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## Derbyshire County Council Adult Care

### Support Standards – Practice Guidance for Independent Providers, Supporting People to Live Independently in Their Own Homes

#### Approval and Authorisation

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#### Change History

Version	Date	Name	Reason
V1	August 2014	James Gough	New Practice Guidance Issued to Staff and Providers.

This document will be reviewed on a regular basis – if you would like to make any comments, amendments, additions etc please email Dawn Nash – Procedures and Information, [dawn.nash@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:dawn.nash@derbyshire.gov.uk)

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## **Supported Living**

For the purpose of this document, the word “tenant” is used to also mean “owner occupier”, where appropriate.

Supported Living services differ from registered care homes with much more emphasis being placed on people participating fully in the running of their own home and their finances.

Each person will have a tenancy or be an owner occupier and become eligible for a range of benefits to pay for their support, housing and living expenses. Support staff visit people in their own homes. For people with disabilities this way of living enables a more independent lifestyle as well as greater financial control.

## **Support Standards**

These are the standards that Derbyshire Adult Care expects providers to maintain when working on financial and support issues with tenants in supported living. They are an integral part of Derbyshire Adult Care quality monitoring systems.

The support provider should in addition work in accordance with the service specifications contained within the Derbyshire Framework Agreement for the Provision of Supported Living Services for People with Learning Disabilities

## **Good Practice in Tenancy Support: General**

- All tenants are encouraged and supported to exercise their electoral rights if they wish to do so.
- Tenants are provided with keys to their home and their bedroom, unless an assessment indicates that this would present an unacceptable risk and the tenant agrees to this.
- All tenants have the right to make an informed choice regarding entry to their home and own room, this includes staff members, unless identified otherwise in a risk assessment/support plan.
- No homes or bedrooms are entered by or shown to visitors without the tenants' permission.
- Tenants should be consulted prior to any visits to their home being arranged. Visitors, other than tenants' family and friends, should be kept to a minimum.
- All visitors to be introduced and the purpose of the visit explained.
- All shared bathrooms and toilets have doors which can be locked from the inside, subject to a risk assessment where required.

- Tenants will be assisted to insure their personal possessions, if they wish to do so. Staff should encourage tenants to take out a contents insurance policy to cover their own possessions and help set up the payments for this.
- Telephone calls – staff should help tenants to budget for their calls. The bill should be itemised so that staff can assist tenants to identify their own calls and arrange to pay for them.

### **Good Practice in Tenancy Support: Choice and Respect**

- Tenants are not discriminated against when expressing their individuality.
- All tenants are addressed by their preferred name.
- All tenants are able to wear the clothing and accessories of their choice with staff encouraging an understanding of appropriate dress (e.g. weather conditions).
- All tenants can have visitors of their choice and receive those visitors in privacy. If this affects the rights of other tenants then agreed house rules should be established.
- All tenants are encouraged and supported to shop for personal items.

### **Good Practice in Tenancy Support: Tenants Finances**

- By law, all tenants should receive their full benefit entitlement. If support workers are concerned that this is not the case they should contact the social worker or the welfare benefits representative.
- Support staff should be prepared to provide the following advice or assistance to tenants concerning their financial affairs:
  - Helping tenants to read documents relating to finances
  - Help in analysing income and expenditure to aid budgeting
  - Help to maximise income/benefits
  - Help in prioritising bills
  - Options for insurance of possessions, but not advice on what company to use
  - Advice on the use of a bank account
  - Referral to other agencies as appropriate e.g. CAB/Department for Work and Pensions/Money Advice Services
  - Collection of monies such as rent, welfare loans and rechargeable repairs
  - Advice on payment options for utility bills such as gas, electricity, telephone, T.V. and water, where appropriate.
- The aim is that all tenants in supported living should have responsibility for their own finances with assistance from support staff. In general, it is not expected that tenants will need appointees to be in place for them. (The DWP can

appoint another person to act on the individual's behalf with regard to benefits and pensions etc where the individual does not have the capacity to do these themselves).

