

UT COMPLIANCE

A TRADING NAME OF UNIQUE TENDERS LIMITED

POLICY DOCUMENT

Notifications Policy

UT Compliance

SUPPORTED LIVING

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CONFIDENTIAL DOCUMENT

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1. Scope

This Notifications Policy applies to all employees, contractors, volunteers, and service users within 's supported living services in England. The policy outlines the procedures and responsibilities for reporting significant events, safeguarding incidents, operational changes, and any other issues that require notification to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) or other relevant regulatory bodies.

The policy covers:

- **All Staff and Contractors:** Responsible for understanding and adhering to notification requirements, promptly identifying and reporting any significant events, safeguarding issues, or incidents. Staff play an essential role in maintaining the safety, transparency, and accountability of 's services.
- **Registered Manager (), Data Protection Officer (), and Health and Safety Officer (**):** Key roles tasked with overseeing compliance with notification regulations, ensuring that all reportable events are submitted to the CQC within the required timeframes, reviewing incidents, and maintaining clear documentation.
- **Service Users and Families:** values transparency with service users and their families, keeping them informed about significant events or incidents that impact their care. Families are encouraged to voice any concerns they may have regarding incidents or reportable events.

Aligned with CQC Regulations 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18, this policy ensures that remains compliant with all notification requirements. By following a clear structure and adopting a transparent approach, promotes the safety, dignity, and well-being of service users and accountability across all aspects of care and operations.

2. Legal and Regulatory Framework

| Term/Regulation | Description/Definition |
|--|---|
| CQC Regulation 14 – Meeting Nutritional and Hydration Needs | Requires providers to notify the CQC if there are significant changes or incidents regarding a service user's nutritional or hydration needs, ensuring transparency and safeguarding. |
| CQC Regulation 15 – Premises and Equipment | Mandates providers to report incidents that affect the safety or quality of premises and equipment, protecting service users from harm. |
| CQC Regulation 16 – Receiving and Acting on Complaints | Outlines requirements for reporting serious complaints that impact the health and well-being of service users to the CQC. |
| CQC Regulation 17 – Good Governance | Requires accurate record-keeping and timely notifications to maintain accountability, transparency, and effective service management. |
| CQC Regulation 18 – Staffing | Mandates reporting of any significant staffing changes, absences, or issues impacting the safe delivery of care, ensuring continuity and safety of services. |
| Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR | Governs the handling and storage of any personal data included in notifications, ensuring compliance with data protection regulations. |

3. Definitions of Key Terms

| Term | Definition |
|------------------------------|---|
| Notification | The required submission of information to the CQC or other relevant regulatory bodies about significant events, incidents, or changes affecting service delivery or service user welfare. |
| CQC | The Care Quality Commission, the independent regulator of health and social care services in England, responsible for monitoring compliance with standards and regulations. |
| Safeguarding Incident | Any situation or event that may cause harm or risk to a service user, requiring immediate notification to protect their safety and well-being. |
| Significant Event | An event or incident that affects the health, safety, or well-being of service users, including accidents, medical emergencies, and serious complaints. |
| Person-Centred Care | An approach to care that places the individual's needs, preferences, and values at the forefront of all decisions and actions. |
| Good Governance | The practice of maintaining effective oversight, transparency, accountability, and compliance in service delivery and operations. |

4. Policy Statement

is committed to ensuring that all required notifications are submitted accurately, promptly, and transparently to regulatory bodies, specifically the CQC. This policy establishes a clear framework to manage reportable events and incidents, enabling to uphold high standards of accountability, safety, and compliance in all areas of service provision.

Our approach to notifications is rooted in the following principles:

- Commitment to Compliance:** We adhere to all notification regulations as outlined by the CQC and other regulatory bodies, ensuring that reportable events are identified, documented, and submitted promptly. Compliance with these regulations underscores our dedication to transparency, risk management, and safeguarding.
- Transparency and Accountability:** We believe in a culture of openness and accountability, where significant events and incidents are documented and addressed transparently. This approach supports both the safety of service users and the ethical obligations of to operate with integrity and honesty in all notifications.
- Person-Centred and Family-Inclusive Approach:** In all aspects of notification and reporting, prioritises the comfort, safety, and dignity of service users. Our notification practices are designed to keep service users and their families informed and involved in decisions that impact their well-being, fostering trust and confidence in our care services.
- Continuous Improvement:** regularly reviews notification practices and incidents, integrating feedback and lessons learned to refine procedures and enhance service quality. We strive to continuously improve our approach to notifications, ensuring that staff remain vigilant, informed, and proactive in all reporting activities.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

