



Risk Assessment Policy

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1 INTRODUCTION - 1ST HOMECARE SOLUTIONS AND RISK ASSESSMENTS

Under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, there is a duty placed on every employer “to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all his employees”. This duty includes in particular the provision and maintenance of systems of work that are so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and without risks to health.

In addition to this general duty, under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 employers are required to consider the health and safety risks to employees and to carry out a risk assessment to protect employees from exposure to reasonably foreseeable risks. This provides that:

“1) Every employer shall make a suitable and sufficient assessment of—

- (a) the risks to the health and safety of his employees to which they are exposed whilst they are at work; and
 - (b) the risks to the health and safety of persons not in his employment arising out of or in connection with the conduct by him of his undertaking,
- for the purpose of identifying the measures he needs to take to comply with the requirements and prohibitions imposed upon him by or under the relevant statutory provisions.

Employers are required to review assessments if there is reason to think they are no longer valid or if there has been a significant change in the matters to which the assessment relates, and make any changes required.

As an employer, 1st Homecare is under the duty to carry out risk assessments and to review and update them as needed. Risk assessments will be conducted where 1st Homecare takes on a new client, and subsequently if the client’s needs change, there is a need for new equipment to be used, and if other situations arise requiring an assessment.

Risk assessments are conducted with the aim of identifying and evaluating hazards and where possible eliminating the risk or else reducing it to a reasonable level, and providing or arranging appropriate training to achieve this.

1st Homecare will ensure that risk assessments are conducted at the work premises of 1st Homecare and within the homes of clients, to:

- Assess the needs of the client
- Identify any risks or hazards to the client and carer arising in the home environment
- Ensure safe working practices and promote a safe working environment
- Prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health

Risk assessments are conducted by a manager and/or by another delegated individual who is appropriately trained to conduct them.

2 RISK ASSESSMENT OF COMPANY PREMISES

Risk assessments are conducted at 1st Homecare's office premises and updated at regular intervals as required. This includes a check on the safety certificates held for any equipment in the office e.g. fire extinguishers. The record of the assessment will state the date of the assessment, action required and the date that any actions required are completed and will be kept on file.

3 RISK ASSESSMENTS WITHIN CLIENTS' HOMES

Following the initial contact with the client and/or client's representative, and 1st Homecare agreeing to provide care, a full assessment will be carried out in the home environment prior to service commencement to assess the needs of the client as well as to identify any hazards and risks to the client and to the Company's carers arising from these. This initial assessment will take the form of a Personal Assessment and a Health and Safety Risk Assessment. The Health and Safety Risk Assessment is comprehensive and will focus not only on the physical environment, including whether there is a risk of falls, but will take account also of the physical, emotional and psychological condition of the person requiring care.

Additionally, a Moving and Handling Risk Assessment, Medication Risk Assessment and Mental Capacity Assessment will be conducted where required.

Appropriate action will be taken to eliminate the risks identified wherever possible or else 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.

All risk assessments will be reviewed at regular intervals, currently annually or else more frequently as 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 eg. discharge from hospital.

4 PRIOR TO THE ASSESSMENTS

An appointment should be made to carry out the full assessments as soon as the Company has undertaken to provide care to the client.

Prior to the assessments, as much information as possible should be gathered regarding the client, including:

- From the client
- From the person making the referral (if not the client themselves directly)
- If the referral is from a local authority, CHC or other such body, from the commissioning document and any other assessment
- Whether there are any known risks
- The client's living circumstances and who is currently involved in their care

5 DURING THE VISIT

It is important to ensure the client feels comfortable and secure while the assessment is carried out. The person doing the assessments (“the assessor”) should ensure he or she does the following:

- Introduces himself/herself and the Company, explains what the Company does and what its aims are, and the services it can provide
- Presents his/her ID badge
- Finds out what the client’s expectations and desired outcomes are
- Explains to the client that he/she needs to gather some information, explaining why the information is needed, namely, for the purposes of determining the most suitable care services for the client’s needs and ensuring the safety of the client and the carers who will be visiting the client and carrying out the services 1st Homecare is being commissioned to provide. The client Consent form must be completed if not already completed.
- Asks the client for permission to take a look around the client’s house
- Asks the client if they mind if he/she takes notes, reassuring the client that the information will be held in strict confidentiality
- Ensures the questions are asked in an “open” way
- Listens and observes carefully, maintaining eye contact
- Takes good notes, noting all observations
- Asks for more information where a concern arises about the client’s care needs or their safety and security

6 PERFORMING THE ASSESSMENTS

The Health and Safety Risk Assessment

The risk assessments performed by the Company are carried out by assessing each task that the client needs support with and each step of the task (where there is eg a process to get the client from one room to another to help with toileting or showering/bathing) in order to:

- Identify the hazards
- Decide who could be at risk of being hurt and how
- Evaluate the likelihood and severity
- Record the risks found and what needs to be done to control them
- Ask the client to agree to controls being put in place
- In due course, re-assess and review the assessment: is it working? If not, what can be done?

