

Health and Safety within Domiciliary Care, Provider and OCC Responsibilities

Paul Lundy

Health, Safety and Wellbeing
Oxfordshire County Council



Introduction

The essential point of home care is that it enables and supports people who are unable to care for themselves or their families because of sickness, disability or old age to live in their own homes.

Home support staff are relied on to carry out a wide range of different support tasks for service users which can present significant health and safety risks to both **support staff** and **service users**.

Typical support tasks could include personal care, lifting and handling tasks, using a range of household chemicals, using electrical equipment such as vacuum cleaners, cookers, microwaves and heaters etc. They may also administer or assist service users with medication, shopping and other domestic chores.

Legal Duties

Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSWA)

HSWA section 2 requires employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all their **employees**; and HSWA section 3 requires employers and the self employed to conduct their undertaking in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that other **persons not in their employment**, (for example people who use care services) are not thereby exposed to risks to their health and safety.

Employers and self employed persons are also required by regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR) to assess the risks to workers and others (for example people who use care services) who may be affected by their work or business.

Legal Duties

Care packages

Individuals with an eligible need will be offered appropriate services based on their assessments. A written care plan is produced which sets out precisely what the health and social care needs are and how they will be met. The level of care may range from home care through to the provision of accommodation with nursing.

Local Authorities are required to review the care plan and associated risk assessments at regular intervals to ensure that the services are still relevant and continue to meet the needs of the individual. This is consistent with the requirements under health and safety legislation to review risk assessments.

The provider and it's staff must ensure that the service is delivered in a safe manner that promotes a service users health, wellbeing and independence.



Policies and Procedures

Care Providers must ensure that policies and procedures are in place to protect staff and service users while support activities are undertaken by:

- Carrying out suitable risk assessments that take account of the real and significant risks faced by home support staff.
- Providing health and safety training and information as well as refresher training so that support staff are confident in carrying out their duties.
- Ensuring that a reporting system is in place that encourages support staff to report and record incidents and accidents.

Competence

Providers must ensure all staff are aware of their health and safety responsibilities to themselves and the service users.

Providers have legal duties to provide appropriate health and safety information and training to all their staff. Training should include all the risks that employees are exposed to and the precautions needed.

Providers must ensure monitoring arrangements are in place for support staff which should include supervision/observation.

Support Staff Induction

Typical support staff induction must include health and safety training and should cover:

- Manual Handling
- Infection Control
- Fire Procedures
- First Aid
- Basic Hygiene
- Food Preparation, storage and hygiene
- Dealing with emergency situations
- The use of protective clothing/equipment

Oxfordshire County Council Learning and Development Team can provide you with more information on available training.

Please contact: **01865 797123** or email

L&D.sharedservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk



Support Staff Induction

In addition to the Induction, training must be given to support staff when:

- There is a transfer of job, a change in service user or changes in responsibility.
- New equipment is used.
- There are changes in work methods.

Providers must also provide information for support staff that is easy to understand and which is relevant. Information for persons who have difficulty in understanding or reading English should be considered.

Risk Assessment

Care Providers must undertake suitable and sufficient risk assessment of the risk to health and safety of their staff and service users who may be affected.

Risk assessments must be carried out by competent staff and before the care package commences.

Risk assessments must be made available to staff and Providers must ensure support staff implement the preventative and protective measures to reduce and control the risk.

Risk Assessment – 5 Steps

Identify the hazard



Decide who might be harmed and how
e.g. Support staff and/or Service User



Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
e.g. H/M/L – Safety equipment



Record your findings and implement them
e.g. Disseminate risk assessment, update care plan
and carryout work according to safe procedures.



Review your assessment and update if necessary
e.g. Monitor - Observation, supervision
Changes in care package

Risk Assessment

REFER TO HANDOUT -
RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Care is tailored to the needs of the individual – read the Care Plan!



Key areas of risk

Moving and Handling



Moving and handling is the most common cause of Injuries to support staff and can also lead to injuries to service users as a result of incorrect or poor practice.

According to the Health and Safety Executive around 50% of all accidents reported in the social care sector relates to the helping of service users whose mobility is reduced by disability or illness.

Poor working environment, inappropriate equipment, badly planned work and inadequate training increase the risk of injuries to both support staff and service user.

For further information

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/healthservices/moving-handling.htm#a4>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg225.pdf>

Key areas of risk Medication



All medicines are potentially harmful if not used correctly, and care must be taken in their storage, administration, control and safe disposal. The majority of service users will take responsibility for administering their own medication.

