



## **Health and Safety Policy**

November 2022

1st Homecare Solutions Ltd.  
5a Ridgeway Court  
Grovebury Road  
Leighton Buzzard  
Bedfordshire  
LU7 4SF

Tel: 01525 376677

1st Homecare (Oxford) Ltd  
Ground Floor,  
8 Isis Business Centre  
Pony Road  
Oxford  
OX4 2RD

Tel: 01865 744174

1st Homecare Kings Langley  
Unit 15 Sunderland Estate  
Church Lane  
Kings Langley  
WD4 8JU

Tel: 01923 269877

### 1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL POLICY

1st Homecare has a duty to take reasonable care to ensure the safety of its employees, including by means of:

- The provision and maintenance of safe systems of work and equipment that are without risks to health, so far as is reasonably practicable
- The provision of information, instruction, training and supervision necessary to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety at work of its employees
- Arrangements for ensuring safety and the absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances
- So far as is reasonably practicable, the maintenance in a safe condition of any place of work under its control
- The provision and maintenance of a working environment for 1st Homecare's employees that is, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe, without risks to health, and adequate as regards facilities and arrangements for their welfare at work

1st Homecare also has a duty to ensure that it provides care to its clients in a safe way, including through the following means:

- ensuring risk assessments are carried out
- taking steps that are reasonably practicable to mitigate risks that cannot be avoided
- including relevant health and safety concerns in clients' care plans, including allergies and other limitations on clients' needs and abilities
- the reporting and monitoring of events (accidents and incidents including near misses)
- compliance with the duty of candour
- the ability for clients to raise concerns and complaints
- a commitment to learning and development among management and staff
- the provision of appropriate training for staff
- the safe management of medication, and
- having in place business continuity plans.

Information on the arrangements made by 1st Homecare to comply with its obligations is set out below and in 1st Homecare's other policies and procedures.

### 2 RESPONSIBILITIES AND ARRANGEMENTS

**The Registered Providers, which are 1st Homecare Solutions Ltd and 1st Homecare (Oxford) Ltd, represented by the Nominated Person, John Rennison, CEO, have overall responsibility for health and safety within the organization and for ensuring that the necessary standard of safety proficiency is achieved and maintained.**

**The Safety Officers**, who have day to day responsibility for health and safety and for implementing this Policy, are as follows:

- Leighton Buzzard branch – Emma Batchelor
- Oxford branch – Michelle Brown
- Kings Langley branch – Lesley Bignold
- Live in – Michelle Thomas

The Safety Officers have overall responsibility for health and safety matters including the following:

- The maintenance of safety records
- Investigating accidents and incidents and taking steps to prevent their recurrence
- Ensuring the Accidents, Incidents and Emergencies Policy and the recording and reporting procedures contained in it are followed
- Conducting, or making arrangements to have conducted, risk assessments
- The recording and reporting of accidents in accordance with RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013)
- Ensuring that 1st Homecare's obligations with regard to the assessment, control and monitoring of hazardous substances are met
- Ensuring that all employees are given induction training and that on-going training needs are met and records kept
- Supervision and maintenance of any equipment and its usage
- The health and safety policies and procedures in use by 1st Homecare

The Safety Officers may delegate responsibility to other Managers or staff.

**All carers, as employees**, have a duty to take reasonable care of themselves and others and do everything they can to prevent injury to themselves, fellow carers and clients and all others who may be affected by their actions and omissions at work. They are responsible for their own acts and omissions, and are required to:

- Work safely, in accordance with 1st Homecare's agreed ways of working including health and safety policies and procedures, and in accordance with training received
- To co-operate in meeting statutory obligations and to contribute positively to health and safety at work
- Report accidents and incidents that have led to injury or damage as well as any "near miss" incidents, in accordance with the Accidents, Incidents and Emergencies Policy, and also report incidents, errors and near misses in accordance with the Medication Policy
- Inform the Office immediately of dangerous situations or potentially dangerous situations at work, and any problems or defects in health and safety arrangements
- Keep all personal inoculations up to date e.g. tetanus
- Use equipment in accordance with instructions and training
- Not carry out any activity that may put themselves or others at risk

- Be alert to safeguarding issues and report any suspicions of a safeguarding issue under the 1st Homecare Safeguarding Policy
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety and welfare

Any carer who is faced with a conflict between the demands of safety and their job should raise this immediately with the Branch Manager or On call manager.

