



# Lone Working Policy

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Date	Author/Editor	Summary of Changes	Version No.
26.06.2018	Adele Houston	Review of 1 <sup>st</sup> version of policy	1
13.05.2019	Robert Krawczyk	Creation of 2 <sup>nd</sup> version of policy	2
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## CONSULTATION AND RATIFICATION SCHEDULE

Name of Consultative Body	Date of Approval
Senior Management Team	13.9.2023

## CROSS REFERENCE TO OTHER POLICIES/STRATEGIES

This policy should be read in conjunction with:	Detail
Policy 19	Health and Safety Policy
Policy 32	Mobile Phones Policy
	Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
	Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

KEYWORDS: working alone, personal safety, isolation, outreach, on-call

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## **1. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S STATEMENT**

All organisations have a duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employees within the workplace.

Due to the ever changing and developing requirements of our society and within the social care field, the workplace can mean any location where the employees/volunteers of Primecare Health LTD work.

In today's modern society employees/volunteers must be aware of the possible dangers they can face if and when they are Lone Working.

It is the responsibility of the Senior Management Team and Board of Primecare Health LTD, to ensure that all employees/volunteers are made aware of the importance of maintaining their own safety when Lone Working. We must ensure that appropriate levels of support are in place to enable staff to undertake Lone Working practices safely.

As with all organisational Policies and Procedures, Senior Managers have a legal obligation where they must ensure that they implement this policy and that all staff are aware of this Policy, and ensure staff at all levels attend the necessary Lone Working training plus read and maintain Risk Assessments, and report any concerns over their personal safety to the appropriate manager. Managers shall lead by example and recognise their responsibility in ensuring and supporting any employees/volunteers who Lone Work and includes giving the appropriate levels of support to staff to contact the Police over any threats or violence to them in relation to when they are lone working.

It is the responsibility of each of us to ensure our own safety at all times and this strategy will help to address that commitment at all levels throughout Primecare Health LTD.

All staff must be made aware of the Lone Working Policy; therefore, a copy shall be made available to all staff via the online Employee Portal found on Primecare Health LTD website.

## **2. LEGISLATION**

There is no overall legal regulation on lone working, but the general duties of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the specific duties of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 will apply. These require the employer to undertake, as far as is reasonably practicable, a suitable and sufficient assessment of any significant risks involved in Lone Working and the identification of any hazards when Lone Working. This shall be done through devising and implementing safe working arrangements to ensure that the risks are either reduced or adequately controlled to ensure the safety of all employees/volunteers and to inform all employees/volunteers of the outcomes.

Employers are also under a duty to provide facilities for first aid (Health and Safety (First Aid Regulations) and welfare (Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations) of their employees/volunteers.

Further legal duties are placed upon the Board and Senior Management Team under the Corporate Homicide (Scotland) Act 2007

### **3. DEFINITION OF A 'LONE WORKER'**

Lone working may be defined as any work activity which is intended to be carried out in isolation from other workers or without the direct support/supervision of another individual, be it within or outwith of normal office hours. For example, outreach support workers in one-to-one services; working within another's home; home working, key holders, cleaners (if working outside normal office hours), employees/volunteers whose post requires them to commute alone on behalf of Primecare Health LTD – e.g. Fundraising, Advisory Service, IT, HR, Learning & Development, Management. This definition will also include any contractors or maintenance personnel who undertake work on behalf of the organisation who are required to lone work within any of the organisation's premises.

### **4. RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Departmental Heads/ Managers Responsibilities**

- Ensuring risk assessments of the workplace and the activities of their staff to identify potential hazards, in relation to lone working and ensuring that the risks associated with lone working are considered at all times and are recorded appropriately and communicated to all lone workers
- That an assessment of risk is undertaken in relation to supporting individuals, and that this information is communicated to others
- If an individual has already been identified as posing a potential risk, an assessment must be made to ensure that the risk is reduced as far as is reasonably practicable. In addition, arrangements for the individual's support and the protection of staff are agreed and put in place
- Documenting locally relevant guidelines and plans and ensuring that staff are aware of them, in support of the organisation's overall approach to reducing the risks from lone working
- Reviewing existing local arrangements for controlling and reducing lone working risks and implementing any additional measures that may be necessary
- Ensuring that staff are informed on issues relating to lone working
- Ensure all employees/volunteers undertake appropriate Lone Working training and refresher training and that staff training records are maintained
- Monitoring and reporting of all accidents, incidents or near misses within their areas of responsibility and, where necessary investigate, to reduce the risk of the repetition of similar episodes in relation to lone working
- Communicate any developments or amendments on Lone Working which occur to all employees/volunteers
- Develop and maintain a robust on-call support network for all staff who Lone Work.

