

Nurse24TM HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

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Corporate Policy

General Statement of Intent

Nurse24 Ltd is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for all employees; doing all that is reasonably practicable to establish and maintain high standards of Occupational Safety, Health and Welfare within the organisation so as to reduce risk to those who come into contact with our services.

Nurse24 Ltd will comply with current Health and Safety legislation, Codes of Practice, guidance notes, British standards and any subsequent legislation enacted under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Every employee is personally responsible and accountable for the successful implementation of this policy. To fulfil these responsibilities, Nurse24 Ltd will, so far as reasonably practicable, ensure that arrangements are in place for the following:

- The identification and effective management of significant risks associated with the work undertaken by Nurse24 Ltd
- The identification and implementation of safe working practices and safe systems of work
- The safe use, handling, storage and transportation of articles and substances
- The provision of information, training and supervision to enable all employees to perform their duties safely regarding their own Health and Safety as well as the safety of others who are affected by the various activities of Nurse24 Ltd
- A safe workplace and a safe working environment with adequate welfare facilities
- The effective monitoring of performance and commitment towards continuous improvement
- To do all the above whilst maintaining our vision of empowering and enhancing the lives of the service users we support

This policy is fully endorsed by the Director and will be implemented throughout the organisation as a whole. The policy will be brought to the attention of all employees. We will continue to review our Health and Safety policy annually or earlier if circumstances warrant it, to ensure its further development and continuing relevance to the structure and needs of Nurse24 Ltd.

Signed:

Position: Director

Date: 20 September 2022

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1. INTRODUCTION

Nurse24 Ltd attaches the greatest importance to Health and Safety matters and undertakes to conduct its operations in such a way as to ensure the Health and Safety of its employees, service users and anyone who may be affected by our activities.

Nurse24 Ltd shall meet all requirements identified in relevant Health and Safety legislation and provide the funding, time and other resources such are reasonably required to ensure that we comply with legal obligations for Health and Safety.

2. REVIEW OF THE HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY AND SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS

The corporate Health and Safety policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or more frequently as required.

The corporate Health and Safety policy will be reviewed and amended to ensure it reflects the organisation's current business activities and objectives and to ensure it meets current legislative requirements and good practice.

Revisions and amendments to the Health and Safety policy and related policies will be proposed and approved if necessary and revised policy statements will be signed and dated by the Director when renewed.

3. CONSULTATION

The *Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations* (1996) requires employers to consult with all employees on any Health and Safety matters which may affect them. Nurse24 Ltd recognises its duty to consult with employees on all aspects of Health and Safety in accordance with these regulations and the *Safety Representatives and Safety Committee Regulations* (1997). This feedback shall be reported as appropriate, and used as the basis for action plans as required.

4. ORGANISATION FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY

4.1 Statement of Safety Policy to Employees

Nurse24 Ltd shall take all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees by the provision and maintenance of:

- a. An environment that is safe including any equipment that is used which has been tested appropriately for service users
- b. Systems of work that are healthy and safe. These may take the form of written codes of practice or guidance notes, but sometimes may be verbal
- c. Arrangements for the healthy and safe use, handling, storage and transportation of articles, equipment, substances and medication.
- d. Sufficient information, instruction and training to enable employees to carry out their work healthily and safely and to contribute positively to their own Health and Safety at work
- e. An adequate level of trained and competent supervision
- f. A safe place of work, with safe access and exit, paying particular attention to the structure of buildings, electrical installations, drainage, maintenance of floors, steps, stairs, corridors, doorways, fire escape routes and security arrangements which would minimise the risk of incidents
- g. A healthy working environment with effective management control over levels of noise, dust, smoke, fumes, temperature, lighting, ventilation, air pressure, cleanliness, food hygiene and adequate protection against occupational disease and infestation
- h. Arrangements for fire evacuation, first aid cover and other emergency situations
- i. Adequate welfare facilities such as eating, washing and toilet facilities and the provision of suitable protective clothing and equipment
- j. Arrangements for the safe introduction of new machinery, equipment, substances and procedures.

