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MANAGEMENT OF STAFF SLEEPING ON SHIFT

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MANAGEMENT OF STAFF SLEEPING ON SHIFT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety, dignity, and wellbeing of all service users at all times, and to uphold professional standards by addressing any instance where staff are found sleeping or appearing to sleep whilst on duty.

This protocol supports compliance with the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 and aligns with CQC Quality Statements under the domains of Safe, Effective, Caring, Responsive, and Well-led.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff providing care and support in a service user's home under the Nursing Direct service. It covers both daytime and night-time shifts.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

Nursing Direct operates a zero-tolerance approach to sleeping whilst on duty, except where staff are explicitly assigned a "sleep-in shift" as part of their contracted duties.

Any breach of this policy will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter, as it compromises:

- The safety and wellbeing of service users.
- The integrity and reputation of Nursing Direct.
- Compliance with CQC and safeguarding standards.

All staff must:

- Remain awake, alert, and responsive throughout their shift.
- Follow the service user's care plan at all times.
- Complete regular observational checks and record all care accurately.
- Maintain professional conduct and report any incidents, safeguarding concerns, or changes in the service user's condition immediately.

4. SHIFT-SPECIFIC EXPECTATIONS

Day Shifts

- Ensure your phone is fully charged at the start of the shift (bring a power bank if required).
- Complete Care Notes on the OneTouch App at least every hour.
- In the event that recording on the OneTouch App is not possible, records still need to be made on paper and scanned to the office.
- Recording on the OneTouch App should not interrupt direct care and support to the service user
- Sleeping is strictly prohibited.
- Follow the care plan and complete regular observational checks.
- Report any changes in the service user's condition immediately.

Night Shifts

- Ensure your phone is fully charged at the start of the shift (bring a power bank if required).
- Complete Care Notes on the OneTouch App every 30 minutes.
- In the event that recording on the OneTouch App is not possible, records still need to be made on paper and scanned to the office.
- Recording on the OneTouch App should not interrupt direct care and support to the service user
- Sleeping is strictly prohibited.
- Follow the care plan and maintain regular observational checks.
- Report any changes in the service user's condition immediately.

5. MAINTAINING ALERTNESS AT NIGHT

To support staff in remaining awake and alert during waking night shifts:

- The use of a phone or laptop is permitted only to help stay awake, provided this does not disturb the service user or family.
- If using earbuds or headphones, only one may be used so you remain able to hear and respond immediately to the service user.
- Remain attentive, alert, and responsive at all times while using devices.
- Do not lie down during waking night shifts, remain seated upright and alert throughout.

6. MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Managers and clinical leads will:

- Monitor Care Note completion through the OneTouch App.
- Review missed or incomplete documentation and implement corrective actions.
- Conduct risk assessments for staff removed from care packages due to sleeping on shift before reallocation to another package.

7. PROCEDURE

7.1 Reporting

- Any staff member who suspects or witnesses another staff member sleeping on duty must immediately report the incident to Nursing Direct.
- The incident must be logged on Radar Healthcare under the appropriate category (e.g., Incident – Staff Conduct).

7.2 Immediate Actions

Nursing Direct will:

- Conduct an immediate investigation, including speaking with the staff member concerned.
- Assess potential risks to the service user.
- Ensure continuity of safe care during the remainder of the shift.
- Where confirmed, the staff member may be suspended pending investigation, in line with the Disciplinary Policy.

7.2a Risk Mitigation (Post-Incident Monitoring)

Where a staff member has been observed or reported to have fallen asleep on duty, and the risk is considered manageable, the Registered Manager or On-call Manager may implement a risk mitigation plan prior to, or alongside, formal investigation.

As part of this plan:

- The staff member will be instructed to complete 15-minute observational checks on the service user(s)
- These checks must be accurately recorded in the OneTouch App using the designated observation log
- In the event that recording on the OneTouch App is not possible, records still need to be made on paper and scanned to the office
- Compliance will be closely monitored by management via OneTouch data and follow-up calls
- Any further lapse in alertness, or failure to complete observations as directed, will result in immediate suspension pending full investigation
- Recording on the OneTouch App should not interrupt direct care and support to the service user

This measure is designed to ensure ongoing service user safety while offering the staff member an opportunity to demonstrate improved conduct and accountability.

7.3 Investigation

- A formal investigation will be carried out, including gathering witness statements, reviewing documentation, and any CCTV evidence (where applicable).
- The staff member will be invited to a disciplinary meeting, at which they may be accompanied by a representative.

7.4 Outcomes

Possible outcomes include:

- No action (if unsubstantiated).
- Formal written warning.
- Additional supervision, retraining, or reassignment.
- Dismissal for gross misconduct (if substantiated).

8. SLEEP-IN SHIFTS

Where sleep-in duties are part of the contractual role:

- Staff must remain contactable and responsive to any service user needs.
- Sleeping is only permitted during designated hours where no active care duties are required.
- Staff must be ready to wake and respond immediately to any call for assistance.
- Failure to respond during a sleep-in will be treated as sleeping on active duty and may result in disciplinary action.

9. DOCUMENTATION

All incidents, investigations, and outcomes must be:

- Recorded within Radar Healthcare system.
- Retained in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and Nursing Direct's record retention policies.

10. MONITORING AND NON-COMPLIANCE

- Care Notes recorded on the OneTouch App will be regularly monitored for gaps or irregularities.
- Where failures to complete documentation are identified:
 1. Staff will receive guidance and be reminded of their responsibilities.
 2. Continued concerns may result in removal from the care package.
 3. When removed from a care package, a risk assessment will be completed prior to assignment to a new service user.
- Repeated or serious non-compliance may lead to formal disciplinary action and notification to regulatory leads, in line with CQC requirements.

11. REVIEW AND GOVERNANCE

- The Registered Manager is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.
- Patterns or repeated breaches will be discussed at Quality and Governance Meetings.
- This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required by regulatory or organisational change.

12. DEFINITIONS

12.1 All staff including Agency Workers

12.1.1 Staff

Denotes the employees of Nursing Direct Healthcare Limited.

12.1.2 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.

12.2 **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.

12.3 **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.

12.4 **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.

12.5 **Sleeping on duty**

Any instance where a staff member is found asleep, appears to be asleep, or is otherwise disengaged to the extent that they are unable to safely and effectively perform their duties.

12.6 **Rest breaks**

Scheduled and approved breaks in accordance with the Working Time Regulations 1998, during which staff may rest in designated areas but must not leave the premises without prior authorisation.

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REVIEW DATE:	22/10/2026
SIGNED:	 Marc Stiff – Group Managing Director