

Health, Social Care and Housing Committee

10am, Tuesday, 16 June 2015

Policy on Visitors to Health and Social Care Services

Item number 7.5

Report number

Executive/routine

Wards

Executive summary

The Committee is requested to approve a policy statement in respect of visitors to Health and Social Care services. This proposed policy is attached at Appendix 1.

The purpose of the policy is to ensure the provision of care services, which meet the health, welfare and social needs of service users in a safe, dignified and discreet manner.

Where the Council provides or arranges residential accommodation, this represents the person's home. The policy provides guidance for staff to take a flexible approach to visitors, based on a resident's wishes, and the health, safety and public protection responsibilities of staff. The policy promotes the principles of privacy, dignity, choice and safety.

Links

Coalition pledges

Council outcomes CO10, CO14, CO15

Single Outcome Agreement SO2

Policy on Visitors to Health and Social Care Services

Recommendations

- 1.1 The Committee is requested to approve a policy statement in respect of visitors to Health and Social Care services. The proposed policy is attached at Appendix 1.

Background

- 2.1 Social care staff who support vulnerable people in a range of services recognise that visitors are valuable, both to individuals and the service, by providing and maintaining connections to the local community.

Services registered with the Care Inspectorate are required to deliver care to standards of practice and safety laid out in the National Care Standards. This includes the safety of the visitor as well as the person visited. This policy is in line with the strategic vision of improved health and wellbeing for Edinburgh citizens, making links with communities and protecting vulnerable people.

Main report

- 3.1 The overall aim of the policy is to establish guidance for visitors and staff, which protect the safety and well being of service users, visitors and staff.
- 3.2 The policy outlines the Council's expectations of staff towards individuals visiting Council services, in order to ensure the safety and protection of all who use, visit and work in the service. The principles of privacy, dignity, choice and safety apply to this policy. It covers all care homes, housing support, adult placement and day services.
- 3.3 The policy covers the following areas:
 - Visiting times
 - Expectation of visitors
 - Visitors' access within the service
 - Meals (care home and day service)
 - Pets
 - Smoking (care home and day service)

- Assisting service users (care home and day service)
- Minimizing the spread of infections in services
- Fire safety
- Protection of vulnerable individuals visiting the service
- Suggestions, comments and complaints.

3.4 The policy is consistent with other Council policies: Adult Support and Protection; Infection Control; Violence to Employees at Work; Fire Safety and Child Protection.

3.5 The policy has been developed with staff, managers and Care Inspectorate guidance, and will be reviewed annually.

Measures of success

4.1 Registered services are regulated by the Care Inspectorate. Policies and procedures in place to protect the safety of individuals in the service are subject to inspection as part of this regime. Care services are required to notify the Care Inspectorate of incidents where a service user, staff member or visitor's safety is compromised. This is reflected in the grade awarded to the service.

4.2 The policy seeks to promote best practice and keep people safe. Breaches of safety are reported via the Council's reporting system.

Financial impact

5.1 There are no financial implications posed by the policy.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

6.1 The policy on visitors to Council services meets the requirement for having up to date policies, describing agreed courses of action or sets of standards for this service area.

6.2 All staff are required to be trained and aware of this and associated policies. Management and reporting systems are in place to monitor compliance.

Equalities impact

7.1 There are no anticipated equalities impacts for this policy. The ERIA form is attached as Appendix 2.

Sustainability impact

8.1 Not relevant to this policy.

Consultation and engagement

9.1 This policy was prepared using best practice guidance in conjunction with staff and managers. This policy has been in use in Health and Social Care for some time and is reviewed in partnership with the stakeholders.