All employees have a responsibility for health and safety, which is written into job descriptions.

4.2 Statement of Safety Policy to Non-Employees

Nurse24 Ltd will, so far as is reasonably practicable, ensure the health and safety of non-employees who encounter, or who may be affected by, the acts or omissions of its employees whilst at work, by identifying the areas of risk and taking the steps that are necessary to minimise those risks.

Identifiable non-employees coming under the protection of Nurse24 Ltd are as follows:

- a. Invited guests and visitors to Nurse24 Ltd premises and offices
- b. Service users
- c. The recipients of work carried out by Nurse24 Ltd employees

This duty will be met by providing and maintaining healthy and safe premises, sites and resources so far as is reasonably practicable; and ensuring sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision as appropriate.

The Director shall ensure that members of the Team shall be properly acquainted with their duties and responsibilities in terms of health, safety and welfare.

4.3 Statement of Safety Policy to Other Organisations

Nurse24 Ltd acknowledges that where its employees are required to work in a location which is controlled by another employer, the appropriate manager shall satisfy themselves that provisions have been made to ensure the health, safety and welfare of those Nurse24 Ltd employees.

Where Nurse24 Ltd undertakes a joint venture with other organisations, the appropriate Manager shall ensure that health and safety responsibilities are allocated, accepted and carried out accordingly. Where legal duties of communication apply, the appropriate manager will ensure that these are met and will maintain appropriate records.

4.4 Health and Safety Responsibilities for Designated Employees and Sub-Contractors

4.4.1 Duties of all Employees and Sub-Contractors

An integral part of Cucumber Recruitment's efforts to promote health and safety in its operation is the need to recognise that all employees have a part to play in promoting health and safety. Each employee must ensure that they follow the standards and procedures laid down in this policy.

Nurse24 Ltd will endeavour to create and develop a working environment in which there is an awareness of the vital importance of health and safety. In seeking to create a positive health and safety culture, Nurse24 Ltd will encourage all employees to participate in developing and practising safe working methods and will encourage all individuals to have a regard for the welfare of themselves and others.

4.4.2 Duties of the Director

So far as is reasonably practicable, the Director:

- Has ultimate responsibility for Health and Safety within Nurse24 Ltd
- Will ensure that adequate financial resources are made available to meet legal obligations under the *Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)* and other relevant health and safety legislation, and Cucumber Recruitment's own policies
- Will, via training, make arrangements for the training of employees on aspects of health and safety relevant to their roles.
- Will, via the Service Managers, ensure that all services/places of work occupied by employees of Nurse24 Ltd fulfil the requirements of current fire legislation and that staff are trained in order to facilitate safe evacuation of buildings in case of fire or other emergencies

4.4.3 Service Directors and Service Managers

So far as is reasonably practicable:

- Have a responsibility to interpret Cucumber Recruitment's Health and Safety policy within their area of control, to ensure its implementation and monitor its effectiveness
- Will identify those employees who have managerial or supervisory responsibilities for health and safety and ensure that they accept, understand and carry out those responsibilities and duties
- Will ensure that adequate money, time and resources are made available to facilitate healthy and safe working conditions in their departments
- Will ensure that all employees receive an appropriate level of information, instruction and training in Health and Safety to carry out their work satisfactorily and shall ensure an adequate level of competent supervision for employees, guests and service users
- Will ensure that all serious accidents are reported and recorded sufficiently and that an

incident report form is completed and investigated by a senior manager

- Will ensure that all reportable accidents, diseases and occurrences – as defined by the *Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (1995)* – are reported to the Health and Safety Executive

4.4.4 All employees of (and all other persons engaged in work on behalf of) Nurse24 Ltd

As identified by the Director and so far as is reasonably practicable:

