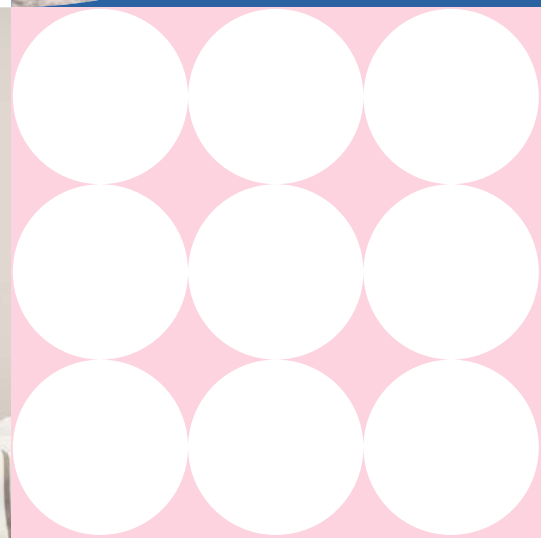


Health & Safety



Legislation

The main reason for health and safety legislation is to protect people at work and those who are affected by work activities. Legislation (that is, laws) is made so that everyone in society knows which behaviours are acceptable and which are not. Laws cover all aspects of our lives including protecting the health and safety of people at work and those affected by work activities including those who receive care and support.

Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

Sets out how employers, employees and the self-employed must work in a safe way, giving every person on the work premises legal duties and responsibilities. As this act is very general, subject-specific 'regulations' have also been put in place to help every workplace to be safe.

www.hse.gov.uk/legislation/hswa.htm

Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013

Are often referred to as 'RIDDOR'. Reporting accidents and incidents is an important part of your work in any health or social care workplace. The most serious accidents and incidents are reportable to health and safety authorities.

www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Are about how health and safety is managed within a care workplace, including risk assessment, training and ensuring employees receive the information they need.

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1999/3242/contents/made

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

Sets out how every workplace must prevent/protect against fire.

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2005/1541/contents/made

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulation (COSHH) 2002

Are designed to protect people from hazardous substances - that is, any substance that can cause harm or ill health.

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/>

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992

Cover the transporting or supporting of any load (including people) and how to carry this out safely and prevent injury.

www.hse.gov.uk/msd/pushpull/regulations.htm

The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 2002

Set out how any type of equipment is to be used safely. Work equipment needs to be checked and maintained regularly and employees trained in its safe use. In a care or health setting, 'equipment' includes not only specialist devices like lifting aids, but also everyday things such as televisions.

www.hse.gov.uk/work-equipment-machinery/puwer.htm

The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulation 1998 (LOLER)

Have specific requirements relating to work equipment which is used for lifting and lowering people or loads.

www.hse.gov.uk/work-equipment-machinery/loler.htm

It's everyone's duty to make sure they follow health and safety guidelines to make sure we provide a safe environment in your Tribe community.



Policies & Procedures

Tribe sets out health and safety policies and procedures to help you remain safe when providing or receiving support in your community. You should always refer to the Tribe Terms of Service and Community Guidelines for guidance on yours and others health and safety.

If you are a volunteer, working on behalf a voluntary organisation, please also refer to their individual guidance.

Please familiarise yourself with the relevant health and safety policy and procedures before carrying out any work in your community.

As a volunteer or support provider, you are responsible for taking reasonable care of yourself and others in the workplace. You need to follow the policies and procedures of Tribe and not act in a way which will cause an accident or ill health to yourself or others. You will probably work with a number of individuals who all have different needs and who require different types of support. Any task you do whilst at work, must not put them at risk.

An example of how you can take reasonable care of those within your workplace would be to report anything that could cause someone to trip or fall, like a frayed carpet or a wet floor, and take any action that you are asked to do.

Special Training

There are a number of activities that you must not carry out until you have received special training. Usually such training would include some practical elements and assessment by a competent trainer.

These activities include:

- Use of equipment such as hoists and lifts to move people and objects safely: each piece of equipment that you will use will have instructions for safe use.
- Medication: there is legislation that controls the prescribing, dispensing, administration, storage and disposal of medicines.
- Assisting and moving: it is essential that you know about safe moving and handling so you don't hurt yourself or the individual.
- First aid: this is the immediate assistance given to someone who has been injured or taken ill before the arrival of qualified medical assistance. If you are untrained you should get help from a first aider or call an ambulance. You should not attempt first aid without training as you could make their condition or injury worse.
- Emergency procedures: for emergency situations such as fire, explosion, flood, building damage, etc.
- Food handling and preparation: this will help you to prepare food that is safe and stop you from causing food poisoning.