- If there is a difference of opinion about whether an appointee is needed or whether the existing situation (with or without an appointee) should continue, then a risk assessment or an adult safeguarding meeting should be convened as appropriate. If the tenant's views are unclear or compromised, then an advocate should be employed to support the tenant in making their view known.
- In exceptional cases (perhaps when a tenant's capacity is in doubt) a Receiver can be appointed by the Court of Protection to manage a person's money and property. A Receiver should not make decisions about anything other than financial matters, and can be a friend or relative or a paid professional.
- Both Appointees and Receivers should use the money which they manage for the vulnerable person's benefit. If anyone has concerns that an Appointee or a Receiver is misusing the tenant's money then the social worker must be informed. Support staff who handle others' finances/valuables without formal permission may be liable to allegations of theft, fraud or obtaining a primary advantage by deception – all of which are criminal offences.
- All tenants should have the choice of where to hold their current accounts, and to bank their savings.
- All Tenants are encouraged and assisted to set up their own bank account. (Credit and Debit cards requiring pin number are best avoided where a financial risk has been identified).
- Tenants should be supported to set up direct debits where appropriate.
- The following practices are not acceptable unless formal permission has been obtained from the tenant or their representative:
  - Holding monies belonging to tenants.
  - Holding valuables such as bank books, benefit books, credit cards and jewellery.
  - Cashing cheques for tenants.
  - Collecting benefits for tenants.
  - Handling monies for shopping or bills payment on behalf of the tenant.
  - Occasionally, exceptional circumstances dictate that the support staff have no option but to take responsibility for a tenant's money or valuables. This may be because of a death or emergency visit to hospital. In this case support staff must have a witness and complete a log of items, dated and signed with the managers of the service informed at the earliest opportunity.

### **Good Practice in Tenancy Support: Support Staff**

- All tenants are encouraged and supported to choose for themselves how and where they spend their day as identified within their support plan.
- Tenants are fully encouraged and supported to choose the décor, furniture and furnishings for their home.
- All tenants receive appropriate support and encouragement to access local community resources and events, to meet their social/educational/cultural needs. This should be reflected in the support plan and achieved through a person centred approach.
- Tenants are supported and encouraged to take control of their contact with health and social care professionals and other services.
- Tenants participate in regular house meetings and are involved in the planning and management of their support.
- Support staff should ensure that tenants are familiar with what to do on discovering a fire or hearing a fire alarm. Risk assessments and evacuation plans should be completed alongside the tenants.

### **Good Practice in Tenancy Support: Risk**

**The following points are rights which assist tenants to have control over their own lives. However, for some tenants, staff will need to take a more proactive approach. Staff should work in partnership with tenants to reach an agreement about the following:**

- Risk assessments must be in place that identify all hazards and how they are to be addressed.
- All tenants have a right to make informed choices, which may involve a degree of risk.
- Tenants have the right not to participate in an activity.
- Tenants are able to be alone in their bedroom whenever they wish.
- Tenants choose for themselves when to have a bath or a shower and when to get up and when to go to bed.
- Tenants have a right to identify when, how and what they wish to eat.

**Some people will need assistance to make choices that do not put themselves or others at risk. Assessments of the risks should be carried out to clarify whether any steps should be taken to protect people from harm, abuse or**

exploitation, in conjunction with the principles of the [Mental Capacity Act 2005 \(MCA 2005\)](#).

### **Good practice in the five principles of the Mental Capacity Act**

- Principle 1: Assume a person has capacity unless proved otherwise.
- Principle 2: Do not treat people as incapable of making a decision unless all practicable steps have been tried to help them.
- Principle 3: A person should not be treated as incapable of making a decision because their decisions may seem unwise.
- Principle 4: Always do things or take decisions for people without capacity, in their best interest.
- Principle 5: Before doing something to someone or making a decision on their behalf, consider whether the outcome would be the least restrictive intervention - anything done for or on behalf of people without capacity should be an option that is least restrictive as long as it is still in their best interests.

