



Homecare Association



Code of Practice

For homecare provider members
of the Homecare Association

We are the Homecare Association



Introduction

The Homecare Association is the UK's membership body for homecare providers. Our mission is to work together to ensure that homecare is valued, so that all of us can live well at home and flourish within our communities.

The following Code of Practice reflects the commitment of Homecare Association provider member organisations to this mission.

This Code of Practice applies to all Homecare Association members providing homecare services to people of all ages and in all situations.

Where Homecare Association members are acting as an employment agency (solely providing introductory services), they will abide by the Code of Practice, to the extent that the Code applies to the services they offer.

All Homecare Association members will sign their agreement to abide by the Code of Practice upon first becoming members and reaffirm this annually at renewal.

The Code is divided into two parts:

Part 1

Statement of Principles and Values to which all members are required to commit.

Part 2

Guidance about good quality, which homecare provider members should aspire to at all times.



Part 1

Statement of Principles and Values to which all homecare provider members are required to commit.

1.1 A Statement of Principles and Values

In order to qualify for membership of the Homecare Association, provider members must demonstrate their commitment to the Homecare Association's mission, abiding by the following principles and values.

If significant failure on the part of a provider member is evidenced, the Homecare Association reserves the right to suspend or expel them from membership.



Our vision is of a society where we are all able to live well at home and flourish within our communities.



Provider members will:

Help deliver the mission by providing high-quality, sustainable homecare. Indicators of such quality are outlined in Part 2.

Specifically, all members will:

1.2 Promote the independence, preferences, dignity and privacy of people who use services

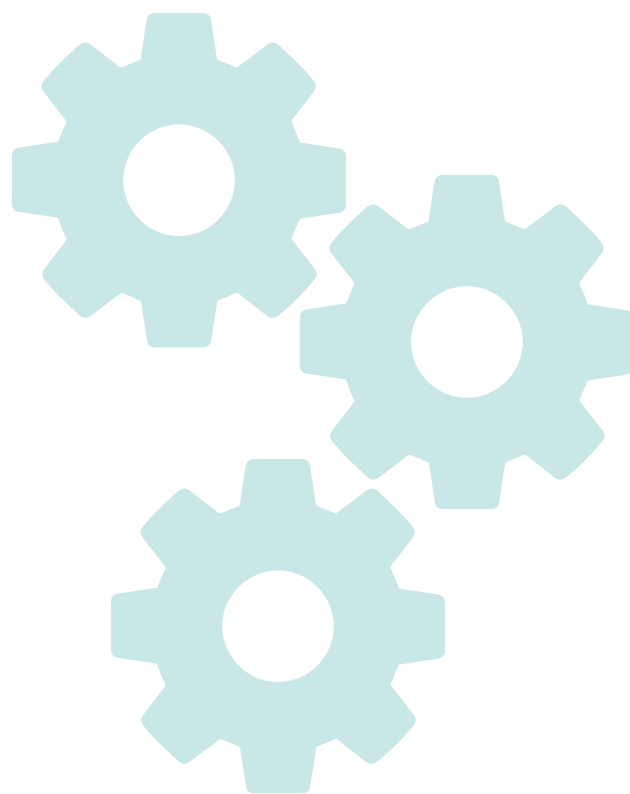
- a) Operate within the terms of applicable mental capacity legislation by assuming the person is able to make decisions for themselves, unless specifically judged to lack capacity to make those relevant decisions at that time. In which case provider members will be expected to take into account what is known about the person's previous preferences and wishes and to act at all times in the person's best interests, taking the least restrictive option.
- b) Enable and support people who use services to make decisions on their lifestyle, activities, care and support. This may include supporting people who use services when they make decisions which might seem unwise (provided they are lawful, do not cause harm to others and are consistent with the provider's duty of care). In those cases, members must carefully consider their legal obligations, including complying with mental capacity and safeguarding legislation and requirements.
- c) Assist people who use services to communicate their views and wishes by talking, writing, signing or any other

means, so their decisions and priorities are clear signs to advocacy and other services that support communication where appropriate.