| Role | Responsibilities |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| All Staff | Identify and report incidents, significant events, or changes that require notification, document information accurately, and follow established procedures for notifying the Registered Manager. |
| Registered Manager () | Ensures all notifications are submitted accurately and within required timeframes, reviews incident reports, maintains documentation, and provides guidance to staff on notification procedures. |
| Health and Safety Officer () | Ensures all incidents affecting premises and equipment are reported, collaborates with the Registered Manager for safety-related notifications, and conducts assessments as needed. |
| Data Protection Officer () | Ensures that any personal data included in notifications complies with data protection standards, including secure storage, handling, and adherence to GDPR. |
| Safeguarding Lead () | Assists in reporting safeguarding incidents, collaborates with relevant authorities, and ensures service users' safety during the investigation of any reportable safeguarding events. |

6. Procedures

has developed structured procedures to ensure that all reportable events are managed effectively and communicated promptly to relevant authorities. These procedures establish a clear pathway for identifying, documenting, and submitting notifications, ensuring compliance with CQC standards and safeguarding service users' safety and well-being.

- **Identifying Reportable Events:** Staff are trained to recognise incidents and events that require notification, including safeguarding incidents, significant changes in service user health, deaths, accidents, complaints, and staffing issues that may affect the quality of care. Staff are expected to report these events immediately to the Registered Manager () for further assessment.
- **Documentation and Reporting:** All incidents are documented in detail, including descriptions of the event, individuals involved, actions taken, and outcomes. This documentation is reviewed by the Registered Manager to confirm the necessity for notification, ensuring that reports are accurate, thorough, and compliant with regulatory standards.
- **Submitting Notifications to CQC and Other Authorities:** The Registered Manager is responsible for submitting notifications to the CQC within the required timeframes, using the appropriate reporting channels. Notifications include all pertinent information, including the nature of the incident, any actions taken to address it, and follow-up plans. This ensures regulatory compliance and maintains clear communication with the CQC.
- **Data Protection in Notification:** The Data Protection Officer () ensures that any personal data included in notifications complies with GDPR standards. This includes secure handling, access limitations, and proper storage of sensitive information related to reportable events, safeguarding the privacy of service users and staff.
- **Communication with Service Users and Families:** is committed to transparent communication with service users and their families. Service users and families are informed of any incidents or changes impacting their care in a respectful and timely manner. This open communication builds trust and ensures that they are kept informed and involved in matters related to their well-being.

- **Follow-Up and Corrective Actions:** After an incident has been notified, conducts an internal review to assess the root causes and identify corrective actions. This may involve revisiting procedures, providing additional staff training, or adjusting practices to prevent future incidents. Documentation of corrective actions supports continuous improvement and ensures that lessons are applied to enhance safety and quality.

7. Training and Development

To ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities and are equipped to manage notifications effectively, provides a comprehensive training and development program. This program covers the identification of reportable events, documentation practices, notification procedures, and the legal obligations related to CQC notifications. Through ongoing education, ensures that staff remain vigilant, informed, and capable of maintaining high standards of safety, compliance, and transparency.

- **Induction Training for New Staff:** As part of their induction, new staff members receive training on identifying and documenting incidents that require notification. This training introduces new employees to the types of events that must be reported, the process for notifying the Registered Manager (), and the importance of timely and accurate notifications to the CQC and other regulatory bodies. Induction training also emphasises the role of staff in promoting transparency and accountability.
- **Annual Refresher Training:** All staff participate in annual refresher training that reinforces best practices in incident reporting, documentation, and notification submission. Refresher training includes updates on any changes in CQC notification standards, examples of reportable events, and case studies that help staff apply notification principles in real-life scenarios. This training helps maintain staff awareness, ensuring they are prepared to respond to any event requiring notification.
- **Specialised Training for Key Personnel:** Key personnel, including the Registered Manager (), Health and Safety Officer (), and Data Protection Officer (), receive additional training in regulatory compliance, incident assessment, and data protection in notifications. This specialised training enables them to oversee the notification process, manage complex incidents, and guide other team members as needed, ensuring that notifications are handled efficiently and in compliance with legal requirements.
- **Workshops and Scenario-Based Learning:** Periodic workshops are held to give staff hands-on experience in handling different notification scenarios. These workshops include scenario-based exercises where staff can practice identifying reportable incidents, documenting them accurately, and following through with notification procedures. By practising these skills, staff become more confident in handling reportable events and supporting the notification process.
- **Ongoing Education and Resources:** makes additional resources available to staff, including guidelines, instructional materials, and updates on notification standards. Staff have access to policy documents, online modules, and examples of reportable events to reinforce their understanding of notification responsibilities. This commitment to continuous education fosters a proactive, informed workforce that upholds high standards of safety and compliance.