Background reading/external references

10.1 Legislative Context

Health and Social Care Policies adhere to all the relevant legislative requirements:

[Protection of Vulnerable Groups \(Scotland\) Act 2007](#)

[The Adult Support and Protection \(Scotland\) Act 2007](#)

[Adults with Incapacity \(Scotland\) Act 2000](#)

[Mental Health \(Care and Treatment\) \(Scotland\) Act 2003](#)

[Smoking, Health and Social Care \(Scotland\) Act 2005](#)

[Health and Safety at Work Act 1974](#)

[The Regulation of Care \(Requirement as to Care Services\) \(Scotland\)](#)

[Regulations 2002](#)

[Children \(Scotland\) Act 1995](#)

10.2 Associated Documents

[Protecting Vulnerable Adults: Ensuing Rights and Preventing Abuse](#)

[Code of Practice for Adults with Incapacity Act \(2000\) Code of Practice for Adult Support and Protection Act \(2007\)](#)

[City of Edinburgh Council Policy on Violence to Employees at Work \(September 2003\)](#)

Peter Gabbitas

Director of Health and Social Care

Contact: Marion Randall, Care Home and Day Service Manager

E-mail: Marion.Randall@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 553 8229

Links

Coalition pledges

Council outcomes CO10; CO11; CO12; CO13

Single Outcome Agreement SO2

Appendices

Visitors to Health and Social Care Services Policy

Control schedule

Approved by	Health, Social Care and Housing Committee
Approval date	16 June 2015
Senior Responsible Officer	Monica Boyle, Head of Older People and Disability Services
Author	Marion Randall, Service Manager – Older People
Scheduled for review	16 June 2016

Version control

Version	Date	Author	Comment
0.1	7 April 2015	Marion Randall	

Committee decisions affecting this policy

Date	Committee	Link to report	Link to minute
-------------	------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

Visitors to Health and Social Care Services

Policy statement

1. The Council is committed to providing care services which meet the health, welfare and social needs of service users in a safe, dignified and discreet manner. This will be achieved through the promotion of the principles of privacy, dignity, choice and safety.

The Council provides a range of care services where there is the potential for visitors to the service, other than colleagues and other professionals.

Some services provide residential accommodation, for example care homes, housing support and adult placement services. Some are provided from City of Edinburgh Council (the Council) premises, such as day centres and some from the home of service users such as home care and support services.

Where the Council provides or arranges residential accommodation, this represents the service user's home, and it is, therefore, important that staff in these services take a flexible approach on the issue of visitors, which is based on service users' wishes and health and safety responsibilities. Where the service is provided by adult placement carers, it is essential that contracts and expectations of adult carers include the principles outlined in this policy statement.

Managers should develop information for visitors to their services, which takes account of the principles and guidelines in this policy statement.

Scope

2. This policy has been developed for the benefit of service users, visitors and staff.

This policy outlines the Council's expectations of staff toward individuals visiting all services provided by Health and Social Care.

All parts of this policy apply to care home services. Other services should apply the principles and guidelines of the policy where they are relevant to the delivery of the service. For housing support and adult placement services, staff must consider how the principles of privacy, dignity, choice and safety of service users can be promoted. Consultation with carers and families in adult placements

and occupants in shared housing support tenancies is essential in establishing the principles of this policy.

Definitions

3. 'The Council' means the City of Edinburgh Council.

'An adult' is someone aged over 16 years.

'A visitor' is any person who does not live or work in the residential service, e.g. relative, friend, building contractor, etc.

Policy content

4. **This policy covers the following areas:**

- visiting times
- expectations of visitors
- visitor access within the service
- meals (care homes and day care)
- pets
- smoking (care homes and day care)
- assisting Service Users (care homes and day care)
- minimising the spread of infection in services
- fire safety
- protection of vulnerable individuals visiting the service
- suggestions, comments and complaints.

4.1 Visiting Times

In residential environments, friends and relatives of residents are welcome to visit the care home without prior notice and at reasonable times, as long as these times do not inconvenience other residents. In care homes for older people, it may be difficult to accommodate visitors very late at night or early in the morning as, at these times, residents will normally have retired for the night or be getting out of bed. In other types of care homes, this restriction may be different or not applicable.