- d) Respect people's confidentiality, sharing personal information only where this is necessary and permitted under applicable data protection legislation.
- e) Promote people's safety and wellbeing at all times; complying with the relevant safety, quality, and safeguarding obligations.
- f) If necessary, challenge commissioners where the person's safety and wellbeing may be jeopardised by the way or nature in which the service has been commissioned.
- g) Act in a way that embraces the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion for both people using services and employees, complying as appropriate with equalities and human rights legislation.
- h) Systematically gather the views of people who use the services, their families and other nominated carers and continuously use this information to improve services.
- i) Deal promptly, openly and efficiently with complaints and, as appropriate, learn from them by improving services.
- j) Promote the interests of people who use homecare services at all times.

1.3 Work collaboratively

- a) Recognise the crucial role played by family members and family carers in the person's wellbeing and work with them, as appropriate, to support their efforts and maximise good care.
- b) Collaborate with other agencies (in health, social care, housing and other areas) for the benefit of the person using the service, including ensuring the safe transfer of care to and from other providers where this is required.



- c) Wherever possible and appropriate, encourage the identification and use of a 'single point of contact' among all the organisations involved in care provision for the person using the service to maximise efficiency and minimise confusion.
- d) Support the Homecare Association's work on providers' behalf to champion the homecare sector and to ensure that homecare is valued so that everyone can live well at home and flourish within their communities.

1.4 Select and support competent staff across the whole organisation

- a) Ensure full compliance with all legal requirements, such as those governing safer recruitment, wages, working time, quality and safety of care provision.
- b) Recruit staff for their values and provide a safe and rewarding working environment.
- c) Ensure that good practice is recognised, shared and promoted at all times.

- d) Ensure that staff are sufficiently competent to complete their responsibilities and tasks and receive an induction appropriate to their role as well as ongoing training, supervision and support to perform their role well and to make successful progress in their career in care.
 - e) Listen to – and act on – credible reports of poor practice wherever they are from.
 - f) Ensure that there is a clear and accessible whistleblowing policy in place, which all levels of the organisation understand and staff are confident to use.
 - g) Balance the rights of people using the service to make their own decisions, with the employer’s responsibility to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and others in the workplace.
- c) Use clear invoices, terms of business and pricing models, explaining costs and charges in a way which will allow the person easily to identify what they will be required to pay. Support individuals to understand whether they might be entitled to state assistance.
 - d) Ensure there is adequate insurance in place to protect people interacting with your service, such as customers and staff.
 - e) Maintain accurate and appropriate records of people using and working in the service.
 - f) Use the Homecare Association logo appropriately (as permitted) to signal commitment to high-quality, sustainable care.
 - g) Act at all times to promote positive attitudes to homecare generally and to the Homecare Association.
 - h) Embrace opportunities to develop practices which reduce environmental harm and improve social conditions.
 - i) Avoid practices which compromise the safety, quality or continuity of your services or put your customers at risk.

1.5 Achieve and maintain registration

- a) Register with the applicable statutory regulator(s), as required, and maintain registration.
- b) Meet or exceed applicable regulatory requirements or relevant mandatory guidance / guidelines in force at the time. If not providing a regulated service, deliver to a similar high standard and in compliance with relevant legal obligations.

1.6 Maintain a sustainable and effective business

- a) Promote a culture of continuous improvement across the whole organisation and celebrate innovation and creative practice.
- b) Conduct business with transparency; deal with others honestly and fairly at all times, particularly ensuring that your contracts are easy to understand and each party's expectations are clearly defined.



Part 2

Guidance about good quality, which homecare provider members should aspire to at all times

2.1 Indicators for quality in homecare delivery

These indicators relate equally to all homecare services, to people of all ages and in all situations.

