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

## SPECIALIST NEEDS

### WARNING:

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# SPECIALIST NEEDS POLICY & PROCEDURE

## 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To ensure that all Service Users with specialist needs have their Care needs met by knowledgeable, experienced, competent Staff including Agency Workers who use evidence-based best practice and who have access to specialist services' support and guidance.
- 1.2 This policy sets out the framework and expectations to achieve this purpose and to ensure that the needs of Service Users are recognised and satisfied.
- 1.3 To ensure that Nursing Direct consistently meets the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) Key Lines of Enquiry (Safe, Effective, Caring, Responsive and Well-led) and the associated Quality Statements, in line with regulatory requirements.
- 1.4 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
  - The Medical Devices Regulations 2002
  - Mental Capacity Act 2005
  - Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice
  - UK GDPR
  - Data Protection Act 2018

## 2. SCOPE

- 2.1 The following roles may be affected by this policy:
  - Registered Manager
  - 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
  - External health professionals

## 3. OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 To ensure that the care needs of any Service User with specialist needs can be safely met by Nursing Direct staff including Agency Workers who are trained, knowledgeable and competent.
- 3.2 This policy, therefore, aims to provide clarity with regards to:
  - Ensuring that a robust assessment provides confirmation that needs can be met.
  - Record-keeping requirements, ensuring Service User involvement.
  - Staff including Agency Workers education, training, and delegation

## 4. POLICY

- 4.1 Nursing Direct will take account of the following when considering accepting a Service User with specialist needs:
  - Assurance that Nursing Direct can meet the needs of the Service User and without undue risk to the Service User, the staff including Agency Workers or others
  - The acceptance by the Service User and/or the Next of Kin, as well as each person involved in the Service User's Care of any risks relating to the care service.
  - It is the Service User's preferred choice.
  - The suitability, accessibility, and availability of alternative arrangements
  - The extent of the Service User's needs (e.g., frequency of Staff including Agency Workers intervention required)
  - The psychological, social, and physical impact on the Service User
  - The Service User's human rights and the rights of their family
  - Ensuring that staff including Agency Workers have the appropriate skills, competence, and experience to deliver quality care.
  - Confirming that there is a sufficient network of external healthcare professionals available to offer support and guidance, and who to contact in the absence of a sufficient network of healthcare professionals.

- 4.2 If after assessment it is considered that Nursing Direct cannot safely meet the specialist needs of the service user, then a service will not be offered or provided for the service user. When this is the case, a full explanation will be provided of the reasons for the decisions.
- 4.3 Nursing Direct will regularly review the needs of the Service User in order to establish that staff including Agency Workers can accommodate those needs safely. Any changes in the Service User's condition that cannot be met safely will be responded to in a timely manner by accessing other healthcare professionals. Where services are commissioned by Local Authorities, CCG's and other service users or Health Commissioners, discussion will take place with them as soon as care needs change.
- 4.4 All care delivered will be individualised and person centred. Nursing Direct will always seek to promote the Service User's independence in all aspects of care.
- 4.5 Nursing Direct will meet the highest standards of quality, safety, and compassion, ensuring that service users receive personalised support tailored to their specialist needs.

## 5. PROCEDURE

### 5.1 Care Assessment Planning

Before the start of any care package, consideration will be given as to whether or not Nursing Direct can meet the individual specialist needs for that Service User. The allocated clinical lead for the package of care will complete the pre-onboarding will ensure that the documentation is fully completed and must communicate the findings to Nursing Direct.

The pre-onboarding assessment must include the following:

- The Service User's current details (e.g. name, gender, date of birth, address, unique identification number, emergency contact details, any person(s) acting on behalf of the Service User and their contact details, GP contact details)
- Evidence of assessed needs including known preferences, diverse needs, and risk assessments
- Specific risks in relation to current and historical risks – this may include risk of suicide, homicide, or harm to themselves and others
- Records of presenting symptoms and the Service User's current health Psychiatric and medical history, physical investigations, and medication history
- A current Care Plan which includes any infection or long-term health conditions that need to be managed
- Evidence of any advance decisions regarding treatments the Service User does not wish to receive
- A list of current medications, including any allergies Discharge summaries following any previous inpatient stays
- Any safeguarding concerns
- Any other relevant verbal or written information, including social, financial, and psychological factors affecting the Service User

The current case notes, where applicable. These should clearly set out the records of care, treatment and support provided up to the point of transfer

As well as gathering assessment information from the Service User and their family members, Nursing Direct will seek support from the Service User's social worker or other relevant healthcare professionals currently involved in the Care of the Service User.

Before agreeing to a package of Care, consideration must be given to ensuring that suitably skilled, competent, and experienced staff including Agency Workers are available to meet the needs of the Service User.

Consideration will also be given to the maintenance of any equipment used, service dates and the impact on the dependency level and staffing level required and the access to healthcare professional support.

Nursing Direct will confirm that any equipment necessary to meet the needs of the service user is in place before the start of care. Nursing Direct will also clarify the process for ordering medicinal stock to always ensure an adequate supply.

Care Plans must be available to clearly identify who is involved in the Service User's Care, to identify how to access specialist support, if necessary, equipment, and indicate who to escalate concerns to if the condition of the Service User changes.

All assessment planning will take account of the Service User's rights and their unique perspectives on what matters to them in the way they choose to live their lives and manage risk. This includes having the information they need to help them be equal partners in their care and play a part in their own safety.