- Will take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts and omissions at work
- Will co-operate with managers, so far as is necessary, in order that Nurse24 Ltd can carry out its duties
- Will not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse any item which may affect their own or others' health, safety or welfare
- Will make themselves familiar with and conform to Nurse24 Ltd's Health and Safety policy and other relevant codes of safe working practice
- Will always observe all health and safety rules and conform to instructions given by their supervisor
- Will wear appropriate clothing and use any resources or equipment safely
- Will report to their Supervisor all accidents, incident near misses, dangerous occurrences and damages
- Will report to their supervisor any unsafe conditions or practices in their workplace

Note: other persons engaged in work on behalf of Nurse24 Ltd include volunteers, students, trainees, service users and contractors and their employees.

5 ARRANGEMENTS FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING

5.1 Corporate Training

Nurse24 Ltd will provide suitable and sufficient training in health and safety prior to employment, in order for all staff to:

- Familiarise themselves with the company Health and Safety policy and related safety policies and procedures
- Recognise, avoid and manage potentially hazardous situations
- Inform employees about the legal obligations of the company and their obligations as employees in relation to health and safety
- Promote safety awareness and best practice
- Ensure that accidents and incidents are prevented wherever possible and, where they occur, are managed effectively
- Report accidents, incidents, hazards and general health and safety concerns using the appropriate processes and documentation.

Appropriate accredited training will be made available to all staff as required in areas including the following:

- Safeguarding of vulnerable adults
- Health and safety
- Emergency first aid in the workplace
- Fire safety
- Equality and diversity
- Medication administration
- Mental capacity act and deprivation of liberty
- Moving and handling
- Food hygiene

5.2 Local Safety Induction

All new employees on placement should be inducted into and familiarised with the Health and Safety requirements and expectations of specific services, eg, familiarisation with the fire procedure at each different location.

As a minimum the local safety induction should include the following:

- Site safety rules, e.g. local fire procedure
- Identified hazards and control measures, including those involving service users
- Reporting systems for accidents, incidents and concerns
- Company and local safety policies and procedures

Service users, visitors and sub-contractors will also be made familiar with site safety rules, e.g. fire procedure and any identified hazards.

6 SPECIFIC HEALTH AND SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS

In the case of any issues or procedures in relation to health and safety matters, Nurse24 Ltd will pursue the following principles as far as is reasonably practicable:

6.1 Accidents

Accident Investigation

Nurse24 Ltd will thoroughly investigate any accident involving our staff that has caused personal injury to them self or a service user or significant property or resource damage. The causes of the accident will be investigated and relevant steps will be taken to reduce or eliminate the possibility of such an accident recurring. All accidents reported will be reviewed and followed up by the Health and Safety Department of the particular location.

Accident Prevention

Nurse24 Ltd will endeavour to prevent accidents by improving its procedures and

advise on Health and Safety through the training provided and sensible assessment of potential hazards. Accident statistics will be reviewed, and any identified clusters or trends will be investigated, in order that appropriate strategies can be implemented.

6.2 Development of Safe Working Procedures

Safe working procedures and methods of work will be devised and implemented following the identification of risks and the undertaking of risk assessments. Where risks relate to working with individual service users, safe working practices and guidelines will be written into client risk management plans with which all staff will be familiarised with.

6.3 Employer's Liability Insurance

Nurse24 Ltd will maintain up to date Employer's Liability insurance to a maximum of £10,000,000. Every Nurse24 Ltd managed project and premises will have on display a copy of the current Employer's Liability Insurance Certificate.

6.4 Extreme Temperatures

Nurse24 Ltd acknowledges the vulnerability of many of its service users during extended periods of hot and cold weather. Advice and guidance are released by the Health and Safety Department annually, and resources are made available to ensure service users' safety and comfort in extreme conditions ensuring keeping cool in Summer and warm in Winter.

6.5 Fire Prevention

Nurse24 Ltd places a great emphasis on fire prevention and management across the organisation. See Nurse24 Ltd's *Fire Prevention and Safety* policy.

