



Service User Handbook



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Registered Provider: Just Ask Care and Support cic Tel: 01756 792834

Registered Manager: Steve Hulbert

Philosophy of care

Our domiciliary care service aims to:

- Offer skilled care to enable people to live safely and independently in their own homes as well as helping to achieve their optimum state of health and wellbeing.
- Treat all people who use and work for Just Ask with respect at all times.
- Uphold the human and citizenship rights of all who live, work, and visit here.
- Support individual choice and personal decision-making as the right of all service users.
- Respect and encourage the right of independence of all service users.
- Recognise the individual uniqueness of service users and staff by always treating them with dignity and respect.
- Always respect an individual's requirement for privacy and treat all information relating to individuals in a confidential manner.

Principles and Values Underpinning Our Services

Just Ask Care and Support consider its management team and employees to be the key factor in the delivery of quality support. We believe that the success of Just Ask is dependent upon developing and maintaining enthusiastic, caring, trained, and valued workforce. Our principles and values are to provide a high standard of personalised care and support to all service users. It is our aim that all service users will be treated with care, dignity, respect, and sensitivity that match their individual needs and desired outcomes. Our service will be delivered flexibly, within our limitations and in an attentive and non-discriminatory fashion with respect for independence, privacy, and the right to make informed choices. We will respect the needs and values of service users in matters of religion, beliefs, culture, race, ethnic origin, and sexuality. Our staff will encourage all service users to maintain where possible their social and cultural links with the community and encourage participation in activities. We encourage all service users to be involved in all aspects of service provision.

Becoming a service user

The first step is for our Care Manager or Registered Manager will visit you at your home.

The Care Manager or Registered Manager will discuss with you your individual requirements and the range of services that Just Ask Care and Support are able to provide. This process will be formalised into an initial assessment of your needs, which should form the basis for a decision by both you and Just Ask as to whether admission to Just Ask is appropriate. In keeping with all records regarding service users, the assessment(s) will be made with your full knowledge, and/or the involvement of your relative, friend, or advocate. Your assessment records will be shown to you and will be available to you at any time.

The Care Manager or Registered Manager will visit you in your home, or in hospital if necessary, and will complete a detailed assessment with you. This initial set of information will form part of your Support Plan, which illustrates and reviews how your family and our staff gain an understanding of how we can use our skills and experience to contribute towards overall improvements to your health and wellbeing.

If you have any questions please discuss them with your support worker, or contact the Care Manager or Registered Manager, who will be very happy to answer any queries.

Privacy of service users

The service user also has a right to privacy regarding both their personal affairs. Written permission, whenever practical, will be sought for access to service users' records, especially in cases where the person or agency requesting the records is not involved in the direct care and support of the individual concerned.

Confidentiality of information

The service user's rights to confidentiality must be always safeguarded. Our staff will not disclose any personal information about service users to a third party unless this has been agreed with the service user concerned or their advocate. Agreement to disclose information should only be sought if this is for the benefit of the service user, e.g., for the purpose of assisting in their care and support with other relevant professionals.

Access to information

Every service user has a right to information about the objectives of their care and a detailed explanation of the service being offered. All service users must be enabled to participate in the planning of their care and consent must be obtained for all interventions.

Discrimination

Our staff must not discriminate against service users on the grounds of race, nationality, language, gender, religion and beliefs, age, sex or sexual orientation, disability, or social standing. Our team must not discriminate between service users who pay directly for their service and those who do not.

Personal dignity, independence, and individuality

Irrespective of the nature and severity of their physical difficulties or mental infirmity, the personal dignity, independence, and individuality of the service user will be respected and always maintained. The support worker must recognise and respect, regardless of circumstances, the uniqueness of each service user and their intrinsic value as an individual. Dignity in social care occurs when each person is valued and treated with respect in all aspects of their daily life, regardless of their circumstances or level of dependence. Just Ask will ensure that service users deliver skilled and sensitive care to enable the service user to achieve the highest possible degree of independence, choice, and control, thereby enhancing their quality of life.

