

Family Commitment policy – version 2

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Rationale

- 1.1 We recognise that families and the significant people in the lives of those we support value being included and we welcome this involvement.

- 1.2 Supporting someone to involve the important people in their lives with planning and decision making should be natural and forms a part of our approach to person centred support.

Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all colleagues, people we support and stakeholders within each home setting where SeeAbility operates.

Policy statement

- 3.1 We believe in working in partnership with those important people in the lives of the people we support.
- 3.2 We help the people we support to make their own decisions about how they wish for their families to be involved in their lives.
- 3.3 We make sure that there is a clear plan in place for each person that wants one detailing decisions around the family's involvement in the lives of the people we support.
- 3.4 As an organisation:
 - we maintain a strong belief of working in partnership with families and the key people in the lives of those we are supporting, especially around making decisions; and,
 - we aim to draw upon the knowledge, skills and experiences of those key people to shape the care we provide for the people we support.
 - we request feedback from the people we support, their families and key persons in their lives as to what is working well or areas that need improvement.
 - We endeavour to keep the families of the people we support up to date with organisational news.

Roles and responsibilities

- 4.1 It is the responsibility of the Registered Manager to ensure that people have a completed Family Commitment plan
- 4.2 Keyworker's, or those who the Registered Manager delegates the task, are responsible for liaising with family members and/or those important to the people we support to complete the Family Commitment plan.

- 4.3 Support colleagues are to work in accordance with the plan, being confident in how to follow the plan for each person.

Procedures and guidance

What does working in partnership mean?

- 5.1 Families, friends and carers play an important part in the lives of the people we support. When we work well with families, friends and carers we can improve the way in which we deliver person centred support.
- 5.2 Working in partnership, and with the support of their families, people can reflect on the lives they lead. Looking at what is working and what may not be helps us review the quality of life someone has.
- 5.3 As a part of our Great Expectations framework we work in partnership to make changes to the way in which we support someone in order to improve their quality of life where possible.
- 5.4 Completing the Family Commitment plan can help to:
- identify the important people in the lives of the people we are supporting.
 - understand that their knowledge, skills and experience can help develop support plans and shape the support we provide.
 - agree the frequency, method and under what circumstances family members wish to be contacted.
 - help family members understand the role that we play in the lives of the people we support.
 - establish expectations and boundaries around information sharing.
 - develop a positive rapport with the families and key people of those we are supporting.
 - demonstrate the values and vision we have as an organisation.
- 5.5 Initial discussions during the assessment and transitions stages as well as ongoing open communication helps develop support plans, risk assessments and guidelines for the people we support. Discuss and share these documents with the family or key people in the lives of the people we support.

- 5.6 Use the feedback and information you receive to make plans and set meaningful goals with the people you are supporting.

The Family Commitment plan

- 6.1 The Family Commitment plan is offered to all of the people we support and their families.
- 6.3 When completing the plan recognise that family members will have different levels of involvement and preferences for how this happens. Plans should be offered to:
- anyone with next of kin status
 - those with Power of Attorney or Court of Protection appointed Deputyship
 - the key people in the lives of the people we support
 - those who the person being supported identifies as someone they wish for us to keep in contact with about their care and support needs.
- 6.4 Manager's need to make sure that all of the families of the people we support have the contact details for themselves and a primary contact for their relative, for example a keyworker.
- 6.5 Family Commitment plans are to be uploaded and stored with the person's support plan on our digital social care record (DSCR) system.
- 6.6 It is important that all colleagues working with the people we support are familiar with each person's plan, in the home that they are supporting, and what is expected in terms of when and how to communicate information. Discuss the plans for each person within team meetings to make sure this information is clear.
- 6.7 Review the Family Commitment plan at each person-centred review, make sure contact details are up to date and that the plan in place is working.
- 6.8 When discussing the plan with families, make sure to tell them that accessing our digital social care record (DSCR) system is an option open to them and allows them to view the records we keep of their relative.

Organisational Communication

- 7.1 Through a range of social media platforms we share organisational and sector updates as well as good new stories and details of upcoming events.
- 7.2 Families can be supported to sign up for a copy of the quarterly Friends and Families mailer through emailing media@seeability.org.
- 7.3 We request feedback from the people we support, families and key people in their lives annually through the satisfaction survey. Home managers are responsible for co-ordinating the completion of the survey for the people we support in their homes. And prompting family members to complete the survey, offering support where needed to gather feedback.
- 7.4 Feedback from the satisfaction survey is gathered for each home and shared with the manager. Feedback is discussed with the team during team meetings and actions set. These are recorded on the homes Quality Action tool.
- 7.5 Our auditors will contact families and those important in the lives of people during the audit process for feedback about the home, support team and quality of life for the people we support. This will form part of the audit report and where appropriate recommendations will be made.

