



Tower Hamlets GP Care Group Lone Worker policy

Date Issued	1 st March 2017
Date to be reviewed	Periodically or if statutory changes are required
Title	Lone Worker Policy
Supersedes	All previous Policies
This policy will impact on	All staff
Financial Implications	No change
Policy Area	Corporate
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Issued By	Ruth Walters
Author	Ruth Walters
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Approval Record

	Committees / Groups / Individual	Date
Consultation	Governance Committee HR Team Director of Health Visiting	2/2/2017
Approved by	Dr Joe Hall Chair, Governance Committee	2/3/17



Lone Worker Policy

Purpose & Scope

To reduce risks associated with 'lone working' for staff working within the THGPCG. This procedure reflects the NHS TH (2009) and NHS Security Management Services guidelines for protecting lone workers in the NHS (2005). This document applies to all situations involving lone working which results from the duties and activities of THGPCG staff.

Principles

1. All staff visiting clients in their own home should have access to a mobile phone
2. All visits must be recorded in advance in a diary which is visible to the central team
3. All staff visiting clients in their own home must have the contact number for the manager/ Service Lead on duty

Responsibilities

Party	Key Responsibilities
Clinical Leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring all staff are aware of the Lone Worker Procedure Establishing local safe working arrangements Identifying staff who are lone workers and ensuring that appropriate induction, training and updating is undertaken as necessary Monitoring and supervision of lone workers Ensuring that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident and managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through a system of investigating incidents
Lone Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their actions Cooperate with rules and procedures for lone working Identifying and advising managers of any concerns or issues regarding processes and procedures involved in lone working Reporting any incidents and asking for guidance as appropriate Taking part in any training as appropriate

Procedure

In most situations, home visiting will pose minimal threat to the safety of staff. The purpose of this document is to anticipate any potential threats and take reasonable steps to manage the identified risks.

1. Referral

- Referring services must review the records to assess known risks and complete the referral form, ensuring that any relevant risk factors are noted in the appropriate place. Incomplete referral forms will be returned.
- Where there is little information available consider the possibility of the first consultation taking place in the practice or where this is not possible consider a joint visit.

2. Before Visits

- Where possible, assess the risks to safety associated with the environment to be visited. Plan all visits in daylight hours where possible
- Where shoes and clothing that do not hinder movement or ability to run in case of emergency
- Ensure that your mobile phone is charged and working before leaving the base office. Programme the work base telephone numbers into the phone so it can be speed dialed.



3. High Risk Visits

- These will only take place after discussion with the Clinical Lead and will only be carried out when two members of staff are available for a joint visit.
- Unplanned visits in the Out of Hours service are undertaken by a GP with a car driver facilitating the visit. The car driver and the visiting GP will exchange telephone numbers and a routine telephone call to the GP will be made 15 minutes after the visit has started. If there is no response or the driver has a concern re the staff member's safety he/she will call 999 and request assistance then inform the OOH base. If there are concerns regarding the risks to staff members in undertaking a visit due to previous experience or a warning alert from practice staff staff may request a police escort or persuade the patient to come to the ED for a review by staff there.

4. During Visits

- Carry staff identification at all times and be prepared to identify yourself
- Remain alert to your surroundings, take note of how doors open and look for potential exit routes
- Wherever practical avoid being in the situation where the patient, carer or relative is between you and the exit
- If a situation arises where you feel uncomfortable be prepared to make an excuse to renegotiate an alternative arrangement
- If there is any perceived or real threat of violence leave immediately and inform the Clinical Lead by telephone

5. Travelling

- Do not display your ID badge whilst travelling, but you must always carry it with you.
- Avoid, where possible, carrying personal items of value such as personal phones, money and keys.
- Avoid displaying items of value whilst travelling
- If someone attempts to steal belongings, whether personal or work property, relinquish it immediately without challenge
- If you see someone who appears to be in distress or requiring help consider the risks associated with stopping to offer assistance
- If you think you are being followed proceed to a place of increased safety such as a busy street, shop or one of the practices
- Be aware of your location and be alert to people around you
- Walk briskly and avoid stopping in areas that are not known to you
- Avoid stopping at cash machines

6. Dealing with Animals

- If you confronted by an aggressive animal during a patient or service user avoid any confrontation and request that the animal be restrained.
- If necessary, abandon the visit and report the incident to the Clinical Lead

7. Incidents

- Proceed immediately to a safer place
- Summon assistance or ask someone to do this for you (this may include emergency services)
- Telephone the Clinical Lead
- Clinical Lead to facilitate a meeting to discuss the need for further support and identify any learning to prevent future occurrence



References

NHS SMS (2005) Not Alone: A Good Practice Guide for the Better Protection of Lone Workers in the NHS Security Management Service

NHS TH (2009) Lone Worker Procedure NHS Tower Hamlets