

Missing Persons Policy

CM27

Date Written	
Author(s)	
Version	
Date Signed Off	
Reviewed by	

Date: []

Review Data

Initial Production

Name	Role/Department	RACI	Date

R = Responsible for writing the policy; **A** = Accountable; **C** = Consulted; **I** = Informed

Change History

Version	Date	Details of Change	Author

Emergency Contact Details

Name	Email	Mobile

CQC Fundamental Standards

Regulation Number	Regulation Details
Regulation 9: Person-centred care	The registered person must carry out, collaboratively with the relevant person, an assessment of the needs and preferences for care and treatment of the service user.
Regulation 12: Safe care and treatment	Risk assessments relating to the health, safety and welfare of people using services must be completed and reviewed regularly by people with the qualifications, skills, competence and experience to do so. Risk assessments should include plans for managing risks.

Key Lines of Enquiry

KLOE	How this applies to Access to Files and Records
Safe	Assessing the risk of a person going missing and taking appropriate action to prevent Missing Persons incidents as part of ensuring that we provide a safe service.
Responsive	Having a person centred approach which considers individual needs and wishes when managing risk helps ensure that we deliver a responsive service.

Related Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with our:

- CM03 - Autonomy and Independence Policy
- CP02 - Care Planning Policy
- HS08 - Risk Assessment Policy

Policy Statement



Policy Aims

This policy is intended to set out the values, principles and policies underpinning Careville Ltd's approach to the discovery that a service user for whom it is responsible is missing.

Through its policy and procedures, the agency also seeks to comply with the requirements to report serious instances through the CQC's notification procedures and the local Adults Safeguarding Board procedures and take the appropriate actions in the event of accidents or in the event of a service user going missing from their home, when the organization retains responsibility for that person's safety.

A service user going "missing" would be an obvious cause for concern. However, it is accepted that there will be many active adult service users who value their mobility and independence and spend time out in the local community without raising concern. Thus, adult service users' need for close supervision must always be balanced against their rights to make their own decisions regarding their movements and whereabouts.

Preventing Missing Persons Incidents

Staff must remain vigilant at all times and try to be aware of exactly where vulnerable service users are at any given time. Service users who are prone to wandering, or who may be at risk of getting lost because of their mental state, will have this identified during risk assessment and a suitable entry made in their care plan. Such service users are kept under observation as appropriate to the level of risk identified.

Action taken to avoid false alarms includes the simple precaution of encouraging service users, and their relatives and friends, to inform any responsible supporting care staff when they are out or not available and to give both a time they expect to return and a contact name and telephone number. All such arrangements are recorded.



Key Question: When should the alarm be raised?

Staff should raise the alarm immediately if they suspect that a service user may be missing by informing their duty manager and, where practicable, the person's relatives.

Situations where a missing persons report should be made include the following:

- where a service user has not returned from an arranged outing, activity or walk
- where the service user is a child who wanders off or absents him or herself from a designated area or activity
- where a service user cannot be found at home and their whereabouts cannot be accounted for.

Procedure in the Event of a Service User Being Reported Missing

Upon receiving a missing persons report the duty manager should carry out the following procedure:

Check that the service user is not on a prearranged outing, activity or walk which has not been notified to the staff member.

Check with contacts (relatives, etc.) who might be aware of the person's whereabouts.

Where practicable organise a search of the immediate vicinity in case the person has just gone out temporarily.

Where there are clear concerns notify the police, or arrange a plan of action with family members, carers, etc.

Upon conclusion of a missing persons incident the care service should investigate it to identify possible changes to the person's care arrangements or to the organisation's policies and procedures.



Key Question: What procedure should be followed after a missing persons incident?

Care workers must record any significant incident on the user's care plan and Careville Ltd's accident/incident records, which should be made available for inspection. The recording should include the times the person went missing and was returned and the actions taken for the person to be returned.

If the user was injured or harmed or was seriously at risk of being harmed as a result of going missing the management will notify the Care Quality Commission and the relevant Local Authority Safeguarding Unit, who might wish to investigate further depending on the circumstances.

If a complaint is made against a care staff member as a result of a service user going missing, the matter will be investigated through the complaints procedure. The investigation will include any possible misconduct by the care staff responsible as a result of the person going missing through its established disciplinary procedures.

All staff are made aware of the possible consequences of a service user whom they are supervising, going missing.

Training

All staff are trained in the missing persons procedure and to know their role in the event of a search.



Key Points to Take Away

- Thus, adult service users' need for close supervision must always be balanced against their rights to make their own decisions regarding their movements and whereabouts.
- Staff must remain vigilant at all times and try to be aware of exactly where vulnerable service users are at any given time.
- Action taken to avoid false alarms includes the simple precaution of encouraging service users, and their relatives and friends, to inform any responsible supporting care staff when they are out or not available and to give both a time they expect to return and a contact name and telephone number.
- Staff should raise the alarm immediately if they suspect that a service user may be missing by informing their duty manager and, where practicable, the person's relatives.

Authorisation and Signature

This Policy is the authorised version agreed by the Directors of Careville Ltd. All employees are expected to follow this policy and failure to do so could result in disciplinary action.

Director's Signature

Director