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RECRUITMENT

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RECRUITMENT POLICY

This policy outlines the recruitment practices and processes carried out at Nursing Direct Healthcare Limited (herein after referred to as "Nursing Direct"), supporting Nursing Direct to be fair, consistent, and effective in their recruitment of Agency Workers in line with relevant employment legislations and best industry practice guidelines.

POLICY AIM

The Aim of this Policy is for Nursing Direct to be a fair and responsible employer within the industry. All recruitment related matters at Nursing Direct are to be dealt with in accordance with this policy to ensure safer recruitment. As per the CQC regulations (Regulation 19), persons employed for the purposes of carrying out a regulated activity has to be of good character and have required qualifications, competence, skills, and experience which are necessary for the work to be performed by them.

In view of the above aims, Nursing Direct focusses on:

Outlining a formal safer recruitment process that Nursing Direct (as the employer) should follow to employ their Agency Workers. By understanding the role as an employer and care provider within the care industry, Nursing Direct can support their Agency Workers to understand how their safer recruitment process works, and how Nursing Direct go about selecting Agency Workers in a way that upholds the quality of the services they deliver.

Nursing Direct aim to have a process in place which is safe, well led, and effective to ensure safer recruitment checks are conducted and comprehensive records of such checks are kept, maintained, and updated accordingly.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- DBS Policy and Procedure
- Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedure
- Training Policy and Procedure
- Induction and onboarding Policy and Procedure
- Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure
- Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy and Procedure

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The main Purpose of this policy is to support Nursing Direct to explain how their recruitment process operates at Nursing Direct, providing a fair, consistent, and effective approach to the recruitment of all Agency Workers, in accordance with employment law and best practice.
- 1.2 To provide a framework for recruitment, onboarding and induction, and training within Nursing Direct; this policy will dovetail with those other named policies and procedures. In addition to this, the recruitment policies of Nursing Direct fully align to the principles outlined within the Equality Act 2010.
- 1.3 To meet the regulatory aspects of Safe, Effective and Well- led status as outlined by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Nursing Direct aims to ensure that it gives attention to Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) and Quality Statements ensuring:
 - That Agency Workers have the skills, knowledge, and experience to deliver effective evidence-based care, support and treatment with processes and practices which keep service users safe and safeguarded from abuse.
 - That Agency Workers work together for a common goal of quality care in their teams understanding their individual roles within teams contributing for achieving organizational goals.
 - That the governance structure and framework support have clear responsibilities so that quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements are understood and managed.
- 1.4 By meeting these expectations Nursing Direct attempts establishing a competent, skilled and dedicated workforce as Nursing Direct believes that recruiting the right workforce is important for maintaining the high standards of service delivery, performance and service user satisfaction. Nursing Direct will review and evaluate applicant thresholds and approaches to safer recruitment, where necessary on a continuous basis.
- 1.4 **Relevant Legislations, Laws, Rules, and Regulations:**

To meet the legal requirements of regulated activities of Nursing Direct, it has taken into consideration the following legislations when complying with its role and duty as an employer towards safer recruitment:

 - The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) (Amendment) (Coronavirus) (No. 3) Regulations 2022
 - Immigration and Asylum Act 2016
 - The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
 - Employment Rights Act 1996
 - Equality Act 2010
 - The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014
 - Data Protection Act 2018
 - UK GDPR
 - The care Act 2014
 - The London Multi Agency Adult Safeguarding Policy and procedure
 - The Police Act 1997

2. SCOPE

2.1 The following roles may be affected by this policy:

- 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
- External health professionals
- Local Authority
- NHS/ICB/CCG

3. OBJECTIVES

3.1 To recruit and retain skilled Agency Workers by use of safe processes, that enable Nursing Direct to achieve and deliver its aims and values.

3.2 To set out the stages and process of recruitment as practiced by Nursing Direct for all identified vacancies and roles.

3.3 To ensure the policies and procedures at Nursing Direct are aligned to demonstrate 'fit and proper' Agency Workers are employed, including the pre-employment checks required.