### 3 ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

#### Risk Assessments

The Managers will ensure that:

- Risk assessments relating to the health, safety and welfare of 1st Homecare's clients are completed and reviewed regularly and/or as needed by staff with the relevant qualifications, skills, competence and experience to do so. Risk assessments will include plans for avoiding or managing risks and will balance the needs and safety of clients with their rights and their wishes, and will be carried out in accordance with the principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005, and
- 1st Homecare follows safe working practices and that a safe working environment is promoted that prevents accidents and cases of work-related ill health.

Risk assessments are conducted with the aim of identifying and evaluating risks and where appropriate eliminating the risk or reducing it to a reasonable level and making appropriate arrangements to achieve this. Risk assessments will be conducted where a new client is taken on and will be reviewed at regular intervals or else more frequently when required, for example, if the client's needs change, there is a need for new equipment to be used, and if other situations arise requiring a further assessment.

#### Risk assessments at 1st Homecare's premises

An annual risk assessment is conducted of 1st Homecare's office premises. This includes a check on the safety certificates held for any equipment in the office e.g. fire extinguishers.

The record of the assessment states the date of the assessment, action required and the date that any actions required are completed and will be kept in the relevant Office.

#### Risk Assessments within clients' homes

The normal workplace for carers is within the homes of 1st Homecare's clients. Accordingly, the hazards and associated risks in relation to clients' homes will be assessed prior to commencing the provision of care, and appropriate action will be taken to eliminate the risks wherever possible or to reduce them to an acceptable level. This is achieved usually by consultation with the client and the client's family or other relevant person. Risk assessment reviews will be conducted at regular intervals or otherwise more frequently if the client's needs change, there is a need for new equipment to be

used, and if other situations arise requiring a further assessment. The risk assessment will be accessible via the Company's online care planning system, Access Care Planning, on the Next of Kin app.

The risk assessment process is comprehensive and will focus not only on the physical environment, including risk of falls and COSHH, but will take account also of the physical, emotional and psychological condition of the person requiring care. Please refer to the Risk Assessment Policy for more information on risk assessments conducted by the Company.

#### 4 IDENTIFICATION AND REPORTING OF HAZARDS

While risk assessments will be conducted as described above, all employees of 1st Homecare need to look out on an on-going basis for hazards and report back to the Office anything they feel may present a risk to their own or someone else's health and safety. Common hazards to look out for include:

- Stair carpets that are not firmly fixed, and wrinkled carpets
- Slippery floors
- Uneven or damaged stairs or steps
- Damaged wires, overloaded sockets, and trailing wires
- Sharp or rough objects or corners on furniture or equipment
- Unreadable labels on products
- Clothes placed near direct heat or fire to dry

#### Sharps

Carers may come into contact with needlesticks (or sharps) during the course of their duties. If a carer comes across sharps that have not been disposed of, they should do the following, taking great care when doing so:

- If there is an appropriate receptacle at the client's home e.g. a sharps bin or sharps box, the carer should:
  - ask the client to dispose of the sharp if he or she is capable of safely doing so
  - If the client is unable to do so, then, wearing gloves, the carer should place the sharp in the receptacle. Carers **SHOULD NEVER** pick up the sharp by the needlepointIf there is no receptacle, the carer should **not** touch the sharp but inform the Office or the On call manager, who will advise the carer what to do.
- The Office or On Call manager should reiterate to carers NOT to touch the needle and to speak to the client or contact the District Nurse/the person giving the client the injections, and advise them they need to arrange the safe disposal of used sharps.
- If the person does not know how to do this, the Office or On call manager should advise them to contact the local authority's waste and recycling department to order a receptacle, or else do so via the local authority's website.