For other types of services staff should, through appropriate consultation with service users and carers, consider how this principle can be implemented.

4.2 Expectations of Visitors

The Council expects visitors to be respectful of all service users, staff, carers / family members and others. Offensive, threatening or violent behaviour by a visitor is unacceptable, and anyone engaging in this type of behaviour may be asked to leave. In circumstances where there is a threat or actual violence, the police should be called immediately to deal with the situation.

In line with health and safety responsibilities, care home services should provide a visitors' book, indicating arrival and departure times. Staff on duty should ensure this is completed, preferably by the visitor. Use of the visitors' book will facilitate security by enabling staff to monitor who is in the building and, in the event of fire, will assist in the safe evacuation of *all* individuals from the building.

Where service users indicate they do not wish to see their visitor, and s/he is unable to communicate this to the visitor, staff can, in consultation with the service user, take appropriate action, which may include asking the visitor to leave.

Staff should support adult placement carers and occupants of housing support tenancies to deal with the difficult behaviour of visitors. If the circumstances warrant this, and following appropriate consultation with carers and service users, this may include a direct approach by staff to the visitor.

4.3 Visitor Access within the Service

Visitors to care home services will normally be able to access the communal areas of the care home and the bedroom of the service user they are visiting. There will, however, be areas of the care home, which should be restricted to visitors. These are:

- other service users' bedrooms
- main kitchen
- laundry
- equipment stores, sluice areas
- communal bathrooms
- residents' designated smoking areas

- offices of any description, unless specifically invited by a member of staff.

In adult placement services, consultation with the carer / family providing the placement is an essential part of establishing the principles of access for visitors to the home. Due to the age and potential vulnerability of family members, careful consideration must be given to which parts of the house a visitor has access to. See section on Protection of Vulnerable Individuals Visiting the Service.

In shared housing support tenancies, the issue of visitor access to different parts of the accommodation should be negotiated with service users. The principles of this policy must be implemented and a balance between the right to privacy of tenants and the safety of visiting vulnerable individuals should be promoted. See section on Protection of Vulnerable Individuals Visiting the Service.

4.4 Meals (Care Home and Day Care Services)

Visitors are welcome to eat meals with the person they are visiting. Staff should encourage visitors to give the service advance notice of their intention to do this, in order to ensure sufficient food is prepared and that it is appropriate. It may be that due to particular circumstances this is difficult to accommodate on every occasion. A small charge may be made to cover the cost of the food.

4.5 Pets

Services need to exercise judgement on whether visiting pets should be allowed. The policy of each service should be informed through consultation with service users. Where pets are allowed into a service, they remain the responsibility of the visitor bringing them, including any damage they may cause.

Pets may be brought into a service with a visitor, as long as they are kept under control at all times. In the event a pet is observed to be not fully under control, and is, or appears to be, a threat to a service user or others, staff should ask the visitor to take the pet away immediately. Following this, a decision should be made and communicated to the owner and service user on whether the pet should be allowed into the service again and the reasons for this. This should be done as soon as possible to avoid confusion or distress.

In adult placement and housing support services, consultation with carers / families and occupants is essential to ascertain their views and wishes on this issue. This will inform the arrangements for each adult placement or housing support tenancy.

4.6 Smoking (Care Home and Day Care Services)

It is the duty of the Council to comply with current legislation on smoking in public places and places of work ([Smoking, Health and Social Care \(Scotland\) Act 2005](#)). Care homes can only permit smoking for residents and only in a designated area. This means that visitors to care home services are not permitted to smoke anywhere in the building or grounds of the service.

In day care services, smoking is not allowed for service users or visitors.

4.7 Assisting Service Users (Care Home and Day Care Services)

The Council has a statutory duty for health and safety in the services it provides.