Listening to the people we support

- 8.1 Wherever possible, ask the people we support about how they would like for their family to be involved in their life. Establish what information they would like to be shared with their family members for example:
 - updates about their health and wellbeing
 - about their day-to-day support and activities
 - making and understanding decisions
 - healthcare appointments
 - planning and reviewing their support needs
 - visiting in their homes
 - when things aren't going so well

Encourage the people we support to take the lead on sharing information with their families and help them to do this for themselves.

- 8.2 Establish whether there are areas that a person does not want to be discussed with their families. These need to be clearly outlined within the person's support plan on our digital social care record (DSCR) system and shared with the staff team supporting them.
- 8.3 Keyworker meetings and action plans need to include records of discussions being had with the people we support about what information they want sharing with their families.
- 8.4 Respect the decisions people make with regards to information they do not want to share. Support them to communicate this with their families where possible.
- 8.5 If needed explain the importance of choice, involvement and decision making for the people we support. Support families to understand the importance of the mental capacity assessment process and how this shapes the way in which we support people.
- 8.6 Always check with the people we support before information is shared with any family or friends.

Conflict, complaints and compliments

- 9.1 Respond to all feedback received from the families of the people we support. Do this promptly and in a way that works for them.
- 9.2 Take all concerns seriously. Listen to the worries or complaints, make sure the person feels heard and can be reassured that the issues raised will be addressed.
- 9.3 All complaints, compliments or concerns are recorded on our digital social care record (DSCR) system as feedback. Keep this record up to date of any discussions, actions or plans following the feedback received.
- 9.4 For all safeguarding reportable concerns or complaints follow the guidance within the Safeguarding adults at risk policy and the Duty of Candour policy.

- 9.5 Know who and when you should escalate any concerns or complaints to. Make sure this and the compliments, concerns and complaints policy are discussed as a part of team meetings and that all colleagues are confident they know who to speak to.
- 9.6 As a part of keyworker meetings discuss the complaints and compliments process with the people we support. Documents such as Complaints easy read and Ask listen, found in the supporting documents for the Compliments, concerns and complaints policy, can support with these discussions.

Additional support

- 10.1 Is it important that you reach out for support when there may be situations of relationship breakdown with the families, friends or key people in the lives of the people we support.
- 10.2 Speak to your Manager, Regional Head of Operations or People Partner for guidance during times where boundaries have been crossed, communication is breaking down or when relationships are strained between the people we support, families and our colleagues.
- 10.3 If you need any further support around any of the topics covered in this policy, we encourage you to contact your line manager or local wellbeing coach. Further support is available to all colleagues via our Employee Assistance Program.
Telephone: 0800 015 7287
Portal address: www.colleaguesupport.co.uk (enter code 72160 as your username and password).

Relevant legislation

- 11.1 Mental Capacity Act 2005
- 11.2 Human Rights Act
- 11.3 GDPR

Relevant external guidance

- 12.1 [Skills for Care – Working with families](#)

Related policies

- 13.1 Support planning policy
- 13.2 Keyworker policy
- 13.3 Making decisions, Mental capacity and Deprivation of liberty policy
- 13.4 Compliments, concerns and complaints policy
- 13.5 Safeguarding adults at risk policy
- 13.6 Duty of Candour policy
- 13.7 Positive behaviour support policy
- 13.8 Data protection policy

Related supporting documents - forms, additional guidance documents and so on

- 14.1 Family commitment plan

Equality statement

- 15.1 This policy promotes equality, diversity and human rights by recognising the importance of working in partnership with the key people in the lives of the people we support.
- 15.2 We promote equality, diversity and human rights by treating all people we support and employ equally and fairly whatever their:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation.

Data protection statement

- 16.1 This policy involves handling personal data. So, when you carry out any procedures this policy describes, you should also think about what our Data protection policy says.
- 16.2 Our Data protection policy is our promise to handle personal data correctly under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Data Protection Regulation (UK-GDPR). It tells you how to keep that promise. It balances everyone's rights to data privacy with the work we do.
- 16.3 For information on how we handle personal sensitive data, see our privacy notices.

Review and version control

- 17.1 We will review this policy three-yearly. But if changed or new legislation, regulation or best practice guidance means we need to, we will review sooner.
- 17.2 For minor changes made mid-scheduled review, we will update this version. We will record this in the version control section below.

Policy owner: Paul Pargeter, Director of Quality and Innovation

Policy author/reviewer: Vicci Wagner, Quality Auditor

People/groups consulted: Operations representatives, Oxfordshire Family Support Network

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2	31/07/2025	07/08/2025	Full review and update