


PREMISES GENERAL, WELFARE AND ENVIRONMENT

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Policy Statement

We aim to provide a homely, welcoming environment for our residents, but we are mindful that they are also workplaces. Workplace legislation is varied and complex and this policy has a wide-ranging content encompassing general workplace environments including internal and external areas of the home.

The Policy

It is important that regular assessments of the premises, both internal and external, are undertaken and that any repairs, risks identified are dealt with in a timely manner. All assessments are recorded and are monitored and audited as part of our Health and Safety Quality assurance system

a) **Asbestos:** Asbestos is likely to be present if the building was constructed or refurbished between 1950 and 2000, particularly where it has a steel frame and or boilers with thermal insulation. An asbestos survey is undertaken in order to identify exposure risks for employees and residents where there is no or limited information on the premises.

-  Its location
-  The type of material (lagging, tiles, partition) etc.
-  Its condition
-  The type of asbestos (blue, brown or white)
-  If asbestos is in poor condition
-  **IN THIS HOME THERE IS NO ASBESTOS**

b) **Radon:** Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that can seep out of the ground and build up in houses and indoor workplace located in a “radon-affected area”. Information on whether you care home is located in a radon affected area, and the degree of likely risk, can be found on the UK radon website (www.ukradon.org)











The highest levels are usually found in underground spaces such as basements. High concentrations can also be found in ground floor buildings because they are usually slightly lower pressure than the surrounding atmosphere, allowing radon from subsoil to enter through cracks and gaps in the floor, if appropriate precautions are not taken.

Radon assessment should be carried out on any building or basement where its location and characteristics suggest that elevated levels may be found and significant exposures to employees and/or other people are possible. Assessment is needed for all workplaces below ground and all workplaces in radon-affected areas. Inexpensive surveys can be carried out by leaving small, plastic, passive detectors in appropriate locations.













c) **Gas Safety:** Gas appliances, and associated pipework, flues and ventilation, are checked for safety at least once a year by Gas Safe registered engineers. Servicing is carried out at the same time to ensure they are maintained in a safe condition. Registered engineers carry out any work on gas appliances and pipework. Liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) installations and service pipework are also inspected and maintained to ensure that they are in a safe condition. Assessments and servicing are carried out by sub-contractors.

d) **Fire Safety:** Although serious fires in care homes are fairly rare, when they do occur they can be catastrophic. Therefore, as an organisation we have responsible for the premises and take precautions to prevent fire. Our fire safety risk assessment is kept up to date, and we use it to ensure that necessary fire safety measures are in place. It identifies what could cause a fire to

start, including:



-  Sources of ignition (e.g. heat or sparks)
-  Material that burn
-  People who may be at risk.
-  Simple control measure includes:
-  Keeping sources of ignition and flammable substances apart;
-  Ensuring good housekeeping (eg avoid build-up of rubbish);
-  Considering how to detect fires and how to warn people quickly if they start-special arrangements may be required where residents have mobility issues;
-  Having the correct fire-fighting equipment, ensuring these are correctly maintained;
-  Keeping fire exist and escape routes clearly marked and unobstructed;
-  Ensuring your workers receive appropriate training.

e) **Working at Heights:** Before working at height all staff must assess the risk through working through these following steps.

-  avoid work at height where it is reasonably practicable to do so
-  where work at height cannot be avoided, prevent falls using either an existing place of work that is already safe and or the right type of equipment
-  minimise the distance and consequences of a fall, by using the right type of equipment where the risk cannot be eliminated
-  do as much work as possible from the ground
-  ensure they and others can get safely to and from where they work at height
-  ensure equipment is suitable, stable and strong enough for the job, maintained and checked regularly
-  make sure they don't overload or overreach when working at height
-  take precautions when working on or near fragile surfaces
-  provide protection from falling objects
-  consider the emergency evacuation and rescue procedures
-  if a ladder is the right piece of equipment for these activities it must be the right type, and that it is checked, in a safe condition, and used safely.
-  Where safety fixtures and fittings are installed, you must ensure they are functioning effectively and have not deteriorated as a result of use, wear or tampering.

f) **Contractors:** Contractors can include window cleaners, gardeners and contract cleaners. Both we and the contractor have responsibility for health and safety and together with the contractor we ensure that adequate risk assessments are in place to reduce the risk to employees, the contractor's employees and others in the care home. It is our responsibility when using a contractor to do work at height to ensure they are doing the work safely and are not putting others at risk, e.g. taking safe access into account and providing protection from falling objects.

g) **Outside areas and vehicles movements:** It is important for our residents, visitors, staff and members of the general public to ensure that the garden and outdoor areas, such as ponds, steps/paths, greenhouses, swimming pools or balconies, do not pose a significant risk. We carry out risk assessments and where ever possible manage the risk so that the outdoor environment and their participation in activities is not unduly restricted. The movement of vehicles around the care home can be a risk to resident, visitors and employees. When assessing the risk, we consider three key areas:

-  Are the outside areas safe? Has the safety of vehicle routes and speeds, parking, lighting, location and unloading of deliveries, visibility and signage, driving surfaces and segregating people and vehicles been assessed?
-  Is the vehicle safe? Work vehicles, e.g. for transporting residents, are they safe for their intended use?



Are people safe? Do visitor and contractors follow the arrangements we have in place, and are employees safe to transport residents?

- h) **Doors and gates:** Doors and gates in areas of the building where residents have access are designed so they can be opened easily and are not be fitted with strong self-closers. In some instances, where it does not cause an obstruction, we have re-hung some doors to open outwards, eg in toilets and bathrooms, as this improves access for emergency access to areas where staff may need to assist a resident. Locks that can be overridden by staff in the event of emergencies are in place in these areas. The security of doors and gates are assessed especially where it has been identified that specific residents leaving the premises will present a significant risk to their safety. In some instances devices that alert staff of resident's location and whether they are at risk of harm have been installed. Where any doors or gates are accessed via a key code system, due regard must be given to the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and any DoLS situation which may arise in the use of such systems. Such doors are the nurses' office where medicines are kept and locking is required.
- i) **Ventilation and heating:** Premises need to be adequately ventilated with clean, fresh air in order to provide the right environment for both residents and staff.

Training Statement.

All organisational personnel with H&S responsibilities including maintenance personnel have the appropriate up to date qualifications. The outside contractors and specialists used by this organisation are required to be registered with the appropriate body and produce evidence of their qualifications and registrations.

Related policies
Accident and Incident Reporting (RIDDOR)
Business Contingency and Emergency planning
COSHH
Environmental Management
Good Governance
Health and Safety
Premises Access – staff and Volunteers
Premises and Resources
Risk Assessment