Visitors may come across situations where the person they are visiting or other service users require assistance, for example, due to a fall or to use bathroom facilities. It is only appropriate for a visitor to assist with the personal care of the service user they are visiting, and this should normally be agreed beforehand with staff on duty. Visitors should also be advised that they must not attempt to lift an individual, in any circumstances, as this may result in injury.

4.8 Minimising the Spread of Infection in Services

The Council has a duty to promote and maintain a hygienic environment and have appropriate procedures for the control of infection in all services it provides. Health and Social Care's Infection Control Policy, and associated procedures, provide staff with the detail necessary to comply with this duty.

Visitors to Council services, and in particular care homes, should be advised of their contribution to minimise the spread of infection. By following simple hygiene practices, visitors can assist staff in protecting service users, and themselves, from the spread of infection, particularly in services for frail people and those prone to infection.

Where appropriate, services should inform visitors which toilet facilities are accessible to them and provide prompts on hand washing, following use of these facilities and on leaving the service. These measures will assist in controlling the spread infection within and outwith services.

In the event of an identified outbreak of infection, it may be necessary to introduce temporary restrictions on visits to a service. This measure should only be implemented following medical advice to do so and where it

has been assessed as a necessary precaution for safeguarding the health of service users, staff, visitors and others.

4.9 Fire Safety

Visitors should have clear information on how they are expected to respond in the event of an emergency. A service's evacuation plan should include action to be taken with regard to visitors.

Visitors to care homes and day care services should be advised not to use a lift or re-enter the building following evacuation until they are advised to do so by the Fire and Rescue Service or the senior member of staff on duty.

In adult placement and housing support services, staff should ensure that carers and service users are aware of what they need to do in the event they need to evacuate their accommodation.

4.10 Protection of Vulnerable Individuals Visiting the Service

The Council has a duty of care to all service users in receipt of its services. It also has a duty toward vulnerable people visiting these services, such as children, people with learning disabilities and mental health problems, and frail older people.

Where vulnerable individuals are visiting their friends and relatives, the service must apply reasonable guidelines to ensure their safety and the safety of others during the period they are in the accommodation, or the grounds of the service.

Visitors, including children and vulnerable adults, are expected to respect service users, staff and others. Behaviour causing concern or distress may lead to the individual and any supervising adult being asked to leave the service. If required, this decision should be made by the senior staff member on duty.

4.10.1 Children

The Council expects children (under 16 years of age) visiting the service to be accompanied and supervised appropriately by a responsible adult (other than a staff member), whilst they are in the accommodation or grounds of the service.

To facilitate a safe environment for visiting children, and to determine whether a child is at risk from service users or poses a risk to others, the senior staff member on duty is responsible for undertaking a risk assessment. The risk assessment should include details of the child, the accommodation, and where applicable, the

grounds of the service, service users, and where appropriate, the responsible adult.

Where there are concerns over the welfare and safety of a visiting child, the responsible adult accompanying the child should be asked to remove the child from the service. If the concerns are about the responsible adult, and staff consider the child to be at risk, they must follow the Edinburgh and Lothians' Inter-Agency Child Protection Procedures, and inform, without delay, appropriate Council officers of their concerns. These procedures are located on the Council's intranet.

Visiting children who have demonstrated the ability to act responsibly whilst in the service, and who are not at risk or do not pose a risk to others, may be allowed to visit unaccompanied, following a risk assessment.

Young people over the age of 16 are considered to be adults.

In adult placement services, staff must ensure that the carer(s) are aware of their responsibilities in the event child protection issues arise, and of the appropriate action they should take.

In housing support services, only visiting support is provided. Risk assessments on the safety of visiting children should be undertaken. Service users must be advised of their responsibilities with regard to the safety and welfare of children visiting their accommodation, and of children living in the tenancy.

4.10.2 Adults at risk

For adults at risk, risk assessments should be undertaken to facilitate a safe environment. These assessments should also take account of any risk the visiting adult may pose toward service users and others in the service.