4. POLICY

4.1 It is the responsibility of the management team to:

- Comply with this policy and all related recruitment procedures at Nursing Direct
- Ensure every stage of the recruitment process is fair and complies with legislation
- Ensure that all necessary pre-employment checks are carried out during recruitment
- Maintain and update knowledge in relation to recruitment procedures
- Ensure that recruitment is applied fairly to all, in line with the Equality Act 2010
- Seek advice if information comes to light at any stage of the process which may impact on the employment offer
- Ensure that Nursing Direct employees responsible for the recruitment of others has the appropriate skills, experience and knowledge to undertake this role
- Ensure that any conditions of employment are made clear throughout the recruitment process and successful applicants receive written terms and conditions of employment on commencement

4.2 Nursing Direct follows a step-by-step safer recruitment process as detailed below. All prospective applicants will undertake the same process, ensuring a fair and equitable experience for every applicant.

1. Identifying a Vacant Post
2. Advertisement
3. Application
4. Interview and Selection
5. The Application Pack
6. Statutory Checks
7. Offering of Employment

4.3 Following the above steps of the recruitment process, Nursing Direct will assess the applicant against agreed standards and the vetting/ interview process will be documented. Specific attention will be given to equality laws for avoiding discrimination of any kind.

4.4 Nursing Direct will have due regard and compliance with UK GDPR and data protection legislations in relation to the archiving and retention of application forms and associated documentation. Nursing Direct will gather and hold information as required in line with these legislations, taking into account the requirements of Schedule 3 and 4 of the Health & Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014.

4.5 Nursing Direct will have an awareness and current knowledge of the impact of the EU settlement scheme on immigration and the workforce.

5. PROCEDURE

5.1 Identifying a Vacant Post

When a vacancy arises, the management of Nursing Direct will consider the most appropriate way to cover the work. The management team will review the staffing levels, skill mix and working patterns in their workforce to identify any potential gaps and requirements for recruitment.

The job description and person specification will be updated to reflect any additions or alterations of the role.

Nursing Direct consider that effective resourcing is not just about filling an immediate vacancy but about preparing for the long-term success of the business, using workforce planning to understand the skills needed for organisational performance.

5.2 Advertisement

In addition to the role-specific job description and person specification, a comprehensive advertisement for the position will be crafted, ensuring clear and precise details about Nursing Direct.

Language used will be unbiased. All vacancies will be diligently advertised across suitable media platforms and websites,

In all recruitment activity Nursing Direct ensure that it complies fully with the Equality Act 2010 and Nursing Direct's Equality and Diversity Policy. This will apply when posting job adverts, compiling job descriptions and person specifications as well as throughout the safer recruitment process.

Adverts can include all of or some of the information below:

- A statement about the values of Nursing Direct Healthcare Limited and its commitment to safe recruitment and working with vulnerable adults
- The job title, salary, hours and location
- The contract type being offered i.e. zero hours contract
- The details of how to apply and the deadline closing date and potential interview dates (if known)
- Contact details for further information and guidance on how to apply.
- That the role will be subject to DBS checks
- The role, skills and qualifications and other competencies necessary
- The necessary standard of spoken English required for the role.
- Basic job description (work to be done) and person specification.

The advert will be placed in the preferred sources as agreed by Nursing Direct. The advert must be aimed to attract the "best fit" applicant and should be based on a clear specific job description and detailed person specification.

A good advert should reflect a positive but a realistic image of the role and reflect Nursing Direct's commitment to safeguarding Adults and Children, as all Agency Workers are expected to adhere to this. It will include that successful applicants will undergo DBS and identity checks, reference and Right to Work checks.

5.3 Application

5.3.1 Applying to work with Nursing Direct

The first stage of the application is to complete the application form online through the Nursing Direct website, attaching a copy of the applicants most recent and up to date CV.

5.3.2 When applying for posts, all applicants will be provided with a job description, details, of the appropriate conditions of service and details about the company. The job description will include.

1. A clear list of the primary duties and responsibilities associated with the post
2. An outline of the required qualifications and/or skill sets necessary for the role
3. Specific details of any experience which applicants are expected to possess

5.3.3 Protected Characteristics and Equality and Diversity

Nursing Direct is dedicated to ensuring that no individual faces less favourable treatment based on disability, gender, race, religion or belief, age, pregnancy, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, caring responsibilities, or working hours. We are committed to preventing any applicant from being unfairly disadvantaged by requirements or conditions that disproportionately impact a specific group.