Working in unsafe ways, ways that have not been agreed with the employer and without appropriate training can mean that you are putting yourself, the individuals you support and others at risk of harm. To make sure that you are keeping the individuals you support as safe as possible, you should only undertake certain activities once you are competent to do so.

Accidents and Sudden Illness

Risk assessments should be available which identify all the potential risks and steps to reduce the likelihood of them happening.

Potential accidents could include:

- Slips, trips and falls
- Sharps injuries (where a sharp object e.g. needle, blade, broken glass or cannula penetrates the skin)
- Burns and scalds
- Injuries from operating machinery or specialised equipment
- Electrocutation
- Accidental poisoning.

As well as injuries arising from accidents, the nature of health and social care means that individuals may have existing conditions which can cause sudden illness, including:

- Diabetic coma
- Epileptic seizure
- Fainting (this might also be caused by an accident)
- Bleeding (after an operation, or a nosebleed, as well as from an accident)
- Stroke
- Heart attack.



If an accident or sudden illness happens you must ensure the safety of the individuals concerned and everyone else who may be affected. Tribe has a health and safety procedure to outline what to do in an emergency and you must ensure that you are familiar with it. You must also be familiar with the individual's care plan, for example if they are known to have a condition that could lead to sudden illness, and how you should respond.

First Aid

There are three levels of first aid training: first aider, emergency first aid at work and appointed person. If you have not received training in any of the levels, you should not attempt any form of first aid, but must seek help immediately. Without specialist first-aid training, you should not attempt first aid as you could make the injury or condition worse. For example, moving someone into the recovery position could make a neck or spinal injury worse.

In emergency situations:

- Remain calm and send for help by shouting, phoning or finding someone
- Observe the individual, listen to what they are saying, try to find out what happened and reassure them, but do not move them unless it is absolutely necessary for safety
- Stay with the injured or sick individual until help arrives, observing and noting any changes in condition, as you will need to tell relevant medical staff or others what you have seen
- Do as little as you need to do in order to keep the casualty stable and alive until qualified help arrives
- Report the incident to Tribe and follow the agreed ways of working
- Call the Emergency Services on 999

Reporting Health and Safety Risks

The most important part of hazard reporting is that you act quickly and tell Tribe who can take action to prevent an accident or harm. It is a legal requirement that you do this. Once a hazard is identified, a risk assessment needs to be carried out.

You should be familiar with Tribe's agreed ways of working for reporting health and safety risks.



Moving and Assisting

Your role may include moving and assisting people and will certainly involve moving and handling objects. There are laws specifically about tasks that involve lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving by hand or bodily force. These tasks are governed, in particular, by the last three regulations in the list of legislation at the start of this guide.

Some work roles require the use of assisted beds and hoists to help with moving and assisting individuals. You must have proper training before using this equipment, to ensure that you use it properly and do not injure yourself or the individual.

Other tasks requiring training and assessment of competence:

- Supporting an individual to transfer from a bed to a chair
- Helping with daily assisting routines like bathing
- Moving on and off the toilet.

You should always carry out moving and assisting tasks in the agreed ways found in your policies and procedures and the individual's care plan.

Over a third of injuries in the workplace, which lead to time off work, are due to moving and handling. It is extremely important that specialist training on moving and handling is provided. This will prevent accidents and minimise the likelihood of injury to the individuals you support, yourself and others.

Medication and Healthcare

Some people may use medication and require support to store and take it correctly. Others may be able to manage their own medication safely. Individuals who can manage their own medication safely should be encouraged to do so as this promotes their independence and makes mistakes less likely to happen. Information about the support each person requires will be included in their care plan.

Whenever you are dealing with medication you need to be aware of the main points of agreed procedures about handling medication:

- **Ordering:** the process should be quick and efficient
- **Receiving:** a list of medication ordered should be checked
- **Storing:** controlled drugs (CDs) must be stored in a locked cupboard or might be kept by the individual if self-administering
- **Administering:** ensure the right person receives the right dose of the right medication at the right time
- **Recording:** use the Medicine Administration Record (MAR) which charts the administration of drugs to clearly update records.
- **Transfer:** medication has to stay with the individual as it is their property, so if they are transferred the medication goes with them.
- **Disposal:** return unwanted medication to a pharmacy.

It may be that your role does not require you to work with medication and therefore you won't be required to undertake any specialist training. However, it is important to know what your employer's ways of working are.

Tasks like cutting or filing fingernails or toe nails, continence maintenance and assisting with medication can be carried out only if they have been written in the individual's care or support plan. That's why it is vital that the individual's needs and wishes are agreed and clearly written down as a care plan, so all workers know when and how to provide support for that particular person, as well as whether the person has the mental capacity or mobility they need to manage themselves.