Fulfilment of aspirations

To have their social, emotional, spiritual, cultural, political, and sexual needs acknowledged and respected. Service users will be enabled to achieve their potential capacity – physical, intellectual, emotional, and social. Individuals will be given support and freedom to realise personal aspirations and abilities in all respects of daily life.

Consultation

Service users have a right to be involved in a careful and thorough assessment of their needs and wishes, and to be informed of the outcome. Service users will be consulted about daily living arrangements and enabled to participate in discussions about any proposed changes to those arrangements. Service users will be fully involved in and fully informed about the individual assessment of their care needs. Just Ask's commitment will be to find the best and most effective way of meeting service users' needs and aspirations. Service users will be supported in making informed choices about their future, which should be incorporated into their personal support plan.

Personal choice

The support worker will encourage and help each individual service user to exercise, to their full potential and personal choice in opportunities and lifestyle. The support worker will ensure that the person whom they provide support has a say in decisions about the provision and extent of their support plan, the frequency and regularity at which it is reviewed, and a say in the withdrawal of any service. Where, for reasons of incapacity, the person who is being cared for is not able to participate fully in the development and review of the support plan, consideration will nevertheless be given to their wishes, as far as these are expressed through others and are practical. We welcome the assistance of designated advocates in this context.

Reviews

The service user will have regular reviews of their needs and individual circumstances at which they have a right to be present and/or represented by an advocate or a designated person within their circle of support.

Services information

The service user will be fully informed about the services provided by Just Ask Care and Support.

Legal rights

The service user will be fully informed about their legal rights including their human rights.

Medication

The service user will be fully involved in discussions and informed about their medication needs. They will be supported if required, to make decisions about their medical treatment whenever possible. Service users can be sure that they are protected by the organisation's policies and procedures with regards to safe administration, recording and storage of medicines. Service users will receive medications at the prescribed time and all medical devices will be used in a safe manner by staff and properly maintained.

Family and friends

The service user will be supported to maintain continued access to family, friends, facilities, and the community. This will include support to form personal relationships.

Supporting independence of service users

The service user will be supported to take risks to the extent that they do so based on their own informed opinions. Service users will have the opportunity to think, act and make decisions without reference to another person, and without other unreasonable restrictions. This will include the capacity to incur a degree of calculated risk.

The principles outlined above must be guided by prior commitments imposed by health and safety or statutory requirements.

Confidentiality

Our policy is that any information about service users is strictly confidential and that maintaining a position of trust in this regard is paramount. However, because some information is relevant to providing quality care, such information will be shared with members of staff who may support you. The service user or, where appropriate, the Care Manager, Registered Manager or advocate will be consulted before information is shared.

- Information about service users will be held electronically on Just Ask's computer systems and treated in a strictly confidential manner.
- Information about service users is needed to enable staff to provide proper support and treatment.
- Some of the information may also be used for other purposes, such as:
 - Making sure services meet the individual needs of service users.
 - Helping staff to review the support they provide to service users to help them achieve the highest possible standards.
 - Investigating complaints or legal claims.
 - Auditing of our services.

Sometimes information about your needs may be passed on to other agencies or organisations, for example, if you are receiving care or support from a GP or hospital. The types of organisations with whom we may share information about you are:

- GPs.
- District nurses.
- Other health professionals.
- Social workers including care coordinators or care brokers.
- The Care Quality Commission.

Gifts, wills and other documents

Employees are expressly forbidden to act as witnesses to the signature of any documents such as wills and testaments. Neither employees nor Just Ask may be a beneficiary under a Will of any past or present service user. Gifts to staff are subject a client's mental capacity and may only be of small value.

Service user's personal fulfilment

The aim of Just Ask Care and Support is to actively help service users to lead fulfilling lives within the limits of their abilities and wishes, and to recognise and cater for those who do not wish to be active or socialise.

