



# Libertatem Healthcare Group

## Continuity of delivery of care Policy

Notice to employees using a paper copy of this policy  
The company Policies folder on the shared drive holds the most recent version of this document and all employees must ensure that they are using the most recent guidance.

**Document Control**

<b>Document Name</b>	Continuity of delivery of care
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<b>Purpose</b>	To provide guidance to staff and coordinators on how to manage short term and long term staff absence.
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V2.0	November 2017	Karen Hodgkinson	Owner updated, changes in document to reflect the company position
V3.0	26.06.2019	Karen Hodgkinson	Reviewed and updated with LHG standard document and version control

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## **Outcome**

To ensure that current and prospective clients, their relatives, case managers and key decision makers have access to comprehensive information to make informed decisions on whether Libertatem Healthcare Group is able to meet their specific care needs.

## **Purpose of this Document**

This document outlines the procedures of Libertatem Healthcare Group in relation to the exceptional circumstances in which a change of a Service User's care or support workers might be unavoidable

## **Scope**

For users of our service, people who are considering using our service, and the friends, relatives, carers and representatives of users and potential users.

## **Policy Statement**

Libertatem Healthcare Group aims to be fully compliant with current staffing regulations as set out by the Care Quality Commission. It is therefore committed to ensuring that staffing levels, in terms of both numbers and skills, are appropriate for the number of people we support and that they are being cared for in a way that meets their assessed needs.

Libertatem Healthcare Group recognises that people we support often prefer to receive care from a single worker or small group of workers with whom they have built a relationship and we will endeavor to ensure that care is delivered by these workers as much as possible.

## **General Rules for Replacing Workers**

A Manager or Supervisor who has to arrange for a replacement worker should observe the following general rules:

- Consult the Service User or their representative as soon as possible. This is advisable in every case if the change is permanent or likely to last longer than 30 days.
- If the person we support has several workers supplying service, consider whether one of the other existing workers could be available, by extending hours or by shifting from other duties
- Always, unless the previous worker was found to be unsatisfactory, use a worker who as near as possible replicates the skills, experience and knowledge of the worker being replaced.
- If the person we support has had other workers in the past and was satisfied with them, consider whether they could be available.
- Ensure that the newly allocated worker is briefed both by you and, if feasible, by the worker being replaced.
- If there is time, ensure that the newly allocated worker receives appropriate specialist training before starting to provide service, or as soon after as possible.
- Apologise fully, express sympathy and as far as possible provide support to the affected person and their carer or representative throughout the process.
- In cases where the person we support has communication or comprehension difficulties, take special care to ensure, as far as possible, that they understand what is happening, and that the position has been explained to the person's relative or representative if there is one.
- In cases where a person we support is receiving substantial help from a carer, ensure that the situation is fully explained to the carer as well as to the Service User.
- when communicating with a person we support or their representative, always consider whether it would be best for a care worker who is familiar with the person to carry out this function on Libertatem Healthcare Group's behalf.

Remember that we have obligations to staff as well as to the people we support. In particular, be careful not to reveal confidential information about a staff member.

### **Specific Reasons for Making a Change Worker is unavailable at short notice**

Most sickness absence is unpredictable, so quick action is likely to be needed to fill the gap created by the non-availability of a worker. An attempt should be made to work out how long the absence is likely to be and to make a plan to cover the whole period rather than proceeding on a day-to-day basis. An absence arising from special or compassionate leave should be similarly handled.

### **Worker on holiday or training**

It should usually be possible to anticipate absences resulting from holidays or training, to make careful replacement plans and to explain the situation fully to the Service User in advance.

### **Worker leaves the organisation**

It should usually be possible to anticipate absences resulting from a worker's leaving the company so that careful replacement plans can be made and a full explanation of the situation can be discussed with the person we support in advance.

### **Sudden, unpredicted need to change worker permanently**

If a worker, for example, leaves the company without notice or it becomes necessary to change a worker urgently for any of the reason, quick action is likely to be needed to fill the gap. Consideration should be given as to whether it is possible to make an alternative long-term arrangement immediately or whether a temporary arrangement is necessary until a more satisfactory long-term replacement can be available.

### **Service requirements change in ways which make it impossible for the worker to continue**

If a situation arises in which it becomes apparent that a worker does not have the necessary skills, physical capacity or training to deal with the person we support or cannot be available for the required hours, it should usually be possible to anticipate the development and make planned arrangements for a replacement. If not, the point above applies.

### **The person we support requests a change of worker**

If the person we support requests a change of worker, the manager should of course explore the reasons. In most cases, since we always aim to meet the individual needs and the request should be met. Even if the request seems unreasonable, it may be wise to make a change as the relationship with the existing worker may deteriorate further. Only if the request seems flippant or if there are repeated requests, should we hesitate to comply with the person we supports wishes. Before making the change the manager should discuss the request with the worker to obtain as full a picture as possible, to support the worker if appropriate, and if the worker was indeed unsatisfactory to initiate any other necessary action, for example, further training, increased support or supervision, or, in serious cases, discipline.

### **A non-professional relationship has developed**

If a non-professional relationship has developed between a person we support and a worker, it is usually necessary to act swiftly, but the person we support should still be consulted as fully as possible about the replacement. The Manager should then assess whether the incident should lead to further training or disciplinary or other action in respect. Consideration should be given to safeguarding rules and appropriate referral provided to external agencies if any risk has been identified.

### **An assignment causes severe stress for a worker**

If it is necessary to relieve a worker because of the stress the assignment generates, the situation should usually be anticipated and a carefully planned replacement introduced with full consultation. The new worker should, of course, be confidentially briefed on what has happened and, if appropriate, be provided with additional support. Careful consideration should be given to the future workload and support needs of the worker replaced.

**Worker suffers abuse or discrimination**

If a worker suffers abuse or discrimination to an extent that they need to withdraw from a person we support, the Manager should thoroughly explore the situation and consider whether the organisation can continue to provide a service. If it is decided to continue, any replacement worker should be thoroughly briefed on the risks in the situation. The person we support or their representative should still be consulted as fully as possible about the replacement but they should be warned that any recurrence of the abuse or discrimination may prejudice the continuance of the service.