## **Employees Responsibilities**

Employees have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions and to co-operate with the organisation in meeting its legal obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

- Employees are responsible for complying with the organisation's policies and procedures including this policy and procedures for lone working
- Employees must ensure that they undertake all training provided for them by the organisation in relation to lone working, including regular refresher training.
- Employees must be actively involved in the process to identify any lone working risks and in any reviews of the risk assessments that take place
- Employees must be aware that their behaviour or comments can possibly increase risks when lone working
- Any employee who is aware of a potential lone working risk must inform their line manager so that preventative action may be taken, and information shared appropriately
- Employees/volunteers are responsible for reporting any problems encountered with the local on-call system/process to their line manager, this includes any problems with equipment provided to support the lone worker i.e. mobile phones, panic alarms
- Employees are responsible for and are encouraged to report all accidents, incidents and potential near misses in relation to Lone Working.

## **5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Training of all employees/volunteers in Lone Working will be delivered, monitored and evaluated by the Health and Safety Business Partner and the Learning and Development group

The Health and Safety Partner will report any legislation amendments, practice developments, quality assurance issues in regard to Lone Working to the Health and Safety Committee.

## **6. RISK ASSESSMENT**

Where lone working is the norm, it is essential to manage lone working and to conduct suitable, sufficient risk assessments in accordance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the organisation's Corporate Risk Register to meet the requirements of the Corporate Homicide (Scotland) Act 2007.

During the risk assessment process, it is important to involve employees/volunteers, in planned risk assessment procedures, as they are a valuable source of information and advice. This will also help to ensure that all relevant hazards have been identified and risks mitigated. The risk assessment process will also identify employees/volunteers who may be at a higher risk from lone working such as: younger, inexperienced workers, expectant

mothers or staff members with ill health etc. Once control measures have been implemented checks will be made to ensure that they are communicated and implemented, and the risk assessments reviewed regularly to ensure they are still adequate.

When a risk assessment shows that it is not possible for the work to be carried out safely by a lone worker, arrangements for providing help will be identified and, where reasonably practicable, put in place. Where a lone worker is working at another employer's workplace, supporting an individual both in or outwith of their home, undertakes regular commuting alone, as part of their role, or are working alone after normal work hours, the line manager must inform their immediate manager of any risks and the control measures that shall be implemented. Thereby proactively assessing the potential risks to staff.

(Note: these examples are not definitive of all potential Lone Working situations)

Risk assessments will also help to decide the right level of supervision and support required. Where high-risk activities are identified at least one other person may need to be present or be able to be contacted during periods of lone working.

## **7. SAFE WORKING PRACTICES**

Following the completion of the risk assessment the information collated in the process should be used to establish safe working arrangements for the lone workers identified. These arrangements will meet organisational and local Policies and Procedures, to establish specific safe working practices in each area and service. Procedures will include limits on what can and cannot be done whilst lone working. Once established the safe working practices must be readily available to staff, via supervision or team meetings.

## **8. TRAINING**

Training is particularly important to lone workers especially where there is limited supervision to guide and help in situations of uncertainty. Information provided will ensure that lone workers understand the risks associated with lone working, the precautions that are needed, contingency plans and include the use of any equipment provided and what they must do in an emergency.

Training will be comprehensive enough to ensure that employees are competent to deal with circumstances which are new, unusual or beyond the scope of training, for example, when to stop lone working and seek advice from the line manager and how to handle aggression. General training applicable to Lone Working is available from Primecare Health LTD and includes:

- Planned and Dynamic Risk Assessments
- Health and Safety
- Manual Handling
- First Aid at Work
- Fire Safety

- Driving
- Managing Aggression
- Incident Reporting
- Working at Heights

For advice on more specific training line managers/ Departmental Heads can be contacted.

All staff must complete the Lone Working course, which is part of the organisation's induction programme, and attend regular 2 yearly refresher courses.

All employees undertaking Lone Working training, or refresher training, will have their details entered onto the organisation's Learning and Development database.

## **9. ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION**

Following any accident/ incident or the identification of any additional hazards during Lone Working an 'Accident and/ or Incident Report Form' must be completed and where possible, witness statements recorded. This will then be investigated by the appropriate line manager and any health and safety issues investigated by the Health and Safety Partner.

Where necessary Risk Assessments must be reviewed and amended.

Staff will also be supported through a debriefing and any recommendations must be recorded, communicated to all relevant staff, and actioned.

## **10. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier if required for legislative or operational reasons.