Home Support Workers must only assist with the administration of medication following authorisation by their line manager and where the need for assistance is recorded on the Care Plan received from the Assessor. Home Support Workers must report any concerns relating to a service user's medication to their line manager and necessary escalation to Care Management.

Key areas of risk Infection



Support staff can be exposed to infections as a result of direct contact with someone under their care who is infected or by cleaning up infected body fluids. It is important that Providers put strict procedures in place and precautions are taken at all times to reduce the risk of exposure and transmission.

Support staff must be given formal training and information on any risks.

Providers must provide support staff with necessary personal protective equipment or clothing (PPE) e.g. gloves, aprons etc.

Key areas of risk

Lone Working



In general support staff regularly work alone which can present several issues that need to be managed e.g.

- Accidents or emergencies arising out of their work.
- Inadequate provision of rest, hygiene and welfare facilities.
- Violence from service users or members of public.
- Moving and handling incidents.

Providers should include lone working in the risk assessments and if it shows that it is not possible for the work to be done safely by a lone worker then other arrangements must be put in place.

Key areas of risk

Bathing (Scalding)



Providers must ensure that a bathing policy is in place and safe bathing procedures implemented to manage the risk of scalding.

All service users must have a risk assessment in place outlining the risk to them of scalding.

All support worker should receive training in safe bathing procedures and are provided with thermometers to test the temperature of the water to ensure it's within safe limits.



For further information

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/lau/lacs/79-5.htm>

Example of a Safe System of Work

Bathing

Before support staff commence work in a client's home, management should assess the premises, the service users needs, and capabilities of staff assigned to the service user.



Where necessary lifting and handling aids should be installed in service users homes and given advice on equipment and modifications to premises.

If a service user refuses a hoist, a manager should visit them to explain why a hoist needs to be used. If refusal persists this needs to be escalated to OCC.

Example of a Safe System of Work

Bathing

The assessment should include a review of staffing levels and where necessary certain bathing tasks including service user transfer may require two support staff.



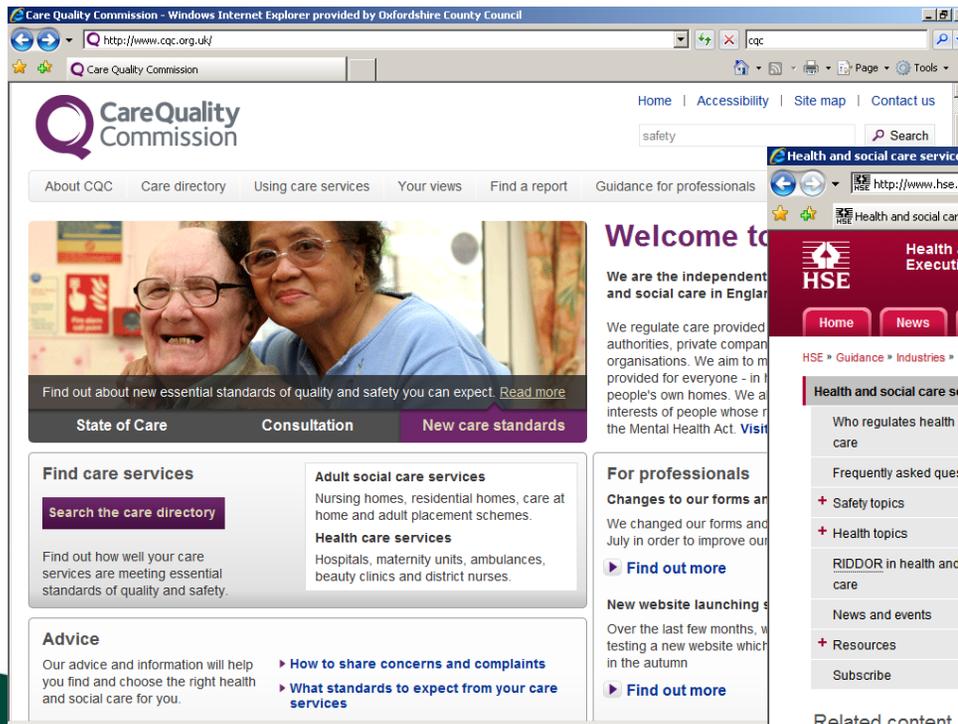
Support staff must given information and training on safe bathing procedures including risk assessments. They should also be provided with all necessary equipment including thermometers, PPE etc.

Emergency procedures must be in place and support staff told who to contact for help when a problem arises.