**It is important to note that everyone is assumed to have capacity under the MCA 2005**

### **Safeguarding Adults**

- Support staff should uphold the dignity and respect of all tenants. See also the [Dignity and Respect Policy for DCC Adult Care](#).
- Support staff have a duty to protect vulnerable adults from abuse.
- Actual or suspected abuse must be reported to the support staff's line manager (or *their* line manager if they are the 'suspected' abuser).
- **Please refer to Derbyshire's Safeguarding Adults Procedures.** Copies of which can be downloaded from the Saferderbyshire web site at the link below. [http://www.saferderbyshire.gov.uk/what\\_we\\_do/safeguarding\\_adults/default.asp](http://www.saferderbyshire.gov.uk/what_we_do/safeguarding_adults/default.asp)  
The procedures reflect the Department of Health's publication "No Secrets".

### **Housekeeping**

- If tenants agree, it is suggested that a housekeeping account should be opened so that regular agreed payments from the tenants can be made into the account.
- Some of the housing costs, such as communal bills, will need to be paid, agreement would need to be reached between tenants, families and staff about

what needs to be covered and at an agreed weekly cost. The following list itemises other expenses which may need to be met by tenants. This list should serve as a check list so that support workers can ensure that arrangements are in place to meet these expenses.

An agreed weekly payment may be made by each tenant to cover food and cleaning materials. This should be agreed and reviewed regularly through the house meeting.

**Utilities** This will include some or all of the following:

- **Gas** - cost of bills divided by number of tenants
- **Electricity** - cost of bills divided by the number of tenants
- **TV Licence** - cost of TV licence divided by the number of tenants
- **Water Rates** - cost of bills divided by the number of tenants
- **Telephone Line** - cost of line rental only divided by the number of tenants. The cost of individual calls to be met by each individual calculated from the itemised bill (Notes on telephone use later)
- **Satellite/Cable TV** - cost of bills proportional to each tenant
- **Internet access** - cost of bills proportional to each tenant.

### **Meals and Mealtimes**

- Tenants are able to have hot or cold drinks and snacks at any time of the day or night. Tenants should be encouraged to be as independent as possible in this, in line with their Support Plan and any risk assessment.
- Support staff should be trained in all relevant aspects of food hygiene.
- Tenants are encouraged and supported to adopt basic hygiene and food safety standards.
- All tenants are encouraged to eat a balanced and nutritious diet.
- Tenants should be supported with their meals/drinks where appropriate.
- Staff will support tenants who have special diets for health, religious, or cultural reasons, including vegetarian and vegan diets.
- All tenants have the choice of eating alone if they wish in line with their Support Plan and any risk assessment.
- Support staff are expected to eat at the same time as the tenants unless the tenants request, or needs indicate otherwise.

### **Staff Meals**

- The housekeeping account is to buy food etc. for tenants, and not for support workers working at the house. It is expected that support staff will either bring in their own meals, or the staff or their employer, will make an agreed



contribution to the housekeeping budget. This should be recorded and documented.

- The cost of staff meals when out, when accompanying tenants on special occasions, should be met by the tenant, but should not exceed the cost of the tenants' meal.
- The cost of staff meals when out accompanying a tenant on regular activities (as identified in the support plan) should be met by the tenant.

### **Telephone Use**

- The line rental and individual telephone calls should be paid for by tenants.

Staff should use the telephone only if unavoidable or on behalf of a tenant. Permission should always be requested from the tenant/s. Alternative arrangements should be made for work-related calls

### **Leisure and Social Activities**

Staff costs incurred whilst accompanying tenants on activities should be met by the tenant.

### **Holidays**

Derbyshire Adult Care's current practice is that a tenant pays for all their own accommodation and travel, plus the staff accommodation and travel costs in addition to staff time over and above regular time on the staff rota. Any discussion with the tenant around holidays needs to be verified by the social worker in the first instance.

