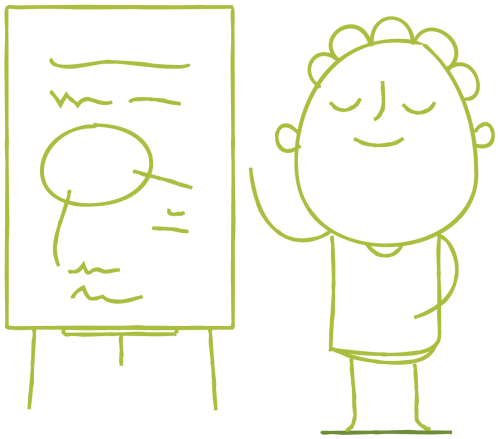
jrhsupport

CARE CERTIFICATE

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

STANDARD 14
Handling information



Standard 14	Handling information

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a very important right of individuals who receive care and support. It is part of the relationship of trust that individuals have with social care workers such as yourself. It's important that you always work in line with the JRH Support Confidentiality policy

Information should always be shared on a need-to-know basis only, for example, with other workers involved in the individual's care. You should not share information with anybody else, even the person's family or friends, without the individual's permission. For example, an individual may not want a friend to know about their health or if they have been unhappy. It is also essential to protect private information from accidental viewing or hearing. For example, if you met another worker and chatted about your work you should consider whether others would be able to hear or if a personal letter to an individual was left in a public place where other people could read it.

Nowadays there are many ways of keeping in touch with people, for example, 'Facebook' and other social media such as 'Twitter' where information is shared instantly. As a social care worker you should be careful to use this responsibly and be mindful of the confidentiality rights of all individuals including other workers.

Many workers have mobile technology with them at work which means it is possible to share information about their day or individuals without enough thought and so there are increased risks of breaching confidentiality. This is just as much a breach as leaving a record out of the filing system or remaining logged in to a computer when you are not present. Breaching confidentiality through use of social media, including taking or sharing photos or videos, may be a disciplinary offence, and in some cases may even be a criminal offence depending on what is shared.

Overall, you have a responsibility as a health or social care worker, to safeguard an individual's personal information. You should also treat personal information about other workers that you have access to in the same way.

Legislation

Increasingly, personal information is stored in computer databases. A law has been created to regulate the use of this data to balance the individual's right to confidentiality and an organisation's need to use it.

The **Data Protection Act 1984** introduced rules on how to store information and the rights of individuals to access data related to them. As technology advanced the Act was revised.

The Act relates to people living within the United Kingdom and provides a way in which individuals can be in control of the information about themselves. It covers any data which can be used to identify a living person, including, names, birthday and anniversary dates, addresses, telephone numbers, fax numbers, email addresses etc.

There are eight main principles in the Act that anyone handling personal data has to adhere to.

Personal details:

1. Must be processed in a fair and lawful way
2. Can only be processed for limited purpose, e.g. in a way previously specifies that has been consented to
3. Have to be relevant, adequate to their intended use and kept to a minimum
4. Have to be accurate and up to date
5. Should not be kept for longer than necessary
6. Should be processed in accordance with a person's rights
7. Should be stored securely
8. Should not be transferred to other countries where there is no adequate protection in place

The Data Protection Act was amended in 2003 to bring it in line with EU Directives. This broadened the term 'data' to include organised paper filing systems. You can find more information about the Data Protection Act here:
www.gov.uk/data-protection/the-data-protection-act

Recording information

Current legislation requires us to keep certain records. These records will relate to such things as day to day support, health & safety etc.

Information that needs to be recorded should always be written in a legible manner because it can be dangerous and damaging to a service user if it is misinterpreted e.g. it might result in a service user being given the wrong medication.

Records always need to be factual and clear, and you should remember that the records you complete in your work setting are considered to be legal documents that could be used by the police, coroners court etc.

Remember – all information that is recorded about a service user is confidential

Policies and Procedures

It is important to ensure safe and secure handling of information. The service users with whom you work are vulnerable and if their personal information is not kept securely, it may place them at risk.

A few of the most common breaches of confidentiality are:

- Records about service users being left lying around
- Conducting conversations about your workplace in a public place
- Talking about service users to your friends and family