You always have to obtain the individual's consent before carrying out healthcare tasks or assisting with medication.

Dealing with Hazardous Substances

Hazardous substances found in a health and social care environments include:

- Cleaning materials
- Disinfectants
- Body fluids
- Medication
- Clinical waste such as dressings
- Contaminated clothes, towels and bed linen

These substances can enter the body via inhalation (breathing in), ingestion (swallowing), injection (needle stick) or absorption (through the skin). For all products you use, read the hazard information found on the label; this will inform you about their hazards and help you to keep yourself and others safe.

There must be a secure and specific area especially for the storage of hazardous substances.

Some hazardous substances should only be handled when the worker is wearing personal protective equipment (PPE). There are policies and procedures which set out when PPE should be worn which will normally include handling clinical waste and some chemicals.

You must always work within agreed ways to protect your own health and wellbeing as well as those around you.

Cleaning products and disinfectants should be kept in their original containers as these give the manufacturer's instructions for correct usage. These instructions must always be followed. An individual may choose to transfer products out of their original containers in their own home. For your own safety you should only use products that are in their original containers.

Identifiable human tissue must always be incinerated. Other biological waste needs to be put in orange or yellow bags and disposed of separately from household waste. Local authorities may arrange a separate collection for this type of waste from individuals' own homes.

Body fluids such as blood, urine, vomit and faeces must be cleaned up immediately. Disposable items used for cleaning the spills, such as paper towels and gloves, should be disposed of as clinical waste.

Clinical waste includes contaminated waste such as used dressings and contaminated personal protective equipment. This waste should be put into bags which identify it as potentially harmful (these are usually yellow or orange) and stored securely until it can be disposed of as set out in the procedures for your workplace. Many local authorities will arrange safe collection of clinical waste from individual's homes if it has been assessed as clinical waste by a community healthcare professional.

Some contaminated clinical waste can pierce the skin and should be stored in sharps bins rather than bags, to protect workers from injuries. You must follow the agreed ways of working. If supporting a person in their own home, be familiar with any risk assessment for disposing of sharps there. Sharps should normally be

returned, in an approved sharps box, to the place they were prescribed.

Waste is considered hazardous if it is potentially harmful to humans or the environment. Disposal must be done in a way that avoids any danger or harm. Your employer will have procedures in place for the storage and disposal of hazardous waste.

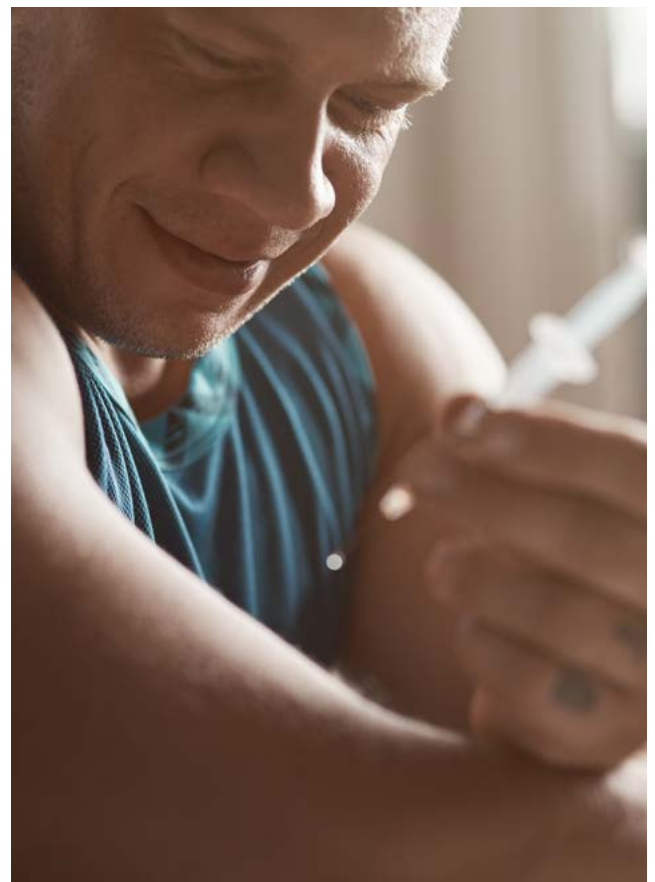
Linen which has been contaminated with body fluids should ideally be washed immediately if you are supporting a person to live in their own home. In the health and social care workplace it should be placed in identifiable bags and placed in a hot wash, separate from other linen. There will be agreed ways of working, which may vary from person to person, for washing clothing.

Handling Medication

Appropriate training must be provided for health and social care workers who are required to provide medication.