Nursing Direct will ensure the principles of the Mental Capacity Act are followed at every stage of the assessment and admission process. Any decisions made on behalf of the Service User will be made using the best interest framework.

Funding arrangements must be in place as outlined in the terms and conditions of the Service User Contract with Nursing Direct.

### 5.2 Care Planning and Delivery of Care

Every Service User will have a Care Plan in place detailing the ability of the Service User in relation to their specialist needs and the support required from staff including Agency Workers to meet those needs.

Service Users supported by Nursing Direct will be supported with a robust Care Plan from the start of their care package. Failure to do so exposes the Service User to the risk of unplanned care which is not evidence-based, fails to meet their needs and exposes them to unacceptable risks.

This Care Plan should include the following:

- The specialist needs and how it affects the Service User
- The support staff including Agency Workers required to meet the needs of the Service User
- Any equipment necessary to meet the specialist need and the responsibility of the staff including Agency Workers.
- Any specialist healthcare professional contacts involved
- Reference to other records in place such as risk assessments, daily records, manufacturers' guidance etc.

Care Plans will be reviewed at least Quarterly, although it is recognised that care plans are live documents and will likely be updated more frequently.

The Service User and/or their family members, with the consent of the Service User, will be fully involved in the Care Plan review as far as is practicable to ensure that the Service User remains at the centre of care decisions.

Interim assessments and Care Plans may be less comprehensive than a full assessment and Care Plans may not fully detail all of the Service User's needs and risks. However, it is recognised that completing full assessments and Care Plans takes time to complete and requires an in-depth knowledge of the Service User.

For any Care packages which may not allow a full assessment of needs, such as an unplanned or emergency Care package, the Registered Manager must be involved in the assessment of the care package. For transfers of care (emergency or planned), staff including Agency Workers will ensure that there is no delay in treatment due to the transfer and therefore must supply a sufficient all medicines and medicinal or other equipment in order to maintain care. A copy of the specialist needs Care Plan must be available for transfer or referenced within any transfer documentation.

Any delegated duties to Staff including Agency Workers to meet specialist needs will be in line and in accordance with professional codes of conduct standards.

### 5.3 **Partnership Working**

Service Users with specialist needs may already have associated specialist healthcare professionals involved in their care.

This should be detailed in the pre-onboarding document detailing the level of support in place. Staff including Agency Workers must liaise with the healthcare professionals to ensure they have all the relevant information to ensure that Nursing Direct can meet the Service User's enhanced needs and understand the support and input that the relevant healthcare professional can provide.

Staff including Agency Workers at Nursing Direct will seek the support, advice, and guidance from any specialist healthcare professionals in a timely manner and refer any medical changes in the Service User to the Service User's GP in the first instance.

Staff including Agency Workers will, at all times, ensure that they build up professional relationships in line with their professional codes of conduct to ensure continuity of care and a consistent approach to the delivery of care.

Any sharing of information will only be with the prior consent of the Service User, or in the best interest of the Service User in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

The Data Protection Act 2018 will be adhered to at all times when discussing information regarding the Service User with other healthcare professionals.

The Registered Manager will ensure compliance with national and local guidelines, such as NICE and Public Health England standards for any specialist needs.

### 5.4 **Learning and Development**

Staff including Agency Workers supporting Service Users who have specialist needs will be provided with the appropriate training needed to meet the needs of the individual.

Nursing Direct will source appropriate, credible training to ensure that staff including Agency Workers are suitably skilled.

Staff including Agency Workers will, at all times, work within their own professional codes of conduct and scope of competence and will be expected to seek further training as needed in order to meet the needs of the Service Users in their care.

Staff including Agency Workers will be expected to maintain their knowledge in any training provided and be able to demonstrate this through supervision, appraisal, and any revalidation requirements (where necessary).

Nursing Direct will ensure that in-house training plans at Nursing Direct reflect the needs of the business and will be subject to ongoing review to ensure that they remain current and suitable for the service users with specialist or complex needs.

## 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 Codes of Conduct

- A code of professional conduct is a necessary addition to any profession to maintain standards for the individuals within that profession to adhere to
- It ensures accountability, responsibility, and trust to the individuals that the profession serves.


### 6.6 Specialist Needs

- Specialist needs may also be known as complex care needs.
- Individuals who have specialist needs will have either a combination of multiple chronic conditions, mental health issues, medication- related problems, and social vulnerability or a condition which requires additional special training for employees / Staff including Agency Workers to support that individual.

## OUTSTANDING PRACTICE

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

- Assessments ensure they take account of Service Users' rights and their unique perspectives on what matters to them in the way they choose to live their lives and manage risk. This includes having the information they need to help them be equal partners in their support and play a part in their own safety
- There is robust evidence that an enhanced assessment of needs is undertaken which includes liaising with the wider multidisciplinary team to ensure that Nursing Direct Healthcare Limited can safely meet the Service User's needs
- A rolling training programme is available for staff development that is reviewed periodically and as necessary to meet the changing needs of the Service User
- Themed audits take place to review the efficiency of meeting specialist needs at Nursing Direct Healthcare Limited
- Visiting healthcare professional feedback is used to monitor the effectiveness of this policy and review practice
- Documentation reflects Service User involvement and Care Plans provide clear guidance to ensure consistent delivery of high-quality support
- Compliance with national and local guidelines, such as NICE and Public Health England standards

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SIGNED:	 Marc Stiff – Group Managing Director