Further H&S Information

Health and Safety Executive Website: www.hse.gov.uk

Care Quality Commission Website: www.cqc.org.uk



Care Quality Commission - Windows Internet Explorer provided by Oxfordshire County Council

http://www.cqc.org.uk

Care Quality Commission

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New website launching

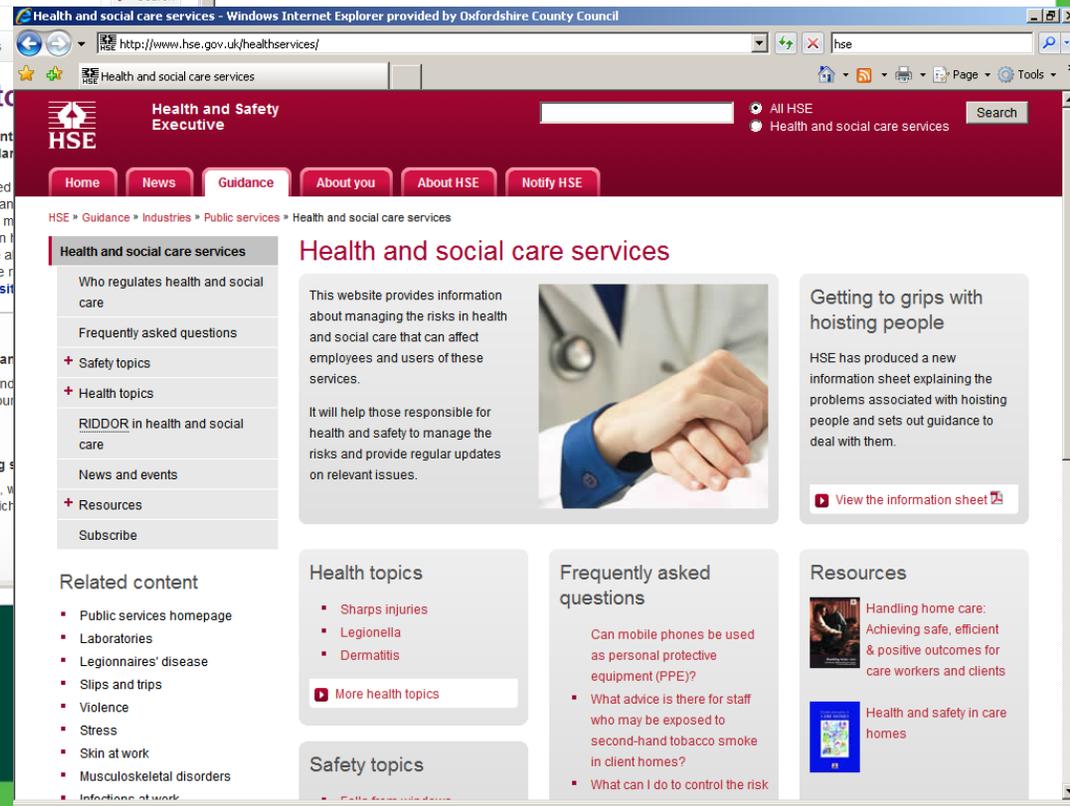
Over the last few months, we've been testing a new website which will be launched in the autumn

[Find out more](#)

Advice

Our advice and information will help you find and choose the right health and social care for you.

- [How to share concerns and complaints](#)
- [What standards to expect from your care services](#)



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Health and social care services

Who regulates health and social care

Frequently asked questions

- Safety topics
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Health and social care services

This website provides information about managing the risks in health and social care that can affect employees and users of these services.

It will help those responsible for health and safety to manage the risks and provide regular updates on relevant issues.

Getting to grips with hoisting people

HSE has produced a new information sheet explaining the problems associated with hoisting people and sets out guidance to deal with them.

[View the information sheet](#)

Related content

- Public services homepage
- Laboratories
- Legionnaires' disease
- Slips and trips
- Violence
- Stress
- Skin at work
- Musculoskeletal disorders
- Infections at work

Health topics

- Sharps injuries
- Legionella
- Dermatitis

[More health topics](#)

Safety topics

Frequently asked questions

- Can mobile phones be used as personal protective equipment (PPE)?
- What advice is there for staff who may be exposed to second-hand tobacco smoke in client homes?
- What can I do to control the risk

Resources

- Handling home care: Achieving safe, efficient & positive outcomes for care workers and clients
- Health and safety in care homes

Working for you

OCC Health, Safety and Wellbeing Contacts

Oxfordshire County Council
Health Safety and Wellbeing
Customer Services
Unipart House
Garsington Road
Oxford
OX4 2GQ

Helpline: 01865 797222

Email: healthandsafetyhelp@oxfordshire.gov.uk