You are not allowed to remind about, assist with or give individuals their medication or carry out related healthcare tasks unless it is part of your role and until you have completed and satisfactorily passed the appropriate training. This applies to inhaled medication, any medication that needs to be swallowed, medical creams or ointments, drops, cutting or filing nails or prompting or helping with injections (for example EpiPen).

Except in emergency, you should not carry out any actions that are not covered by the individual's care plan. As legislation on medication and related tasks is forever changing, you need to keep yourself up to date with current laws and guidance.





Fire Safety

Fires are a hazard in any workplace and can lead to injury or death. Basic fire prevention measures include:

- No smoking or naked flames within the building
- Do not have fire doors propped open as this will increase the speed at which a fire spreads in a building
- Do not allow waste to accumulate which could fuel a fire
- Check escape routes are not blocked and keep them clear of furniture or boxes
- Check that appliances and plugs are turned off to help prevent an electrical fire from starting.

If you are supporting someone in their own home these measures may not apply. You can support individuals to get advice to make their homes safer but you must respect the choices that they make; for example they may choose to smoke and not have smoke alarms.

A workplace will have their own specific procedures and actions to be taken in the event of a fire and you must make sure that you familiarise yourself with these procedures. If you work in someone's home make sure you familiarise yourself with escape routes and agree what you would do in the case of a fire. Sometimes there may be increased risks in an individual's home that you need to be aware of; they may choose to smoke for example.



Working Securely

In order to stop intruders and prevent individuals from becoming victims of crime, good security measures are important. Tribe has some security procedures in place, so ensure you familiarise yourself with them. If you work for a voluntary organisation, you may also have guidance or advice about safe working from them. Ask your team leader about this.

Examples of security measures include:

- Challenging any strangers on the premises or in restricted areas
- Requiring visitors to secure premises to sign a visitor book
- Setting alarms where they are fitted
- Checking the identity of individuals who ring and request information.

If your workplace is small, outside doors should be locked and fitted with a door bell to ensure no unauthorised access. Never let in visitors or give out information unless you have consent to do so.

If you are working in an individual's home you can support them to get advice about how to make their home more secure, for example by accessing information on the internet.

www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/care/home-safety



Stress

Stress, depression and anxiety lead to millions of lost working days. Stress can be both positive and negative. Some pressures and challenges are good as they can help us to work more effectively, but negative stress such as undue pressure, overwork or difficult working conditions can affect our wellbeing and cause illness. Challenging events themselves are not the root cause of stress; it is the way that we see and think about the event or challenge that leads to feeling stressed.

The signs and indicators of stress can be separated into different categories:

- Psychological or emotional – anxiety, anger, depression, low self-esteem, feeling helpless, sensitivity or tearfulness, irritability and indecisiveness
- Physiological or physical – heart palpitations, stomach complaints such as irritable bowel syndrome, uneasiness and tension
- Behavioural – aggression, increased substance misuse such as smoking or alcohol, sleeping more or less, changes in eating patterns and changes to mood and consequent behaviour impacting on relationships and work

The circumstances and situations that can trigger stress vary from person to person. Some people can take on lots of pressures and demands before they will show signs of stress whereas others may be affected by situations and events more easily. This can depend on their personality, their ways of coping with stress and their personal history.

Stress triggers may include:

- Increased demands from others in the workplace or at home
- Changes in working practices or new working practices
- Changes to team members
- Relationship issues
- Unexpected changes relating to finance, personal circumstances or work
- Challenging behaviour of individuals you support
- Tiredness
- Getting something wrong or being criticised.

Managing Stress

We all deal with and respond to 'stressors' in very different ways and our reactions and strategies for responding to them will vary greatly.

Some helpful strategies to deal with stress are:

- Taking more exercise or going for a walk
- Taking time out for yourself
- Doing something that you enjoy
- Taking a deep breath
- Counting down slowly in your head
- Removing yourself from a situation and taking time out
- Talking through how you feel with your line manager
- Attending any stress management courses or workshops available
- Engaging in relaxing activities whilst away from work
- Looking at your diet and substance intake, for example caffeine, and managing a sensible intake
- Undertaking self-awareness activities
- Talking through your stresses with a counsellor
- Talking to a human resources advisor or occupational health advisor (if available in your organisation).

Think about the events and situations that tend to cause you to feel stressed. It is very important to be aware of these so that you can develop positive ways of coping and managing stress. Sometimes it might not be possible to remove the thing that causes stress but if you develop ways of coping then you are able to take the time to look after yourself so that the stress does not have too much of a negative impact on your health and wellbeing. Managing stress well will reduce the negative effects on others including the individuals you care for, your colleagues, family and friends.



This Health and Safety Guidance was prepared using content from Tribe partners Skills for Care.
For more information about Skills for Care, please visit their website: www.skillsforcare.org.uk