Where there are concerns over the welfare and safety of a visiting adult at risk, staff have a responsibility to follow the Council's "Procedures for Adult Protection Ensuring Rights and Preventing Abuse" and inform, without delay, appropriate Council officers of their concerns. These guidelines are located on the Council's intranet.

4.11 Suggestions, Comments, Complaints

It is important that the Council receives feedback from users of its services and others who come into contact with these services.

The Council's complaints leaflet should be made available to visitors.

They should also have the opportunity to speak directly with, or write to, the manager of the care service on issues which concern them.

Implementation

5. For details of the completed [Implementation and Monitoring form](#), please access the relevant committee report. This policy will be reviewed and monitored by internal and external management.

Roles and responsibilities

6. Managers of services have a responsibility to ensure that all staff are aware of this policy and that it is implemented within their service. They should ensure this policy is included in information provided to service users and their carers / representatives.

All staff have a responsibility to ensure they are aware of the content of this policy and the need to comply with it. They should also assist in ensuring that service users and their carers / representatives are fully aware of its content.

Related documents

7.1 Legislative Context:

[Protection of Vulnerable Groups \(Scotland\) Act 2007](#)

[The Adult Support and Protection \(Scotland\) Act 2007](#)

[Adults with Incapacity \(Scotland\) Act 2000](#)

[Mental Health \(Care and Treatment\) \(Scotland\) Act 2003](#)

[Smoking Health and Social Care \(Scotland\) Act 2005](#)

[Health and Safety at Work Act 1974](#)

[The Regulation of Care \(Requirements as to Care Services\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2002](#)

[Children \(Scotland\) Act 1995](#)

7.2 Associated Documents:

[Protecting Vulnerable Adults: Ensuring Rights and Preventing Abuse](#)

[Code of Practice for Adults with Incapacity Act \(2000\)](#)

[Code of Practice for Adult Support and Protection Act \(2007\)](#)

[City of Edinburgh Council Policy on Violence to Employees at Work \(September 2003\)](#)

[Department of Health and Social Care – Infection Control Policy and Procedures](#)

[City of Edinburgh Council – Fire Risk Assessment](#)

Equalities and impact assessment

8. For details of the completed [Record of Equality and Rights Impact Assessment \(ERIA\)](#) form, please access the relevant Committee Report.

Strategic environmental assessment

9. Not applicable to this policy.

Risk assessment

- 10.1 Risk of breaching a range of legislation, for example: Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007; Smoking, Health and Social Care (Scotland) Act 2003; The Regulation of Care (Requirements as to Care Services) (Scotland) Regulations 2002.
- 10.2 This policy is consistent with the Council policy on the assessment of risk.

Review

11. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.



City of Edinburgh Council Record of Equality and Rights Impact Assessment

Part 1: Background and Information

(a) Background Details

Please list ERIA background details:

ERIA Title and Summary Description: Supervision Policy

Service Area	Division	Head of Service	Service Area Reference No.
Health and Social Care	Head of Older People and Disabilities Services	Monica Boyle	

(b) What is being impact assessed?

Describe the different policies or services (i.e. decisions, projects, programmes, policies, services, reviews, plans, functions or practices that relate to the Corporate ERIA Title):

Policies and Services	Date ERIA commenced
This assessment relates to the City of Edinburgh Council's Policy for Visitors to its residential services	April 2015
<p>The Council provides a range of care services where there is the potential for visitors to the service, other than colleagues and other professionals.</p> <p>Some services provide residential accommodation, for example care homes, housing support and adult placement services. Some are provided from City of Edinburgh Council (the Council) premises, such as day centres and some from the home of service users such as home care and support services.</p> <p>Where the Council provides or arranges residential accommodation, this represents the service user's home, and it is, therefore, important that staff in these services take a flexible approach on the issue of visitors, which is based on service users' wishes and health and safety responsibilities. Where the service is provided by adult placement carers, it is essential that contracts and expectations of adult carers include the principles outlined in this policy statement.</p>	

(c) ERIA Team

Please list all ERIA Team Members:

Name	Organisation / Service Area
Marion Randall	Service Manager Older People
Shenaz Bahadur	Equalities Lead Officer - H&SC The City of Edinburgh Council

Part 2: Evidence and Impact Assessment

(a) Evidence Base

Please record the evidence used to support the ERIA. Any identified evidence gaps can be recorded at [part 3a](#). Please allocate an abbreviation for each piece of evidence.