Prospective applicants will be required to indicate if they possess any disabilities as delineated in the Equality Act. This encompasses physical or mental impairments that significantly and persistently impede their capacity to engage in routine daily tasks, such as utilizing telecommunication devices, operating computers, perusing care plans, assessments, and reports, navigating public transportation, or executing manual handling of individuals or equipment etc.

5.3.4 Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustments form part of the recruitment process at Nursing Direct and all applicants will be asked to make Nursing Direct aware of any reasonable adjustments needed. As part of the recruitment process, all applicants who have a disability, who meet the essential criteria for a job, will be interviewed and considered on their merits to ensure that all applicants receive a fair process.

Nursing Direct will consider making reasonable adjustments for the recruitment process if:

- The applicant asks for reasonable adjustments.
- The applicant says they have a disability.
- The employer knows, or could be expected to know, of the disability.

It is against the law for Nursing Direct to ask applicants if they have a disability.

Reasonable adjustments may include:

- Job advertisement to be in a different format, such as Braille.
- Location of the interview - such as on the ground floor for those applicants who may use a wheelchair, or dim lights used for an applicant who may suffer from epilepsy.
- Alternative assessment formats such as in audio, Braille or large print versions
- Extra time for dyslexic applicants
- Easy access/ramps/lifts and other apparatus needed to ease out work depending on the disability

There is no limit on what may be deemed reasonable throughout the recruitment process and even after the recruitment process and selection process and Nursing Direct will support any reasonable requests to create a fair process for applicants even once they are included in the workforce.

5.3.5 Shortlisting

Shortlisting of received application forms will involve a process of reviewing the application and supporting CV against the person specification. The job specification will be used to ensure that a consistent approach is taken.

Whilst shortlisting, Nursing Direct will check that the CV is fully complete and highlight any inconsistencies (such as gaps in employment) that can be addressed during the interview stage.

All applicants who meet the criteria, have the required qualifications and experience, who have also indicated that they have a disability, will be automatically shortlisted and reasonable adjustments to the recruitment stages will be implemented to ensure that applicants receive a fair process.

5.4 Interview and selection

5.4.1 Invitation to Interview

Sufficient notice will be given to the applicant invited to the interview.

When arranging the interview, Agency Workers must request the applicant brings ID with them, a copy of which will be held on the applicant's personnel file if successful.

For unsuccessful applicants, information will be retained and destroyed in line with the Archiving, Disposal and Storing of Records Policy and Procedure.

5.4.2 The Interview Process

Before the interview day, the relevant Recruitment consultant will set time aside for a review of the application forms.

Nursing Direct will:

- Check that educational qualifications are appropriate and adequate
- Check work history; note and investigate all periods of no work and reasons for leaving the position
- Note any declared requirements for adjustments for disability
- Check the suitability of the supplied references
- Check the applicant's disclosure status

If any areas for further discussion are identified as above, these will be added to the interview.

Nursing Direct will also:

- Check that identity has been clearly satisfied and recent photographs supplied.
- Check that all claimed, relevant qualifications are accompanied by documentary evidence.

Interview questions will be agreed and standard for all applicants.

5.4.3 Interview Environment

An interview room will be prepared that enables the applicant to feel relaxed, whilst ensuring that interviews will be private and uninterrupted.

Where possible, arrangements will be made for someone to receive applicants at the door, with instructions to deliver them to a waiting area, making them feel welcome.

The applicants will be welcomed appropriately, and the interviewer will be informed of their arrival.

The applicant will be offered refreshments and supported to feel as comfortable as possible.

5.4.4 Remote Interviews

Where face to face interviews cannot be held, a remote interview will be used as part of the recruitment process by Nursing Direct at their discretion based on the circumstances. The applicant will be provided with an invitation to attend a remote interview which could take the form of a telephone interview or via a remote platform, such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom etc. This will be for the interviewer to decide what form of remote interview will be conducted with the applicant.

