbeing, on reducing the need for care, and on reducing the likelihood that there will be a need for care and support in the future
- Any decisions made must take into account all relevant circumstances
- Any decisions must be made with the Service User's involvement
- Wellbeing must be balanced with that of any family and friends involved
- Staff including Agency Workers must always work to protect Service Users and other people from abuse and neglect
- Staff including Agency Workers must ensure that any actions taken to support or protect Service Users affects their rights and freedom as little as possible

5.1.2 It is vital that Nursing Direct promote a culture that abides by these key principles which supports Service User well-being and that all staff including Agency Workers, are supported to understand and develop skills in this area.

5.2 **Assessment of Needs**
An assessment will be completed for every new Service User to ensure that their needs can be met by Nursing Direct. This will enable staff including Agency Workers to;

- Develop an understanding of the Service User, their likes, dislikes, and normal routines.
- Offer choice around abilities and wishes for the future.
- Ascertain ability to choose and control future care planning and support.
- Involve family members and others involved in care (as agreed by the Service User)
- Be encouraged to think about what outcomes the Service Use wants to achieve in their life.

5.2.1 Staff including Agency Workers will take the time to understand and get to know the Service User, their previous life and past achievements, as well as any goals or aspirations that they have.

5.2.2 To help gather information, Nursing Direct will complete an "all about me" a personal history section within the Care Plan. This will be completed with the Service user, however, if there is an assessed lack of capacity to undertake this task, with the support they require, this will be completed by the Service User's representatives.

5.2.3 Regular review meetings will be held to review and adjust care plans in response to changing needs or preferences. Service users and their families will be invited to these meetings and encouraged to provide input and feedback.

5.2.4 Feedback received will be used to identify areas for improvement in the services provided by Nursing Direct our service. Service users and their families will be involved in the development of improvement plans and the evaluation of their effectiveness.

5.3 **Choice and Control in Daily Practice**

5.3.1 All staff including Agency Workers will treat people as individuals, ensuring that they remain in control of what happens to them. For those Service Users who are unable to be in control, staff including Agency Workers will act in their best interests in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act 2005

5.3.2 Service Users will be empowered by ensuring that they have access to information about services when they want or need it, and staff including Agency Workers will support Service Users to locate this information.

5.3.3 Staff including Agency Workers will ensure that Service Users are fully involved in any decision that affects their care, including personal decisions (such as what to eat, what to wear and what time to wake up or go to bed), and wider decisions about the service where possible.

5.3.4 Staff including Agency Workers will value the time spent supporting people with decision making as much as the time spent doing other tasks

5.3.5 At every opportunity, people will be encouraged to participate as fully as they can at all levels of the service, including the day to day running of the service.

5.3.6 Where Service Users choose not to partake in suggestions from staff including Agency Workers, this will be respectfully accepted, and staff including Agency Workers will seek to identify and revisit the Service User's wishes.

5.3.7 Service Users have the right to live their lives to the full as long as that does not stop others from doing the same.

5.3.8 Where Service Users have capacity, they have the right to take risks, even if those risks appear to be unwise.

5.3.9 Nursing Direct will at every opportunity record choice, control and consent in daily Care Records to evidence that these aspects are being met.

5.4 **Financial Control**

5.4.1 It is important that the Service User has the support they need (where applicable) to cope with administrative and management aspects of their finances, in accordance with relevant policies and procedures.

5.4.2 Where required, Service Users will have the support they need to cope with the administrative and management aspects of their finances in accordance with the guidance provided within the care plan and risk assessment documents.

5.5 **Community Links**

5.5.1 Where possible, and at every opportunity, Nursing Direct will encourage and support service users to participate in the wider community

5.5.2 Nursing Direct will promote community inclusion by supporting service users to participate in local activities and access appropriate services, resources and support groups within their community.

5.6 **Dignity and Respect**

5.6.1 Nursing Direct will ensure that the Service User is treated with dignity and respect at all times, in line with Regulation 10 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014. The CQC says the following about dignity and respect in Regulation 10:

5.6.2 **Service Users must be treated with dignity and respect:**

- When Service Users receive care and treatment, all staff including Agency Workers must treat them with dignity and respect at all times. This includes staff including Agency Workers treating them in a caring and compassionate way.
- All communication with Service Users using services must be respectful. This includes using or facilitating the most suitable means of communication and respecting a person's right to engage or not to engage in communication.
- Staff including Agency Workers must respect the Service User's personal preferences, lifestyle and care choices.
- When providing intimate or personal care, staff including Agency Workers must make every reasonable effort to make sure that they respect the Service User's preferences about who delivers their care and treatment, such as requesting staff including Agency Worker of a specified gender.
- Service Users should be addressed in the way they prefer.
- Service Users must not be neglected or left in undignified situations.
- Complaints and concerns will be addressed promptly and in a respectful manner.

5.7 **Warmth and Kindness**

5.7.1 Nursing Direct maintains that they care about human warmth and empathy when delivering care and ensure that their service users are cared for with kindness and not being treated as objects, burdens, numbers or aliens (as per SCIE 2024)

5.8 **Advocacy**

5.8.1 Service Users who are unable to make choices or decisions about their care due to mental impairment are protected by the Mental Capacity Act.