Staff will take an interest in things that service users have done in the past and discuss current interests, particularly those that they wish to retain. They will assist service users to enhance and maintain their skills and in following their interests if they so wish, by facilitating a varied range of new skills and interests for service users to pursue if so desired.

All service users are equal and unique human beings and will be offered help and services according to their own unique needs, irrespective of age, race, gender, sexuality, culture, or state of health.

Risk taking and risk management

Staff at Just Ask Care and Support understand that there is a delicate and difficult balance between service users' self-determination in risk-taking, and the responsibility of support workers to protect service users from self-harm or from unintentionally harming others. The issue is further complicated when a service user may not be able to make informed decisions or choices, for instance because of communication or mental capacity difficulties, and risk assessments will be completed to minimise risk in aspects of daily living activities.

The assessment of risk is addressed as part of the assessment process for each person and the results are integrated into the support plan. By this process of integration, the views of the service user, Care Manager, family members and professional advisors will be taken fully into account, as part of the multiagency and integrated service user planning process.

Service users and equal opportunities

All service users have the right to practice their beliefs, religion or culture without constraint by restrictive or discriminatory practice. Complaints of discriminatory practice will be thoroughly investigated, and the results of the investigation made known to the complainant and appropriate action taken in accordance with policies, procedures, and regulations. All complaints will be recorded in such a way as to highlight repeated problems.

Smoking

In accordance with legislation, Just Ask requests that all service users refrain from smoking at least one hour before the support worker attends and the room/property is ventilated as much as possible before their arrival. Service users are requested not to smoke while the support worker is in attendance unless they are agreeable.

Fire precautions

Just Ask Care and Support carries out fire risk assessment on the service user's premises and takes steps to ensure that the risk of fire is minimised. Just Ask staff are trained to avoid fire risks and to take steps for everyone's safety in the event of a fire.

Hobbies, interests and activities

Your special interests and hobbies will be discussed during your assessment and noted in your support plan. If you have any special interests, please let us know so that we can plan for you to continue with them.

Religious observances

Religious observance is supported according to the wishes of individuals.

Services available:

- **Shopping**

Should you wish to go shopping, your support worker will accompany you if you wish providing it has been agreed in your support plan and is scheduled in advance.

- **Transport**

All service users will be supported to have access to a vehicle for personal transport, if required, and all efforts will be made to assist the service user in enhancing and retaining their independence.

Taxis can be arranged (charged to the service user at the cost and an estimate of cost will be obtained should a request be made to the staff), if necessary, for relevant appointments where other arrangements cannot be made.

- **Meals**

Should you require meals to be prepared, your support worker will do this for you and endeavour to meet your personal needs/preferences. All support workers who provide meals have achieved a qualification in food hygiene.

Keeping pets

Wherever possible, keeping of pets will be encouraged on the basis of their beneficial and positive influence on service users' lives. However, the upkeep of pets including food and general wellbeing will be the sole responsibility of the service user. Members of staff will only play a minimal role in looking after pets. Service users are advised to take out comprehensive pet insurance.

Medication review

All service users who either self-medicate or have their medicine administered to them will undergo a periodic review of prescribed medication with their GPs. Our Registered Manager will support each service user to facilitate this as part of their ongoing support with meeting health needs.

Fees

You will be given a service user contract together with this handbook. In brief the fees are:

- If you are fully self-supporting, meaning that you are not in receipt of support from a social services department, then you are personally responsible for the full fee quoted, and should plan for regular payments to be made to Just Ask, for example by cheque or bank transfer. Fees are payable in arrears.

Privately funded service users whose capital is declining should note that there is a level at which they may become eligible for support from social services. An application should be made for this support well in advance of reaching the relevant capital level to ensure both continued payment of fees, and preservation of capital.