5.4.5 During the Interview

At the start of the interview, the interviewer will provide a brief outline of the role available at Nursing Direct, as well as gaining assurance of the role being interviewed for. During the interview, all set questions will be asked, recording the answers given by the applicant.

The applicant will be informed that, if they are successful in their application, the job offer will be subject to the receipt of two satisfactory references, one of which must be from the previous employer and that they cannot start work until those references have been received in writing.

They will also be informed that their appointment will be subject to satisfactory information being received from the DBS and the offer of employment will be conditional on the content of the reply and cannot be confirmed until a satisfactory reply has been received. On completion of interview questions, the applicant will be provided with the opportunity to ask any questions. The applicant will be thanked for their time and informed of when the decision will be made, and how they will be informed.

5.4.6 Post Interview

Following each interview, all applicants will be reviewed to critically question all reasons for acceptance and rejection, with no discrimination. If the interviewer is unsure of their proposed decision, they must consult the Registered Manager or senior management for further guidance.

The crossing out of notes is not permitted, and any alteration must be scored by allowing the original to be legible and signed by the person making the alteration.

For all accepted applicants, they will be contacted offering them the post on the condition of successful employment checks being carried out. They will be required to complete the Application Pack ahead of any employment checks being conducted. Should a candidate lack the required experience, they are informed during the interview that registration is currently not feasible. However, if their circumstances change, we encourage them to contact us. Subsequently, an email will be sent to confirm the details discussed during the phone call.

5.5 **The Application Pack**

The Application Pack will request comprehensive details from the applicant, encompassing their full name, date of birth, identification particulars, previous names, as well as a thorough breakdown of their skills, academic and vocational qualifications. This includes specialised skill development and role-specific essential training, alongside a comprehensive employment history, both paid and unpaid, with explanations for any employment gaps. Additionally, applicants will be prompted to articulate how their prior experiences align with the requirements of the position they are applying for.

5.6 **Statutory Checks**

5.6.1 In accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, applicants will be required to disclose any convictions, cautions, or bind overs, regardless of whether they are spent or not. Any relevant details provided will be kept confidentially.

5.6.2 Eligibility to Work in the UK and Identity Checks

Nursing Direct will refer to the Right to Work Checks policy and Procedure in place for full advice and Nursing Direct can also refer to www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk for current information and support with all aspects of eligibility to work.

5.6.3 **English Competency Checks**

Nursing Direct will ensure that all applicants have the required level of English language competence for the job role, which allows them to deliver a high standard of care to all Service Users.

For those applicants already registered with a professional body, Nursing Direct can be assured that they will already have the required level of English competency for their profession. Nursing Direct will conduct competency checks when reviewing their professional registration. For applicants from outside the UK, Nursing Direct has a duty to ensure that they have the appropriate levels of English competency for the role, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Nursing Direct will measure the language competency of applicants through the application or as part of the interview process and also on evidence. Applicants may demonstrate that they:

- Have passed an English language competency test
- Hold a degree or relevant qualification in English from a recognised institution
- Have lived in a multilingual household where English was the primary form of communication
- Are a national of a majority English speaking country
- Have worked in an organisation or institution where English was their primary language
- Have pursued part of their education in the UK

Nursing Direct will determine the appropriate levels of proficiency for each role, as proportionate to the duties and responsibilities undertaken, as per the Care Plan.

5.6.4 **References checks, DBS checks and other checks**

In compliance to the foregoing provisions of this policy in addition to the requirements contained in schedule 3 of the Health and Social care Act 2008 (Regulation 2014), all applicant posts are subject to the receipt of two satisfactory professional from two previous employers. One must be the applicant's current or most recent employer. References must cover the applicants' work abilities, essential skills, conduct and performance at work.

Nursing Direct will arrange the references and the DBS/Disclosure checks to be completed through the Registration team. Nursing Direct require a detailed CV or work history, evidencing the applicant's experience from previous employment.

Nursing Direct will also need satisfactory verification of the reason that employment came to an end within the CV or Work History. Nursing Direct requires this information in order to evidence that they:

- Have the necessary qualifications, competence skills and experience necessary.
- Are able to properly perform the tasks (after any reasonable adjustments)

This information may be provided in the form of a reference, but it does not need to be. While it is not necessary to obtain this evidence in the form of a reference, this is likely to be the easiest way of obtaining the satisfactory evidence. Character references are encouraged as a form of evidencing an individual's conduct.