6.6 First Aid

Nurse24 Ltd will attempt to minimise the effects of personal injury by the provision of basic first aid equipment and by providing first aid training to employees where necessary.

6.7 Food Safety

Nurse24 Ltd will endeavour to make certain that, where appropriate, all employees engaged in the handling and preparation of food are in possession of food hygiene certificates or shall attend appropriate training courses to achieve the necessary standards and qualifications, in order to comply with the *Food Safety Act* (1990).

6.8 Personal Safety for Service Users

Nurse24 Ltd staff have a duty to promote personal safety for vulnerable service users. This is to be achieved through:

- Providing information about health and safety in an accessible format appropriate to the needs of the individual. This should include information about emergency arrangements and emergency telephone numbers. Posters to promote health and safety should be used where appropriate in communal areas but care should be taken not to create an

institutional atmosphere.

- Promoting personal and community safety. Service users should be given information on how to report concerns and should be reminded that harassment of people with disabilities is regarded as a hate crime and should be reported to the police. Service users may require support or assistance from those employed by Nurse24 Ltd. Service users who do not communicate verbally or have specific communication needs will need particularly skilled support to ensure they are aware of their rights. The use of role plays and similar techniques may empower service users to stay safe and to report concerns.

6.9 Infection Control

Nurse24 Ltd places a great emphasis on infection control in all settings, particularly those service users who are most vulnerable. Communicable diseases which are notifiable should be brought to the attention of the appropriate authority. Staff who have any concerns regarding management of infectious diseases in the workplace should contact their line manager who will seek further advice.

Whilst the appropriate action should be followed in respect of any service users or staff who are suffering from infectious or communicable diseases, staff must always respect the dignity, confidentiality and privacy of the individual.

6.10 Manual Handling

The *Manual Handling Operations Regulations (1992)* require that Nurse24 Ltd as an employer carry out a systematic assessment of the risks of injury arising from manual handling operations, and of the action required to reduce those risks to the lowest level reasonably practicable. Manual handling operations means any transporting or supporting of a load (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving) by hand or bodily force. Sufficient training in such activities by employees of Nurse24 Ltd is ensured.

6.11 Risk Assessment

It is the responsibility of individual site-based managers to carry out project specific risk assessments to be monitored. Specialist risk assessments may be carried out as required by the Health and Safety department or external consultants if specific expertise is required.

Where risk is identified Nurse24 Ltd will:

- Analyse the options for eliminating or controlling the identified risks and take the appropriate action required.
- Establish appropriate procedures to manage the identified risk
- Review the assessments appropriately: periodically and where they may no longer be valid or where there has been a significant change, for example in the environment, service user group or pattern of service delivery
- Keep records of the significant findings of risk assessments
- Appoint competent person(s) to assist in complying with statutory duties for Health and

Safety.

- Provide our employees, service users and others with information on identified risk control, procedures and how to access further advice.

6.12 Smoking

Nurse24 Ltd has a duty to protect employees and service users from harmful second hand smoke, whilst also recognising the rights that service users have to smoke in their own private dwellings. Nurse24 Ltd will work with staff and service users to manage each individual case.

6.13 Stress and Employee Welfare

Nurse24 Ltd acknowledges the potential effects of stress on employees, and our duty to minimise staff exposure to undue stress, and to support staff appropriately where stress is inevitable.

6.14 Sub-Contractors

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 impose duties to safeguard the Health and Safety of those who are not in our employment, but who may be affected by our business activities. These duties also apply to a contractor on the premises, in respect of appropriately managing risks posed by their activities.

We will endeavour to employ only competent contractors, who will be selected according to our specifications. Nurse24 Ltd will ensure adequate co-operation between the business and the contractor.

6.15 Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH Regulations 2002)

All products with potentially hazardous chemical components shall be catalogued, and any potential risks associated with the use of these products shall be assessed. Nurse24 Ltd will comply with the requirements of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002 in order to protect employees and service users from hazardous substances that may be used.