- . Carers should then be asked to monitor and feed back to the office once a receptacle is in place.
- If used needles have been found in the dustbin, carers should be instructed NOT to put any other rubbish into the dustbin to avoid the risk of accidental injury to themselves.
- In the event of any inadvertent/accidental contact, the carer should wash the area thoroughly with plenty of running water and soap and inform the Office or On call manager, and seek medical attention immediately.

Syringes or needles must **NEVER** be placed in household waste. They should not be placed in empty cans or in any soft container which the needlepoint may pierce.

Any **domestic** items with a sharp point or edge, e.g. a broken cup, glass, or razorblade, should be disposed of in a safe manner such as carefully wrapped in several layers of newspaper and placed in a rubbish bin.

### Emollients

There is a fire risk with all paraffin-containing emollients used by clients, regardless of paraffin concentration. There may also be a fire risk with paraffin-free emollients. A similar risk may also apply to other skincare products that are applied to the skin over large body areas or in large volumes with repeated use for more than a few days. Clients' clothing and bedding can become contaminated with such emollients or other skincare products and this build-up can potentially create a candlewick. Washing even at high temperatures may reduce but not totally remove residues of the emollients or other product and part of the control measures adopted must be to warn clients of the risk and also warn them not to smoke or go near naked flames as emollients or emollient-treated skin (and clothing or bedding that has been contaminated) can rapidly ignite.

### Smoke alarms

When conducting risk assessments, 1st Homecare staff will check whether there is a smoke alarm fitted in the client's home and that it is working (if it is a battery-operated alarm). If there is none, staff will advise the client to get one fitted, or if there is one but it is not working, staff will advise the client to get the battery changed.

## 5 TRAINING, INSTRUCTION AND SUPERVISION OF CARERS

All registered providers are required to have suitable arrangements in place to ensure that persons employed receive appropriate training, professional development, supervision and appraisal, and are enabled from time to time to obtain further qualifications appropriate to the work they perform.

The success of 1st Homecare depends upon having a team of committed and appropriately trained and qualified carers. Training and development are covered in the

Training and Development Policy. For appraisal and supervision arrangements, the Supervision and Appraisal Policy should be referred to.

### 6 EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION

1st Homecare seeks to promote health and safety in the working environment through training and meetings with carers on an individual and, where possible, group basis, where staff can raise concerns regarding health and safety, as employees are often the best people to understand risks in the workplace.

### 7 FIRST AID

Many people receiving care in their own home live alone and carers may be their most regular visitors. It is not unusual for a carer to be presented with emergency situations requiring immediate attention. All new carers are given basic training in First Aid awareness, including Basic Life Support, as part of their induction, and this training is monitored and refreshed on a regular basis, in order for the carer to be better prepared to deal with emergency situations when they arise. **It is important that all carers strictly observe the following:**

- **Always follow the Accident, Incidents and Emergencies Policy which requires carers to phone 999 in an emergency (and then call the Office/On call manager)**
- **Always call the Office in the case of any minor accident and seek guidance on what to do**
- **No carer should administer Basic Life Support or any First Aid unless told to do so by the 999 responder or by a paramedic (which could include ambulance crew)**

**Do not carry out any actions you are requested to do unless you have received training and are competent to do so.**

In line with health and safety requirements, the details of all suitably trained First Aiders in the Office will be included on the health and safety poster situated in the Office. A first aid box is located in each Office.

### 8 COSHH

Carers are required to ensure the health and safety of themselves and others who could be affected by their actions or omissions. As such, proper regard and attention must be paid to the use, storage and handling of any substance which, if misused, could pose a risk to health and safety. Carers will be given training in COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002) as part of their induction. A COSHH assessment will also be incorporated into the risk assessment conducted in clients' homes, including control measures to prevent or minimise any risk to health.