8. Monitoring and Review

To ensure the effectiveness of notification practices and maintain compliance with regulatory standards, has established a robust process for monitoring and reviewing notification procedures. This process includes regular audits, incident reviews, and feedback mechanisms that allow the organisation to assess compliance, identify areas for improvement, and adapt practices to meet evolving standards.

- **Quarterly Audits of Notification Compliance:** The Registered Manager () conducts quarterly audits to review notification

practices, assess the accuracy and timeliness of submitted notifications, and verify compliance with CQC standards. These audits examine incident documentation, the thoroughness of notification submissions, and adherence to reporting timeframes. Audit findings are documented, and any identified areas for improvement are addressed through corrective actions.

- **Annual Policy Review and Updates:** This Notifications Policy is reviewed annually to ensure it remains aligned with current legislation, CQC requirements, and best practices. During the review, feedback from staff, audit results, and updates in regulatory guidance are considered to inform policy adjustments. The Registered Manager and Health and Safety Officer () ensure that any changes are communicated to all staff, with additional training provided as needed to support revised procedures.
- **Incident Review and Trend Analysis:** All reportable incidents are reviewed periodically to identify patterns, recurring issues, or areas requiring additional focus. The Registered Manager, in collaboration with the Safeguarding Lead () and Data Protection Officer (), conducts trend analyses on notifications to determine if there are systemic issues that need to be addressed. This review helps inform proactive adjustments to practices and supports a culture of continuous improvement in incident management and reporting.
- **Service User and Family Feedback:** Feedback from service users and their families is actively sought to assess the effectiveness of notification practices. gathers this feedback through surveys, informal discussions, and family meetings, creating opportunities for service users and families to share their experiences and insights. This feedback is used to identify areas where notification practices can be improved, ensuring that service users and their families feel informed, respected, and involved in their care.
- **Documentation and Record-Keeping:** All monitoring activities, including audit results, incident reviews, and trend analysis reports, are documented and securely stored in compliance with data protection regulations. These records provide a comprehensive history of monitoring activities, ensuring transparency and accountability, and support compliance verification during internal and external audits.

9. Reporting Concerns

A clear and accessible reporting process is essential to ensure that any concerns related to notifications are identified and addressed promptly. is committed to fostering an environment where staff, service users, and families can report notification-related concerns safely and confidently, supporting a culture of transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement.

- **Immediate Reporting to Management:** Staff are encouraged to report any concerns regarding notification practices directly to the Registered Manager () or Data Protection Officer (). This process enables prompt investigation, ensuring that any issues related to notification compliance are identified and addressed quickly. Immediate reporting minimises the risk of non-compliance and promotes accountability.
- **Confidential Whistleblowing Policy:** has a confidential whistleblowing policy that allows staff to report concerns anonymously if they feel uncomfortable raising issues directly. This policy ensures that staff can report concerns about notification practices without fear of retaliation, promoting a culture of openness and integrity. Whistleblower protections are in place to uphold confidentiality and encourage staff to speak up about any potential issues.
- **Documentation and Tracking of Reported Concerns:** All reported concerns related to notifications are thoroughly documented and tracked from initial report through to resolution. The Registered Manager maintains a record of each concern, including actions taken to address it and any corrective measures implemented. This documentation supports accountability, provides insight into potential systemic issues, and helps identify patterns or trends that may require further attention.
- **Escalation of Serious Concerns:** If a reported concern suggests a significant risk to regulatory compliance or service user

safety, will escalate the issue to relevant external authorities, such as the CQC or safeguarding bodies. This escalation ensures that serious concerns receive the appropriate level of attention and are addressed in compliance with regulatory expectations, protecting the well-being of all individuals involved.

- **Support and Guidance for Reporting Individuals:** provides support and guidance to individuals who report concerns, ensuring they receive clear information about the reporting process and are treated with respect and fairness. The Registered Manager and Health and Safety Officer () offer reassurance, follow-up communication, and support, fostering a supportive environment for transparent issue resolution.
- **Regular Training on Reporting Procedures:** Staff receive regular training on how to report concerns related to notifications, including examples, case studies, and discussions on the importance of ethical reporting. This training ensures that all staff understand their responsibilities in identifying and raising concerns, supporting a culture of vigilance and accountability that prioritises safety and compliance.

Through these reporting procedures, ensures that any issues related to notifications are identified, reported, and managed effectively. By promoting a transparent, accessible, and safe reporting culture, upholds high standards of care and accountability, ensuring that notifications are handled responsibly and compliantly.

Policy Approval & Review

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| APPROVED BY | SIGNATURE <i>No signature on file</i> |
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