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THIS POLICY IS FOR:	Staff including Agency Workers (temporary workers), Commissioners and Service Users

COOPERATING WITH OTHER PROVIDERS

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COOPERATING WITH OTHER PROVIDERS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To ensure that Nursing Direct meets regulatory standards, follows evidence-based best practice, and safeguards its Service Users when considering cooperating with other providers.
- 1.2 To support Nursing Direct in meeting the Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE's) and relevant Quality Statements as set out by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).
- 1.3 Relevant Legislation:
 - The Care Act 2014
 - The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014
 - Mental Capacity Act 2005
 - Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice
 - Access to Health Records Act 1990
 - Data Protection Act 2018
 - UK GDPR

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 Roles Affected:
 - Registered Manager
 - Staff including Agency Workers
- 2.2 People Affected:
 - Service Users
- 2.3 Stakeholders Affected:
 - Representatives
 - Commissioners
 - External health professionals
 - Local Authority
 - NHS/ICB

3. OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 To document the approach that Nursing Direct will take when cooperating and working with other providers of health and social care.

4. POLICY

- 4.1 Nursing Direct will promote a culture of effective cooperation by:
 - Having a strong and robust internal and external communication system
 - Having clear information-sharing protocols and procedures as standard practice
 - Building and maintaining effective partnership and professional working relationships
 - Ensuring that there is a continuous and ongoing review of systems in order to monitor that they remain fit for purpose and deliver quality outcomes for the Service User
- 4.2 Clear processes, systems, and responsibilities will be in place and assigned when supporting Service Users in order to maintain their safe and coordinated care. This will include:
 - The Service User, their family or significant other (with consent) being informed of where personal information is being shared, and offered copies of relevant documentation
 - Service Users will be given information and signposted to any service provider or individual which may be relevant to their needs, and will be given support to access them
 - Other health or social care professionals associated with the Service User being kept informed of any changes
 - In emergency situations, Nursing Direct will be working with other individuals and professionals to respond in a timely and effective manner
- 4.3 People who are supported by Nursing Direct can expect to receive safe and coordinated care, treatment, and support - where more than one provider is involved, or if they are moved between services. To achieve this Nursing Direct will:
 - Cooperate with others involved in the care, treatment, and support of the Service User when responsibility is shared or transferred to other services
 - Share information in a lawful, confidential manner with all relevant services, individuals, teams, or agencies to enable the care, treatment, and support needs of Service Users to be met

- Work with other services, individuals, teams, or agencies to respond to emergency situations
- Support Service Users to access any other health and social care services they need

5. PROCEDURE

5.1 Pre-Assessment Planning

The Statement of Purpose at Nursing Direct will contain details that demonstrate the values and beliefs of the company and staff including Agency Workers. This will be user-friendly and used to demonstrate how Nursing Direct works cooperatively. Staff including Agency Workers can refer to the Statement of Purpose and ensure it is accessible to Service Users, their families, legal representatives, and healthcare professionals.

At the assessment stage of planning care, the staff including Agency Workers responsible for the assessment will identify the following:

- Who the other providers of care are (if any), as well as obtaining key contact names and details
- What role they have in supporting the Service User
- Upon commencement of care, who is responsible for coordinating all providers, from access to communicating changes

This information will be documented and shared with appropriate staff including Agency Workers at Nursing Direct in preparation for the start of care.

In the event of the Service User being unable to discuss the above details due to cognitive decline, the Mental Capacity Act and Code of Practice will be followed, and decisions around sharing of information determined under the Service User's best interest.

5.2 Assessment and Care Plans

When the Service User is assessed as requiring support or treatment by another care provider:

- Care Plans will be produced with the Service User (and with their consent, their family) and will be outcome focused with the aim of self-care as far as possible
- The Service User will be made aware of the person at Nursing Direct who co-ordinates their care in case they need to discuss matters with them. They will also be made aware of any information about them which is to be sent to another service or individual, and offered a copy
- The Care Plan will detail the arrangements made for the coordination of care and support between Nursing Direct and all other services and providers
- Nursing Direct will ensure that all providers have access to the Care Plan where appropriate and any other relevant information which is needed in order for them to provide safe and coordinated support
- Nursing Direct will ensure that other services are informed when a Care Plan review is to be carried out, in order to participate in the process. Nursing Direct will work with other services to facilitate their participation, where required
- Nursing Direct will ensure that all other services are informed whenever a significant change to the Care Plan takes place, where applicable
- Nursing Direct will ensure that all providers provide details about any support or care given to the Service User where Care is commissioned by Local Authorities, ICB's and other service users, or where other information about the Service User may be required from them
- Nursing Direct will ensure that the times and length of visits are agreed with the other providers where double up care is required
- Nursing Direct will ensure that where the Care Plan requires care to be provided by more than one provider at the same visit, staff including Agency Workers do not undertake activities alone if the other staff including Agency Workers does not arrive
- Nursing Direct must consider any lone working issues when doubling up with other providers

