**LONE WORKING POLICY**

Working alone may bring additional risks to a work activity. 1st Healthcare management ensures staff are trained and informed about the measures and procedures to control associated risks and to protect employees and young people within our units.

**Important things to consider are the following:**

1. The lone worker has full knowledge of the hazards and risks to which he or she may be exposed and that they feel capable of carrying out the task/activity in this situation;
2. The lone worker is aware of the procedures to follow in the event that something untoward happens and is aware of their own personal limitations and does not exceed them;
3. An appropriate manager is aware of the whereabouts of all lone workers under their supervision and what activities they are involved in;
4. Procedures are in place to allow lone workers to report back following completion of their tasks/activities.

Managers must in so far as reasonably practical ensure the Health and Safety and Welfare of their staff in accordance to this policy.

It is the policy of 1st Healthcare to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that employees who are required to work alone or unsupervised for significant periods of time are protected from risks to their health, safety and welfare.

It is the responsibility of managers to assess the potential risks of lone working to employees and to ensure that arrangements are in place to reduce these risks to the lowest possible level in accordance with other Directorate policies and procedures. Managers must also ensure that all employees have received appropriate information, instruction and training relating to lone working and provide them with opportunities to raise any concerns through Induction, Supervision, Team meetings and other relevant training available

Staff must be provided opportunities to raise any concerns regarding health and safety, any risks must be assessed, recorded, / managed in-line with Health and safety guidance on the risk of lone working

It is the responsibility of employees to follow these arrangements and to raise any additional concerns, changes in working practices or situations etc. with their line manager as soon as they arise

**Risk assessments for lone working**

The undertaking of risk assessments, which identify and control the hazards and risks associated with lone working are a legal requirement under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations. These will assist in identifying whether work can be carried out safely by one unaccompanied person. Risk Assessments should be undertaken to identification of hazards (dangerous person’s, dangerous dogs, access buildings alone etc.) and should be carried out in association with the employees who will be undertaking those duties to ensure that their experiences, concerns etc. are taken account of.

Line Managers should establish clear procedures to set limits of what activities can and cannot be carried out whilst working alone. It is not possible to list all possible scenarios within this policy however; examples may include visiting a service user known to have violent tendencies, visiting a new service user unknown to 1st Healthcare with limited information about them, working alone in an office outside of standard working hours.

Lone working may expose employees and others to particular hazards which may not be apparent in normal circumstances. 1st Healthcare aims to eliminate these hazards completely or, where this is not possible, to reduce them to an acceptable level.

**In carrying out a Lone Working Risk Assessment particular consideration should be given to:**

1. **Task/activity to be carried out:**
   1. Timing and whether or not it is appropriate for the task to be carried out alone;
   2. Level of risk;
   3. Staff/police response time;
   4. Complexity of task;
   5. Training requirements;
   6. Additional information.
2. **The ability of employees:**
   1. Training provision/requirements;
   2. Relevant qualifications and experience;
   3. Medical fitness;
   4. Competence for task including supervision issues for new employees.
3. **The remoteness or isolation of workplaces:**
   1. Means of communication;
   2. Means of raising an alarm;
   3. Time required for help to arrive;
   4. Access and egress routes;
   5. Transport arrangements.
4. **The risk of injury, violence or criminal activity etc.**
   1. Awareness of the contents of Service User risk assessments, care plans etc.
   2. Awareness of known associates and/or relatives of the Service User;
   3. Information relating to previous visits, social worker concerns etc.
   4. Awareness of medication, alcohol and/or drugs issues;
   5. Presence of family pets etc. which may pose a threat or intimidate;
   6. Hazard recorded on ICS / SWIFT.
5. **Service users’ individual requirements:**
   1. As for (d) above;
   2. Gender, race and/or culture issues.
6. **Means of communication:**
   1. Mobile phone;
   2. Landline telephone;
   3. Personal alarms, and Council issued Arch Angel devices;
   4. Use of a Duress Phrase (In the event staff are held against their will).
7. **Emergency and accident procedures, e.g.:**
   1. Means of summoning assistance;
   2. Means of raising the alarm;
   3. Reporting of accidents, incidents, injuries etc.
8. **The nature of any potential injury or damage and anticipated “worst case” scenario:**
   1. Control measures for dealing with the situation;
   2. Procedures to be followed in an emergency;
   3. Contact points, including those for ‘out of hours’ working.
9. **Backup/support contacts:**
   1. Line manager;
   2. Area Manager;
   3. Emergency Duty Team;
   4. Emergency services – police, fire, ambulance;

Local rules, arrangements and risk assessments should be developed and documented to cover these issues where appropriate and should also take account of any operational guidelines, which may be available.

**Instruction, information, training & supervision**

Employees must be provided with appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to carry out their duties in a safe manner and to identify hazards and risks associated with lone working. Employees must follow safe systems of work where they are in operation and report any shortcomings or concerns in the employer’s arrangements for health and safety to their line manager as soon as possible.

Managers must identify the training requirements of their employees during supervision sessions and give employees the opportunity to have input into this process. Managers must then ensure that relevant training courses are identified and that employees are given the opportunity to attend them. This process should be reviewed during further supervision sessions.