

<b>Policy No: 03-4002</b>	<b>Authorised: Pellagia Margolis</b>	<b>Date: 15/01/2020</b>
<b>HARASSMENT, ABUSE &amp; AGGRESSION FROM A SERVICE USER</b>		

*The Organisation has a common law duty of care to all its employees and workers to provide a safe working environment, whether that be on the Organisation's premises or the service user's place of residence. All employees have the right to be free of inhumane and degrading treatment as stated in Article 4 of the Human Rights Act 1998, as well as statutory protection from harassment and abuse from the service user or any other third party for those employees with 'protective characteristics' listed under Section 4 of the Equality Act 2010.*

*'Protective Characteristics' for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010 include, race, colour, sexual orientation, pregnancy, disability, sex, religion, marriage and gender reassignment.*

*This Policy defines the procedures to be followed when a service user is unduly aggressive, or offers unacceptable harassment and / or abuse, to Care Staff. This includes threat of actual violence. This Policy should be read in conjunction with Policy Nos 4103 and 4104 relevant to the Handling of Challenging Behaviour in a service user.*

1. The Care Worker, particularly when working alone in a service user's home ("territory") can be a very vulnerable target for abuse and / or aggressive actions from a service user, or family member. This can often be the case where the service user is confused or disturbed.
2. This Policy will address abuse, harassment, aggression and violence to include the following:
  - 2.1 Verbal abuse or threats.
  - 2.2 Physical aggression, which may or may not lead to actual violence or attack.
  - 2.3 Sectarian abuse.
  - 2.4 Racial abuse or harassment.
  - 2.5 Sexual harassment, which in itself can take the forms of:
    - Verbal harassment;
    - Actual assault;
    - Exposure to offensive material.
3. Care Staff will be trained in the techniques for identifying and handling potential instances of abuse, harassment or actual violence from a service user. Such training will be recorded in the Staff Training Records, and Care Workers will not be permitted to work with high-risk service users until training has been satisfactorily completed.
4. All possible measures will be taken to recognise possible "flashpoint" situations, which can include the following:
  - 4.1 Ensuring that the original Baseline Assessment of Needs (ref. *Policy No 3002*) clearly identifies potential risk areas. This must include knowledge of a service user's clinical and psychiatric history where, for example, a history of alcohol or drug abuse may be identified.
  - 4.2 Carefully monitoring a service user's reactions and mood swings following a change in medication.
  - 4.3 Ensuring as close a match as possible between service user and Care Worker with respect to ethnicity and culture.
  - 4.4 Avoiding being drawn into conversations that may have sectarian, political or sexual overtones.
5. Where there is deemed to be a high risk of abuse, aggression or harassment, the Care Worker may be accompanied by another staff member on an exception basis. If it becomes apparent that this may become the norm, the Domiciliary Care Services

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Supervisor or Manager will contact the Contracting Authority for a complete review of the service user's case.

6. Each instance of abuse, aggression or harassment offered to a member of staff will be recorded in the service user's notes and reported to the Domiciliary Care Services Supervisor or Manager who will decide upon appropriate action. In extreme cases, the Organisation will exercise the right to withdraw the Care Service completely from the service user, (reference *Policy No 4305*).
7. The Organisation has recourse to Counselling Services for staff members who have been subjected to abuse, aggression, harassment or actual violence.