**POLICY AND PROCEDURE: VISITING AND VISITORS**

**NUMBER: 116**

**CARE FOR VETERANS POLICY**

**Aim of the Policy**

The aims of this policy is on the one hand to promote an open ethos whereby all visitors are made welcome and comfortable during their visit and are treated with courtesy and respect, whilst on the other hand recognising that Care for Veterans, has a duty of care to protect its residents and staff from intruders and anyone who threatens their safety and security. This policy therefore aims to minimise the risks to residents’ safety and security, whilst enabling them to receive as visitors and guests, people of their own choosing at times that are mutually convenient to them.

The policy applies to everyone visiting the Home on any business, to all staff in their treatment of visitors and it provides guidance for residents on what they may expect when they have visitors or make arrangements to have them.

**Definitions**

A visitor is defined as someone who does not live or normally work on the premises as a paid staff member or accredited volunteer and who comes to Care for Veterans for a short period of time in order to see residents or staff.

For the purposes of this policy, visitors include people who:

1. Deliver, provide or supply goods and services that have been bought or commissioned by the Home, staff or residents, also including persons visiting to carry out repairs and/or maintenance.
2. Provide professional services to residents such as G.P.’s, community nurses, pharmacists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, ministers of religion, social workers, advocates, hairdressers, opticians, etc.
3. Visit residents on a personal or social basis regularly or occasionally such as relatives, friends.

**Policy on Residents Visitors and Visiting Arrangements**

Residents may receive visitors at times that are acceptable and reasonable to them and the organisation. There may be occasions when a resident may find it difficult or inconvenient to receive a visitor, for example, because of ill-health or other circumstances. Any decisions to refuse or defer access will be determined by circumstances at the time and the wishes of the resident, which will always remain paramount.

Each resident has provided the organisation with a list of their designated visitors. The organisation should not allow a visit to a resident from someone that is not on their list as a designated visitor.

Residents have the right to add to their list of designated visitors at any time.

Should any members of staff come across someone they do not know or who seems lost or uncomfortable in the home, it would be expected of them to enquire about the identity of the person and the nature and purpose of their visit, particularly if the resident they say they have come to visit is uncertain or confused. For example, this might happen in the cases of visitors who are cold calling for commercial purposes.

**Staff Visitors**

Staff are not expected to receive personal visitors while they are working or be interrupted in the course of their duties by social calls. It is however, acceptable in an emergency to have people who they know such as a family member call and leave a message or have some brief contact concerning sudden illness. This is quite consistent with the open ethos which the home is trying to promote. The same principle applies to staff receiving telephone calls which are acceptable for information exchange, but not general conversational purposes.

**Procedures for Receiving Visitors**

Care for Veterans has a single port of entry so that all visitors report to reception on their arrival. If they are visiting a ward, they should then report to the person in charge of the area or an available staff member, who will ask them their name and who they wish to see and direct them accordingly.

**All** visitors who enter the premises, other than those who are simply delivering or dropping off items such as mail or supplies, **must record their name** in the Visitors’ Book. They must record time of arrival, car registration number (if parked on the premises), who they are visiting and the time of their departure. This will ensure that the Home is able to account for everyone in the building at all times which is important in the event of an emergency, such as a fire which may necessitate emergency evacuation of the building. They will also be asked to wear a ‘Visitor’s’ badge.

As part of Care for Veterans general approach to customer service, members of staff are expected to treat every visitor courteously and to make them feel welcome and comfortable. Where visitors have to wait to see a resident, they are to be offered a seat.

All visitors must report to the front of reception and put on one of the masks that we have available in this area.

They will be greeted by the receptionist who will ask that they undertake an LFD test, unless they can evidence with a text or an email that they have already had a negative LFD test that day.

Visitors will also be asked to read and sign the responsible visitors code and have their temperature taken and recorded on their responsible visitors code.

If the visitor takes an LFD test onsite, they will be asked to return to their car (wait outside if they have no car). They will then be notified when their test result comes back.

All visitors except for the below groups will also need to evidence to the reception staff that they are double vaccinated. This must be through the NHS App, NHS website or with an NHS Pass letter:

* People under the age of 18
* New residents and one guest
* Emergency service personnel responding to an emergency situation
* Residents designated visitors

**Visiting during a pandemic**

During a pandemic the home has the right to go into lockdown in accordance with PHE and government guidelines. This may result in the home shutting its doors for a period, to all visitors.

Likewise, the home may, at some point during the pandemic, open its doors to visitors, with certain restrictions in place. As and when we encounter a pandemic, the service will put together a Business Continuity Plan that will outline how the home is tackling the pandemic. This Business Continuity Plan will cover areas such as visitors. The BCP will be available to all residents and their relatives will be informed of how the service is tackling the pandemic and any restrictions we have in place around areas such as visiting.

Any visitors policies put in place to cover a pandemic will take precedence over this policy and will be the policy that the organisation will work to.