

Business Continuity Plan

We will provide this policy on request at no cost, in large print, in Braille, on tape or in another non-written format.

Introduction

Wheatley Care wish to ensure that essential services are provided to service users in the event of an emergency which causes employee shortages. The plan outlines action the organisation will take to minimise disruption and steps taken to ensure the health and safety of employees, tenants and service users. This document should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- Service/Section Contingency Plans
- Staff Cover Policy
- Time Off Policy
- Attendance Management Policy and Procedures
- Infection Control
- Hand Hygiene Policy

Contingency Plans

Each Section and Service in the organisation is required to have a protocol detailing employee cover arrangements in the event of an emergency. The protocol must include the following and should be reviewed at a minimum on an annual basis:

- Identify essential services
- The minimum number and grades of employees required to maintain essential services
- Names and contact details of employees who are trained and competent to cover essential roles if required.
- Accurate records of employees who have signed an opt out form for the 48 hour working week
- Up to date contact details for all employees
- Up to date contact details for emergency contacts for each employee
- Any IT or telecommunication requirements to allow employees to work from home
- Contact details for a bank of relief staff who are screened and inducted and can be called upon to provide cover

In addition, each Manager should consider the following areas:

- The number of employees who have caring responsibilities and who may therefore be adversely affected by the closure of schools or nurseries which will impact on their availability for work
- Employees who may either be pregnant or covered by the Equality Act and care taken to ensure they are not placed at risk nor required to work additional hours

- or longer shifts which could impact on their health.
- Local public transport arrangements. Managers should be aware of how employees travel to work and consider alternative options to advise employees should public transport be affected by a pandemic.

The Travel and Subsistence Policy will apply where employees are asked to transfer or to work from another location.

Flexibility

The standard contract of employment is 37 hours per week. In the event of high absence which is impacting on service provision, employees will be asked to be flexible in providing cover in the following ways:

- Work additional hours (note must be made as to whether a 48 hour opt out has been signed)
- Part time employees may be asked to increase hours temporarily
- Relief workers may be offered temporary contracts
- Employees may be redeployed (consideration should be given to infection control and health department advice followed)
- Employees who no longer work in front line services may be asked to return on a temporary basis. These employees must have a current enhanced disclosure if it is applicable.
- Any employees who are able to work from home should be asked to do so if the circumstances dictate this
- Any non-essential or non-statutory time off may be cancelled
- Training may be cancelled
- Annual leave not already authorised may not be granted.
- Relationships should be formed with agencies for employee cover if all other avenues have been exhausted. Agency cover must be authorised by the back up on call.

Flu Virus

Emergency shortage of staff is most likely to occur due to an outbreak of a flu virus. The most significant symptoms include sudden onset of high temperature, cough, shortness of breath. Other symptoms include muscle aches and pains, severe headache, loss of appetite, sore throat and chest pain. Please note that these symptoms are a guide and may change with the particular strain of flu. Guidance should be sought from health authorities.

In the event of the spread of infectious disease, such as Swine flu, Influenza A (H1N1)

or Avian flu, Influenza A (H5N1) these steps should be followed:

In the event of suspected illness while at work:

- Contact line manager immediately
- Once permission received to leave, go home immediately and phone GP or NHS 24.
- Follow further reporting and certification requirements
- Do not return to work until authorised by GP
- Normal sick pay provisions will apply

In the event of having flu like symptoms while at home:

- Contact GP or NHS 24
- Follow advice of health authorities
- Contact Line Manager or On call
- If advised to stay at home do so, inform manager and follow normal reporting and certification procedures
- Do not return until authorised to do so by GP
- Normal sick pay provisions will apply

Managers and page holders should do the following on receiving a call from an employee with flu like symptoms:

- Check with the employee the symptoms being experienced
- Check if the employee has been to a country affected by an influenza virus H1N1 or H5N1 or has been in contact with a suspected, probable or confirmed case
- If suspect they are flu like advise the employee to phone NHS 24 or GP
- Advise them not to come to work until cleared to do so
- Advise of reporting arrangements
- Advise Care Services Manager or Section Head immediately
- Check if the employee has someone who can assist them ,ie family, friend or neighbour

Employees who are being investigated as possible or probable cases of H1N1 or H5N1 flu must stay at home and normal sickness absence procedures will apply. In the event of long term sickness, home visits will not be made at the 4 week stage, alternative arrangements will be made.

Nursery or School Closure

In the event of a nursery or school closure, employees will be expected to make alternate arrangements where possible. If this cannot be managed the following will apply:

- Time Off Policy (time off for dependant emergency)

If the nursery or school is closed for more than 2 days, as is likely, then the following may be used:

- Annual leave
- Parental leave
- Long term family issue/carer's leave

Data Protection

Information on health is sensitive data under the Data Protection Act 1998 and should not be disclosed. In the case of a flu pandemic, where the health of others may be affected, disclosure can be made to protect others. Consent should be sought from the individual in the first instance. If consent is not given, in some circumstances, disclosure may still be made, but the advice of health authorities should be followed.

Monitoring

During a Pandemic, the organisation will have designated employees to monitor the spread of the virus on a daily basis and update contingency plans as required.

Action Plan

Action	Person Responsible	Due Date
Each service/section to have a contingency plan	Section Head	June 09
Accurate records of employees who have signed 48 hour opt out	Service Managers	June 09
Check employees have updated contact details	Service Managers/HR	June 09
Obtain enhanced disclosure for employees identified as being able to cover for front line employees	Line Managers/HR	June 09
Train employees to cover essential roles	Section Heads	August 09
Increase bank of relief workers available	Service Managers	August 09