5.8.2 Local advocacy services must be accessed when there is a need for a Service User to receive impartial support for:

- Protection from abuse
- Combatting discrimination
- Securing and exercising rights
- Being involved in decision making
- Being heard

Staff including Agency Workers can refer to the Advocacy Policy and Procedure at Nursing Direct for further guidance and information.

5.9 **Dignity Champions**

5.9.1 A dignity champion is someone who believes passionately that being treated with dignity is a basic human right, not an optional extra. They believe that care services must be compassionate, person-centred, as well as efficient, and are willing to try to do something to achieve this. Dignity champions pledge to challenge poor care, to act as good role models and, through specific guidelines issued by the National Dignity Council on Becoming a dignity champion, to educate and inform all those working around them.

5.9.2 Nursing Direct will have dignity champions in place where possible and support them in the role.

5.10 **Everyone's Responsibility**

5.10.1 **All staff including Agency Workers:**

- Must take personal responsibility for putting the Service User receiving care first
- Are required to challenge poor care, they should do so as soon as they see any shortcomings and must be given the training and support to help them to do so

5.10.2 **Nursing Direct will:**

- Introduce facilitated, practice-based development programmes, to ensure that staff, including Agency Workers, caring for Service Users have the confidence, support and skills to do the right thing for those in their care
- Recruit staff, including Agency Workers, to work with Service Users who demonstrate the compassionate values and behaviours needed for dignified care. This should be considered a core attribute, carrying equal weight with clinical and technical skill
- Regularly supervision staff, including Agency Workers, as an essential part of staff development and quality improvement. Supervisions should incorporate feedback from Service Users, relatives, carers and independent advocates, as well as peers and managers
- Be involved in the care of Service Users who may have dementia and will need to have the necessary skills to provide them with dignified care, developed through basic training and continuous professional and vocational development in dementia. All staff, including Agency Workers, must have basic skills in communicating with a Service User with dementia, including how to demonstrate warmth and kindness
- Have responsibility for care standards, care continuity, dignity, wellbeing and safeguarding, must expect to be held accountable for them and must take the actions they deem necessary in the interests of the Service User
- Gain feedback from Service Users and their families, carers and advocates. The feedback must be discussed and responded to every day, such as during the handover between shifts
- Routinely give staff, including Agency Workers, time and space to reflect on the care they provide and how this could be improved
- Invest in greater use of technology to improve the quality of Care Involve Service Users in how decisions are made
- Ensure that the Care Plan is person-centred and reflects what the Service User would like to do for themselves. It identifies their own wishes, preferences and priorities, and addresses the support they need to retain and develop their sense of dignity and personal identity

5.11 **Breaches in Choice of the Service User**

Nursing Direct will treat any allegations of Service Users not being provided with choice and control with the utmost seriousness and, where required, safeguarding and regulatory bodies will be informed in accordance with legislation. Staff, including Agency Workers, found to be purposefully failing to enable choice to be managed through the disciplinary process at Nursing Direct.

5.12 **Training**

5.12.1 Nursing Direct will ensure that staff, including Agency Workers, have the necessary skills and competence to include;

- Working with service users with cognitive or communication difficulties in decision making
- Person-centred care planning and outcome-based care delivery
- Promotion of choice, independence, and control versus risk management.
- An understanding of what privacy and dignity are and how they can be implemented in the Service User's home
- A working knowledge of the underpinning rationale, legislation and content of this policy

6. DEFINITIONS

6.1 **Staff including Agency Workers**

6.1.1 **Staff**
Denotes the employees of Nursing Direct Healthcare Limited.

6.1.2 **Agency Workers**
Refers to individuals who are contracted with Nursdoc Limited or another employment business as an Agency Worker (temporary worker) provided to Nursing Direct Healthcare Limited to perform care services under the direction of Nursing Direct.

6.2 **Nursing Direct**
Nursing Direct, also known as Nursing Direct Healthcare Limited, is the entity regulated by the CQC (Care Quality Commission) and responsible for the care service provision, contracted to provide homecare services to service users in their homes, in placements, essential healthcare facilities and in the community.

6.3 **Nursdoc Limited**
As the sister company to Nursing Direct Healthcare Limited, Nursdoc Limited acts as an employment business, specialising in providing staffing solutions to the healthcare sector.

6.4 **CQC (Care Quality Commission)**
CQC throughout this policy, the term "CQC" refers to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) which is the independent regulator of health and social care in England.

6.5 **Dignity**
Dignity is the right for someone (the service user in the context of this policy) to be valued and respected for their own sake.

6.6 **Respect**
Having due regard for a person's feelings, wishes or rights (the service user in the context of this policy)

6.7 **Choice**
The right or ability to make choices at every opportunity. It is about putting people first to ensure that they maintain control of their care and any treatment that is received

6.8 **Advocate**
An advocate is an independent person who will listen to the Service User and will represent their wishes without judgement or giving a personal opinion

6.9 **Assessment**
The assessment is a comprehensive needs assessment that is completed before support or care is agreed. The assessment ensures that the needs of the Service user can be met. This allows for a person-centred approach to the planning and delivery of support or care.

6.10 **Accessible Information**
The Accessible Information Standard aims to ensure that people who have a disability, impairment or sensory loss are provided with information that they can easily read or understand with support, so that they can communicate effectively with services. Since 1st August 2016 onwards, all organisations that provide NHS care and/or publicly funded adult social care are legally required to follow the Accessible Information Standard

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SIGNED:	 Marc Stiff – Group Managing Director