For the purpose of COSHH, a substance (any solid, powder, liquid, gas, dust or vapour) is considered hazardous if one or more of the following criteria are met:

- If listed as very toxic, harmful, corrosive or irritant or for which the maximum exposure limit is specified in the COSHH schedule
- The substance is a micro-organism hazardous to health
- The substance is airborne as concentrations of dust
- It is any other substance that creates comparable hazards.

Substances that care should be taken with include the following: alcohol, perfumes, detergents, cleaning products, pesticides and insecticides. Carers should ensure that all household cleaning agents are handled with care as they contain powerful chemicals, using protective clothing including rubber gloves. Products should always be put away after use and stored in a cool cupboard which is kept locked if necessary.

Chemicals should **NEVER BE MIXED**, for example bleach and toilet cleaner, and should always be kept in their original container (never decanted into another container). Carers should always ensure there is adequate ventilation where the chemicals are being used.

The safety instructions on all cleaning products including those in aerosol form must be adhered to, and the products must be disposed of in accordance with those instructions. Particular care should be taken when storing substances if the client is blind or partially sighted or has a reduced or no sense of smell.

### 9 ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

Electrical equipment is normally safe, provided it is properly installed and regularly inspected. Carers must, however, remember that water and liquids are conductors of electricity and that their association with faults caused by, for example, damaged cables, flexes, plugs and sockets, the overloading of circuits and fuses, etc would make an electric shock more severe. Carers should, therefore, be careful to:

- Never touch electrical equipment with wet hands, or move any portable electrical equipment without disconnecting it from the mains
- Keep electrical supply cables and flexes away from wet areas or from where they will be damaged by being walked over or knocked when moving equipment about
- Report any defective equipment to the Office

### 10 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The provisions contained in this Health and Safety Policy should be read in conjunction with other policies and procedures issued by 1st Homecare with the aim of achieving a safe and healthy working environment. These include policies on:

- Infection Control
- Manual Handling, Moving and Positioning
- Accidents, Incidents and Emergencies
- Food Handling
- Personal Safety at Work
- Risk Assessment
- Medication

It is crucial that carers adhere to 1st Homecare's policies at all times.

### 11 GENERAL

A signed and dated copy of this Policy document will be displayed in the Office. The provisions in this Policy may be amended by the Company at any time if they are minor changes. Any substantive changes shall be raised with staff and consulted on.

Signed:



Position: CEO

Dated: 8<sup>th</sup> November 2022

**CHANGE HISTORY**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Description of Change and Reason</b>
1	2012	First Issue
2	Oct 2013	Second issue
3	February 2014	Third issue – change of Registered Manager
4.	October 2014	Fourth issue – references to new policies and deletion of reference to Registered Manager by name
5.	November 2014	Formatting changes and insertion of review date and other minor amendments
6	May 2016	Sixth issue – to update reference to legislation, to amend in accordance with changes in Company practice, to change the address
7	July 2016	Seventh issue – amendment to address of office within risk assessment of premises, amendment to section on sharps to include provision on asking client to pick up sharps if they are able to do so
8	January 2017	Eighth issue – amendment to make applicable to both Offices, amendment of section on First Aid
9	December 2018	Ninth issue – amendment to Oxford address and to typos.
10	January 2020	Tenth issue – inclusion of material on smoke alarms and emollients, and changes to references to the Safety Officer, also inclusion of Kings Langley address and general review.
11	July 2022	Eleventh Issue – change to names of Safety Officers, minor changes to format of document.
12	November 2022	Twelfth Issue – advice to be given by On call manager or the Office if there is no sharps receptacle in place, and what action to take.

**DOCUMENT CONTROL**

Name of document	Health and Safety Policy
Status	Approved
Issue	12
Issue date	November 2022
Maintainer	1HC
Owner	1HC
File name	1HC Health and Safety Policy
File location	1HC policies/care
Review date	November 2023