5.6.5 All successful applicants must prove their "Right to work" status through checks from the Home Office.

5.6.6 **Qualifications**

Documenting evidence of relevant qualifications, full employment history and satisfactory information about their ability to work within a Regulated Activity is also strictly required.

Nursing Direct will ensure that, where applicable to the role, applicants have the necessary qualifications. All applicants are required to provide evidence of any qualification that is required for the role. This evidence must then be photocopied and retained within the new applicants personnel record.

Registered body registration checks will be made accordingly when employing professionally registered individuals.

5.6.7 Recording and Collection of Data

Applicant's data and details that are gathered through Application and interview process, are to be stored, maintained and recorded confidentially from the point of receipt.

Initial document checks may be required to be completed remotely; however, original copies should be taken to the office and verified prior to the applicant being cleared and starting work with Nursing Direct

5.7 Offering of Employment

5.7.1 Upon successful completion of the employment checks, the conditions of employment, including the contract relevant to the position, will be issued by Nursing Direct

5.7.2 Formal employment offers must not be issued prior to the receipt of satisfactory written references and the provision of the following original documentation:

1. A DBS enhanced level clearance
2. An immigration documentation proving a "Right of work."
3. A written explanation together with acceptable evidence of any spent or unspent convictions
4. Verified identity documents.

5.7.3 Managing Conflicts of Interest

In cases of potential conflict of interest during the recruitment process, for example personal relationships, the management team will thoroughly investigate the situation and make a decision accordingly. As a minimum:

- Job applicants will be required to declare on their application any personal/work relationship
- Job applicants will not be interviewed by someone they have a personal relationship with
- Job applicants will not be appointed into a post which results in a line management relationship with someone with whom they have a personal relationship

5.7.4 Withdrawal of Offers

If, after careful consideration, it is decided to withdraw the conditional offer of employment, the grounds for withdrawal must be very clear, e.g. due to unsatisfactory references or other employment checks and the offer of employment rescinded in writing. This decision must be made in conjunction with senior management.

5.7.5 Complaints

Where an applicant, either internal or external, has a complaint about the recruitment process, they must direct their complaint in writing to management in line with the Complaints, Suggestions and Compliments Policy and Procedure.

6. DEFINITIONS

6.1 Applicant

- An applicant is a person who has applied for a role
- The individual is known as an applicant until they commence employment when they become an Agency Worker.

6.2 Agency Workers

Refers to individuals who register with Nursdoc Limited as an Agency Worker and subsequently provide care services to the packages of care delivered by Nursing Direct Healthcare Limited.

6.3 Employees

Denotes the permanent employees of Nursing Direct Healthcare Limited.

6.4 Nursing Direct

Nursing Direct, also known as Nursing Direct Healthcare Limited, is the entity regulated and responsible for the service provision. Contracted to deliver homecare services to service users in their homes, in placements and essential healthcare facilities. Nursing Direct sources its workforce from Nursdoc Limited.

6.5 Nursdoc Limited

As the sister company to Nursing Direct Healthcare Limited, Nursdoc Limited acts as an employment business, specialising in providing staffing solutions for various healthcare needs

6.6 CQC

Throughout this policy, the term "CQC" refers to the 'Care Quality Commission (CQC)' which is the regulatory authority governing care provision within the UK.

OUTSTANDING PRACTICE

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

- Service Users/their representatives are to be involved in the recruitment process for development of the service, such as in identifying staffing needs, participating in the interview and recruitment selection process
- Nursing Direct has clear strategies with safe and effective recruitment practices to ensure that it appoints suitable people who are capable, skilled experienced and motivated to provide high quality standards of care.
- Nursing Direct uses a values-based recruitment processes to recruit people with the right behaviours and attitudes.
- Nursing Direct has a robust approach to vetting new members of Agency Workers and agency workers, reducing the risk of an unsuitable person being employed (e.g. follow up personal and professional references, look into their training records, focus on gaps in employment history, check