5.3 Transfer of Service User Information to Other Services

When transferring information, staff including Agency Workers will be aware of the risks of breaches of confidentiality under UK GDPR. Staff including Agency Workers will review all information to ensure that it is adequate to safeguard the Service User, does not reveal unnecessary information, and is only information that is relevant to care and support, in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

The information must be transferred in a manner which respects confidentiality and does not allow persons who do not require the information to access it.

If any person suspects that information being transferred has been lost, they must inform the Registered Manager immediately, who will in turn make enquiries and take appropriate action.

Nursing Direct will ensure that when the Service User is moving between services, the following information is provided as a minimum:

- Name
- Gender
- Date of birth
- Address
- Any unique identifier
- Emergency contact
- Formal or informal advocate/attorney name and contact details

- Details of care provided up to the point of transfer
- Assessed needs
- Preferences and any relevant diverse needs
- Medical history relevant to the current assessed needs
- General Practitioner's contact details
- Details of any infection that requires management
- Current medication details
- Allergies
- Contact details of new provider
- Reason for transferring to the new service
- Any advance decisions
- Any risks (such as harm to self or others, wounds, infections, falls, malnutrition)

All information provided must be factual and must not contain subjective opinions. The information transfer must be managed to eliminate the risk of any interruption to care.

This information must be transferred in time to ensure that there is no delay in the assessment of need by the receiving service or person.

5.4 **Organisation and Confidentiality Considerations**

Where any information to be transferred relates to a safeguarding issue, Nursing Direct must ensure that the information transferred is in accordance with safeguarding legislation, and that consent to transfer the information has been obtained. If consent is not obtained, the reasons for the lack of consent must be stated

Notifications to regulatory bodies will be in accordance with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 and staff including Agency Workers must adhere to the notification guidance notes in relation to maintaining anonymity with personal details

Nursing Direct will, within its business continuity planning, identify any areas where cooperation with other organisations or individuals can mitigate risks from events or incidents that may have an adverse effect on business continuity.

5.5 **Emergency Transfer**

- Where possible, Nursing Direct will ensure that all documentation is kept updated to support a swift and timely transfer
- Staff including Agency Workers will cooperate fully with the receiving services and advise accordingly of any queries about the Service User and their abilities, needs and wishes
- Staff including Agency Workers will maintain contact with the receiving provider for updates and progress of the Service User where the Service User is expected to return to their own home, and care will need to be restarted
- Nursing Direct will ensure that clear communication is maintained to ensure there are no missed visits and that staff including Agency Workers are made aware if the Service User is not going to be at home

5.6 **Education and Training**

- Nursing Direct will have an understanding of why cooperating with other providers is important, as well as understanding the consequences if cooperation fails. This can be achieved through meetings, debriefs or supervisions
- Staff including Agency Workers must have an awareness and understanding of their own professional codes of conduct in relation to partnership working and cooperation and be compliant
- Nursing Direct will have an awareness of how to respond to dealing with an emergency transfer

5.7 **Audit and Evaluation**

- Nursing Direct will use feedback from Service Users, their families, and other providers to audit practice with co-operation and compliance with this policy
- Constructive feedback will form evaluation and review of this policy as part of the quality assurance process of Nursing Direct

6. **DEFINITIONS & ABBREVIATIONS**

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 Cooperative

A cooperative activity is done by people working together, people who are willing, helpful, and acting in conjunction with others to achieve a common goal


6.6 Statement of Purpose

- A Statement of Purpose for a business describes what the business does, where it is located and who it is set up for
- Once a business applies to the CQC to register activities that are regulated, it has to include a Statement of Purpose as part of the application. This must include:
 - Aims and objectives
 - The services provided
 - Needs the service meets
 - Contact details
 - Service's legal entity
 - Places where services are provided

OUTSTANDING PRACTICE

To be "outstanding" in this policy area you could provide evidence that:

- Regular audit and evaluation of the process of cooperating with other providers takes place to allow for continuous improvement
- The Service User's documentation clearly includes details of other providers and their responsibilities. Completed transfer information is ready so that it is available in the event of an emergency
- Feedback from individuals and staff is used to review cooperation with other providers
- Service Users' transfers to services are reviewed by Nursing Direct to ensure that systems and processes remain efficient

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SIGNED:	 Marc Stiff – Group Managing Director