Nurse24 Ltd also acknowledges that the greatest risks from harmful substances are for vulnerable service users, who would not be able to recognise the dangers. In such situations, harmful substances will be stored and managed in ways which suitably manage this risk, based on individual site assessment, for example in a locked cupboard.

Sufficient training is provided by Nurse24 Ltd that complies with the COSHH Regulations ensuring that hazardous substances in the work place are assessed and controlled in accordance with the policy guidelines.

Where chemicals are stored or used, Nurse24 Ltd will:

- a) Carry out a suitable assessment of the risk (a COSHH assessment). Such an assessment must be carried out before the use of any substance known to be hazardous to health. Measures must be identified and taken to control the risks
- b) Ensure that the exposure of employees to substances hazardous to health is either prevented or limited so far as is reasonably practicable
- c) Provide suitable personal protective equipment where other controls are not reasonably practicable
- d) Ensure safe storage arrangements for hazardous materials at all sites including domestic properties and office locations;
- e) Maintain control measures in efficient working order and good repair
- f) Ensure that control measures are properly used
- g) Provide suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training

Nurse24 Ltd will also ensure that all employees make full and proper use of control measures and report any defects in these measures to their line manager or to the Risk and Safety Manager.

6.16 Violence and Aggression

Nurse24 Ltd acknowledges that there can be a risk of violence towards staff from service users with complex and challenging behaviours, and a great emphasis is placed on staff safety and our duty of care to staff.

6.17 Water Temperature

High water temperatures create a scalding risk to vulnerable people who use care services.

Those at risk of scalding/burning include: the elderly, those with reduced mental capacity, reduced mobility and anyone with a sensory impairment, or those who cannot react appropriately, or quickly enough, to prevent injury.

In services where service users are supported to bathe and shower, extra care must be taken in this area regarding the risk to service users.

6.18 Work Equipment

Nurse24 Ltd will ensure that equipment provided for use at work is:

- suitable for the intended use;
- safe for use, maintained in a safe condition and, in certain circumstances, inspected to ensure this remains the case;
- used only by people who have received adequate information, instruction and training; and accompanied by suitable safety measures, e.g. protective devices, markings, warnings.

Additionally, lifting equipment that is provided for use at work will be:

- strong and stable enough for the particular use and marked to indicate safe working loads and any relevant servicing information;
- positioned and installed to minimise any risks;
- used safely, i.e. the work is planned, organised and performed by competent people;
- subject to ongoing thorough examination and, where appropriate, inspection by competent people.

7 HEALTH AND SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND SENSORY NEEDS

Nurse24 Ltd is committed to ensuring the safety of vulnerable people, those with disabilities and people with sensory needs. This will be reflected in the areas of health and safety consultation, communication, training, risk assessment and management, safe systems of work and specific health and safety arrangements.

7.1 Risk Assessment and Management

In undertaking Risk Assessments and developing Risk Management Plans to control risks in workplaces, careful consideration will be given to the following:

- Any specific risks or vulnerabilities arising from the needs or conditions of service users or staff e.g. learning disabilities, mental health needs, physical disabilities, sensory impairment such as hearing/sight loss, mental incapacity, gender, age, language needs, health conditions such as diabetes or epilepsy.
- We will use positive risk management approaches to ensure that the liberty, dignity and human rights of service users are not unreasonably compromised and that any risk management arrangements are proportionate to the degree of risk. Where it is thought necessary to have specific restrictions, e.g. a locked knife drawer or locks on kitchen units, we will follow a best interest decision making process involving members of the multi-disciplinary team and families of service users which will balance health and safety consideration with the rights of individuals. In residential care homes such discussions may need to take place within the context of DOLS (Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards). In all such discussions, consideration should be given to the principles of the Mental Capacity Act (2005) which presumes capacity unless demonstrated otherwise.