Evidence	Abbreviation

(b) Rights Impact Assessment – Summary

Please describe all the identified enhancements and infringements of rights against the following ten areas of rights. Please also consider issues of poverty and health inequality within each area of rights:

- Life
- Health
- Physical security
- Legal security
- Education and learning
- Standard of living
- Productive and valued activities
- Individual, family and social life
- Identity, expression and respect
- Participation, influence and voice

Please indicate alongside each identified enhancement or infringement the relevant policy or service (see [part 1b](#)) and relevant evidence (see [part 2a](#)).

Summary of Enhancements of Rights
Rights to ensure Visitors to residential services do not pose a risk to the security of residents and ensure that residents right to an individual, family and social life.
Summary of Infringement of Rights
Can these infringements be justified? Are they proportional?
No explicit infringements of rights identified.

(c) Equality Impact Assessment – Summary

Please consider all the protected characteristics when answering questions 1, 2 and 3 below. Please also consider the issues of poverty and health inequality within each protected characteristic:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender identity
- Marriage / civil partnership
- Pregnancy / maternity

- Race
- Religion / belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

1. Please describe all the positive and negative impacts on the duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation. Please indicate alongside each identified impact the relevant policy or service (see [part 1b](#)) and relevant evidence (see [part 2a](#)).

Positive Impacts
Negative Impacts
Equality Impact Assessment suggests that the Visitor's policy will impact positively on groups with protected characteristics.

2. Please describe all the positive and negative impacts on the duty to advance equality of opportunity (i.e. by removing or minimising disadvantage, meeting the needs of particular groups that are different from the needs of others and encouraging participation in public life)? Please indicate alongside each identified impact the relevant policy or service (see [part 1b](#)) and relevant evidence (see [part 2a](#)).

Positive Impacts
.
Negative Impacts
Equality Impact Assessment suggests that the Visitors Policy will impact positively on groups from protected characteristics.

3. Please describe all the positive and negative impacts on the duty to foster good relations (i.e. by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding)? Please indicate alongside each identified impact the relevant policy or service (see [part 1b](#)) and relevant evidence (see [part 2a](#)).

Positive Impacts
Negative Impacts
Equality Impact Assessment suggests that the Visitors Policy will impact positively on groups from protected characteristics.

Part 3: Evidence Gaps, Recommendations, Justifications and Sign Off

(a) Evidence Gaps

Please list all relevant evidence gaps and action to address identified gaps.

Evidence Gaps	Action to address gaps

(b) Recommendations

Please record SMART recommendations to

- (i) eliminate unlawful practice or infringements of absolute rights;
- (ii) justify identified infringements of rights; or
- (iii) mitigate identified negative equality impacts.

Recommendation	Responsibility of (name)	Timescale

(c) Sign Off

I, the undersigned, am content that:

- (i) the ERIA record represents a thorough and proportionate ERIA analysis based on a sound evidence base;
- (ii) the ERIA analysis gives no indication of unlawful practice or violation of absolute rights;
- (iii) the ERIA recommendations are proportionate and will be delivered;
- (iv) the results of the ERIA process have informed officer or member decision making;
- (v) that the record of ERIA has been published on the Council's website / intranet, or
- (vi) that the ERIA record has been reviewed and re-published.

Date	Sign Off (print name and position)	Reason for Sign Off (please indicate which reason/s from list (i) to (vi) above)
	Monica Boyle - Head of Older People and Disabilities Services	(i) (ii) (iii)