All hazards that are identified should be discussed with the client and a recommendation given to the client/his or her representative that the risks be minimised or removed.

IF THE RISKS ARE FOUND TO BE SERIOUS ONES THAT COULD AFFECT THE SAFETY OF THE COMPANY'S STAFF VISITING THE CLIENT, AND THE CLIENT DOES NOT WISH TO TAKE ANY ACTION TO REMOVE OR REDUCE THE RISK, THE ASSESSOR SHOULD RAISE THIS WITH THE BRANCH MANAGER OR REGISTERED MANAGER SO THAT HE OR SHE CAN TAKE A DECISION AS TO WHAT ACTION TO TAKE – THIS MAY INCLUDE DECLINING TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO THE CLIENT.

The Personal Assessment

The assessor should observe the client carefully in his/her own home surroundings and conduct the assessment, which should among other things take into account the following:

- how mobile the client is
- whether equipment is needed
- whether the client is self-managing or whether they need assistance
- consider the tasks in which the carer will be involved
- whether the client requires additional equipment that is not present in the home
- the possible manual handling issues including whether an OT visit is required
- the level of pain the client experiences
- skin viability
- whether he or she has any communication/information needs relating to a disability or sensory loss (for the purposes of the Accessible Information Standard)
- if the client has any illnesses or conditions that may cause behaviour that challenges, such as dementia, the frequency of such behaviour arising, trigger points, and control measures
- whether there are fire risks from use of emollients

Moving and Handling Risk Assessment

If the client will require assistance in the form of moving and handling, the assessments should also include a Moving and Handling Risk Assessment, to assess the client's mobility, any equipment to be used, the number of carers required, the moving and handling activities and techniques that will be required, anything that should be avoided, and how any space issues may impact on the moving and handling manoeuvres.

Medication Risk Assessment

Where the client is taking medication, a Medication Risk Assessment will be conducted to establish whether the client self-medicates or whether he/she needs any assistance with medication, what risks there may be with regard to supporting the client with his/her medication, and to obtain consent to any assistance assessed as required.

Where the client self-medicates, this will be recorded. If 1st Homecare is needed to assist in any form with medication, a risk assessment will be undertaken. The assessment will cover:

- the level of medication support to be provided
- the client's needs and preferences
- assessing the risks such as for example:
 - the form in which medication is kept e.g. individual packets or pharmacy filled box
 - the storage requirements for the medication dependent on the client's condition

Mental Capacity Assessment

Wherever the Company will be providing support with medication or moving and handling, or when any doubt may arise as to the client's capacity, a Mental Capacity Assessment will be conducted.

Completing the forms

The Company's risk assessment forms must be completed at the time of the assessment. The assessor must sign and date the forms. The forms will be completed on the Company's digital care planning system, and available to the client, next of kin, and others who are given consent to view them eg the client's Social Worker if the client's care has been commissioned by a local authority, on the Company's Next of Kin app.

7 REVIEWING THE ASSESSMENTS

The Company's care planning system will show when reviews are required. Assessments will be reviewed more regularly, or earlier, if the client's condition requires this or a change occurs that requires a review – for example, if the care package is changed, the client's health improves or deteriorates, the client has been in hospital, or the environment in which the care is undertaken undergoes a change. This is to ensure the safety of both the client and the carer whilst care tasks are being carried out, and to ensure that the care being provided meets the needs of the client.

The Company will involve the client's family or other relevant appropriate person/people in the review as appropriate, to ensure that the client's needs and wishes are properly met, and so that all those concerned with the client's care contribute to the evaluation of the care package in place and the quality of care provided.

8 GENERAL

This Policy may be amended as required by the Company from time to time and a new Policy issued.

CHANGE HISTORY

Issue	Date	Description of Change and Reason
1	October 2014	First Issue
2	May 2016	Second Issue – to change the address, update to reflect frequency of occurrence of risk assessments, the assessments undertaken, and to reflect points made by risk assessment trainer who reviewed Policy.
3	January 2017	Third Issue – to ensure covers both Offices
4	October 2018	Fourth Issue – change of address for Oxford office, change to risk assessment being completed by an appropriate manager (rather than the Care Manager), and deletion of reference to risk assessments being signed by the client/representative/family, as risk assessments are now no longer signed by them.
5	January 2020	Fifth Issue – inclusion of KL Office address, removal of reference to 1 st Homecare Solutions, inclusion of reference to AIS, removal of reference to Care Manager.
6	July 2022	Sixth Issue – inclusion of overview of legislative requirements, changes to reflect digital care planning system used by the Company, inclusion of section on when moving and handling and medication risk assessments and mental capacity assessments will be required/conducted.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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