- If you are supported by a social services or another public body, then your fees are paid for in full by them directly to Just Ask
- Alternatively, you may be in using the Direct Payments option offered by social services, whereby they will transfer an agreed monetary value into your bank account, and you will be personally responsible for paying invoices from Just Ask on a monthly basis.

Key workers

For you to receive quality care, we have a Care Manager and Registered Manager who will identify your needs with you and ensure that they can be met through a support plan to ensure that your health gains are maximised. The Care Manager and Registered Manager will ensure that your rights and choices are respected, such as what time you like to rise and retire, what you prefer to wear, what you want to eat etc.

The Care Manager or Registered Manager will undertake an assessment with you to establish your preferred name, personal circumstances, personal history, and your social and medical circumstances, all of which will be entered into your support plan.

The Care Manager or Registered Manager will also assess your psychological and physical capabilities. Previous work experience, hobbies, and preferences regarding activities and food likes and dislikes will be recorded, and a personal program of care and support devised accordingly.

The Care Manager or Registered Manager will be the point of contact for you and your relatives and will be available to answer any questions. They will also arrange for meetings to review your support plan periodically with you and your family, friends or advocate, and to measure the progress of your care program in relation to realistic goal setting.

Inappropriate behaviour

Inappropriate behaviour is the systematic maltreatment, or physical, sexual, emotional, or financial abuse of one person by another. Just Ask Care and Support is committed to preventing inappropriate behaviour and if a service user, support worker, friend or relative has any concerns in this area they should discuss this immediately with our Care Manager or Registered Manager or use the formal complaints procedure.

Service users, principal support workers and relatives will be kept informed of the progress of the investigation into any complaint.

Complaints and protection

It is our aim to protect service users from abuse and we have a duty of care to always safeguard your wellbeing. We will implement the multi-disciplinary agency protection of vulnerable adults procedure should it be necessary, as we will not tolerate any form of abusive practice within the service.

We have clear guidance to ensure that our service users are cared for in a safe and none-threatening environment. We have clear policies and protocols, and our staff are fully trained and competent in their roles to prevent abuse from occurring.

Our complaints procedure is detailed below, and service users can be represented by a friend, adviser or advocate if they so wish, to raise any concerns you or they may have regarding any aspect of their care/support or the running of Just Ask. Any concerns in the first instance should be brought to the attention of the Registered Manager.

Complaints procedure

Should you wish to speak to a manager, for whatever reason, please do not hesitate to contact:

Steve Hulbert – Managing Director

Just Ask Care and Support cic
Suite F3, Birkbeck
Water Street
Skipton
BD23 1PB

Telephone: 01756 792834 Monday to Friday 8.30 – 5.00 Email: admin@justaskcare.org

- Should the office be unattended there is an answer phone to record your message. However, should you require emergency or out-of-hours help, please phone our mobile number: **07435 558971**
- From time-to-time clients or their representatives may have cause for complaint or wish to make a comment about the service or service providers.
- If you should wish to make a complaint, it will not affect the service delivered by Just Ask.
- Your complaint will be acknowledged, and contact will be made within 48 hours of receiving the complaint. Investigation of the complaint will take place within 5 working days.
- A record of all complaints will be kept including details of investigation and action taken. Copies of the above will be placed on the personal file of clients and kept in the office of Just Ask.
- All complaints to Just Ask Care and Support will be dealt with and acted upon in a confidential manner.
- As part of our commitment to good practice we follow policies and procedures, which are continually being updated.
- Clients or their representatives can leave feedback using the 'contact us' page of our website.
- In the event that you have cause for concern or wish to complain about the services provided by Just Ask Care and Support, you can contact either of the organisation's detailed below:

NYCC Adult Social Services
North Yorkshire County Council
County Hall
Northallerton
North Yorkshire
DL7 8AD
Tel: 01274 437765

or

Care Quality Commission
St Nicholas Building
St Nicholas Streets
Newcastle-upon-Tyne
NE1 1NB

Tel: 0191 233 3300