### **White Goods and Furniture Guidance**

- Some tenancy agreements will be for furnished property and others will not. If the property is furnished then the rent payment will cover the replacement of white goods, furniture etc. If the property is not furnished then this cost will need to be covered by the tenant.
- If the rent paid does not cover the replacement of white goods and furniture, please see additional guidelines, "Rental or Replacement of White Goods, Furniture" etc.
- Where items of furniture or white goods have been purchased by tenants, an inventory should be maintained to clarify both ownership and maintenance responsibility.
- Staff will need to discuss with tenants how the garden is going to be maintained. It may be that the tenants want to do this, perhaps with the help of staff, or it may be that a gardener or similar would need to be employed with the costs split between the tenants

## **Transport**

- Most people who live in “supported living” will qualify for Disability Living Allowance mobility component (DLA mobility) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP). This allowance should pay for all transport costs.
- People who receive high rate DLA mobility will be able to purchase a car through the Motability scheme, while some tenants who live together have the choice to pool their DLA mobility to acquire a vehicle which all of them can use. Agreement would need to be reached between the tenants about cost and use on an individual basis, through the house meeting.
- All mileage should be logged. A separate account should be kept for transport.
- If the support worker agrees (and is adequately insured) to provide transport for the tenant on occasion, then a mileage rate should be agreed between the tenant and the support worker’s employer. This should be reimbursed from the tenant’s DLA mobility.

## **Staffing**

- All support staff should have the training and skills required to meet the needs of the tenants.
- Following consultation with the tenants, providers should ensure that there are well planned rotas that are flexible and meet the needs of tenants.
- Providers should ensure that tenants have the opportunity to assist in the selection and induction of new support staff.
- Providers should ensure that staff team meetings are held on a regular basis and documented. Staff team meetings should not be held in the tenants’ home.
- Providers should ensure that tenants’ views are sought and recorded regarding the quality of the service.

## **Social Care and Community Links**

- All tenants should have access to activities (e.g. education, social, leisure, employment), which are based upon their support plan, and day-to-day preferences.
- All tenants should have access to the services of an independent advocate when required.
- Staff should encourage and support tenants to manage their own finances and personal affairs.

- All tenants have access to a telephone, where they can have a private conversation.
- Tenants' post is not opened and read unless this has been agreed in advance and recorded in the support plan. Post is opened and read in the person's presence and in privacy.

## **Records and Administration**

- All personal information should be kept in a locked cupboard, drawer or file, ideally in the tenants own room.
- Tenants should have full access to all information relating to them, in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998) and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- There should be a staff communication system for passing on messages and recording relevant information which should be completed with the tenant.
- There should not be an office within the tenants' home.
- Information collected and held is maintained in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998), and other relevant legislation.

## **Health Care**

- Staff should support each tenant to access appropriate healthcare services and to register with a GP of their choice.
- All tenants are encouraged and supported to receive regular checks from their GP, optician, dentist and chiropodist, where applicable.
- Staff should encourage the promotion of good health.
- Tenants are encouraged to self-administer medicines unless an assessment indicates this presents an unacceptable risk. See also [Home Care Medication and Health Related Activities Policy](#).
- All tenants have the right to refuse medical treatment or care. Where failure to administer a treatment, or provide care, might lead to a substantial deterioration in health, an urgent review should be called.
- Staff should follow the employer's medication policy for the administration, storage and disposal of medication.

- Staff should encourage the use of appropriate aids and adaptations for daily living, according to the needs of the tenants.
- All support staff should be trained in basic First Aid.

### **Expectations of the Provider**

- Tenants will have an Individual Tenancy Agreement. In addition to this an accessible format version will be made available and support will be provided to explain its implications.
- Complaints should be dealt with promptly. Full responses must be given in line with the support provider's complaints policy and procedures.
- On-call management arrangements should be in place for all supported living services.
- Arrangements must be in place for communication between landlord and tenant for such issues as repairs, neighbour disputes or any other issues related to the property.
- Tenants and their representatives should have access to all Derbyshire Adult Care and the providers' policies and procedures, which relate to Supported Living Services.