2.2 People who use services and family carers

Extensive research exists which shows what people receiving homecare and their families and carers value in a homecare service. These quality indicators draw on this research and on feedback from people using homecare services, staff and providers.

Homecare Association member organisations should strive at all times to deliver a service that is tailored to the individual's needs and aspirations, is delivered reliably and in the way they prefer. Specifically, a service which:

- a) Promotes wellbeing and is delivered in the way the person using the service prefers.
- b) Encourages independence and the development of skills, techniques and confidence to enable self-care.
- c) Is centred on the individual, acknowledges their preferences and aspirations and respects their right to change.
- d) Is reliable, with services delivered when expected, and with appropriate prior notification when things do not happen as planned.
- e) Allows sufficient time for care to be provided in a way which is safe, respectful and protects the person's dignity.
- f) Respects the person's home and chosen way of life.
- g) Recognises and supports the contribution of others around the person, such as family and friends, and encourages them to access external support for themselves where this is available.
- h) Promotes the person's dignity and respects their emotional and social needs and aspirations.



Deliver a service that is tailored to the individual's needs and aspirations, is delivered reliably and in the way they prefer.





- i) Signposts to other support, or helps the person to access it, where appropriate.
- j) Is delivered by a consistent, small number of skilled workers whom the person knows.
- k) Is supported by good communication between the person, the homecare worker, family carers and managers of the service.
- l) Wherever possible, involves good communication between the provider member, commissioners of care and other agencies involved with the person.
- m) Is flexible and innovative to meet people's needs.
- n) Learns from mistakes and shortcomings, deals with them appropriately and uses the information to improve the service.
- o) Delivers what has been agreed.

2.3 Staff across the whole organisation

There is also a good bank of knowledge from research and feedback about what staff need in order to give their best.

Homecare Association members should strive at all times to provide an employment environment which includes:

- a) Good employment practice, including fair terms and conditions of employment.
- b) Rewarding employment, so that staff feel valued.
- c) Good quality and appropriate induction, training and support, so that staff feel confident in their work.
- d) Opportunities for staff to develop skills further, either generally, or in relation to specific conditions or situations.
- e) Good ongoing supervision, support and coaching so that staff are motivated to pursue a long-term career in social care.
- f) Open and reliable communication between staff and managers.
- g) Recording and reporting systems which enhance quality of care, but are not constraining or overly time-consuming.
- h) Staff recruited for their values and who are respected and celebrated for their excellent caring, professional attitudes and behaviours.
- i) Promotion at all times of the safety of the staff at work, the person using the service and people interacting with your service.
- j) Identifying and preventing poor practice, for instance, through whistleblowing and appropriate, swift and proportionate handling of reports.
- k) Compliments, complaints and whistleblowing reports lead to organisational reflection, learning and service improvement involving staff.

2.4 The public

A crucial issue in the development and availability of high-quality homecare is raising awareness and public understanding of the existence, nature, contribution and value of care in the home.

Homecare Association members should strive to enhance public understanding and confidence by:

- a) Advertising services in accurate and positive ways that are relevant to the person needing care.
- b) Promoting the value of homecare to the individual, their family and society as a whole at every opportunity and countering false information and negative publicity (for example, with accurate facts and positive views of people who use services).
- c) Notifying the Homecare Association if specific negative publicity is anticipated, so that there can be a sector-wide response to counteract such negativity.
- d) Demonstrating a willingness to work collaboratively with others for the benefit of the people considering their care options, as well as the local and wider community.
- e) Publicising the commercial contribution of homecare in terms of economic value (both to individuals and the NHS or local authorities) and the creation of rewarding, employment opportunities.
- f) Seeking and taking opportunities to promote the value and status of those working in homecare with local and national government, as well as with the public and the media.
- g) Sharing good practice with and through the Homecare Association as appropriate.

- h) Actively participating in Homecare Association-led campaigning and media initiatives on behalf of members and of homecare generally when requested.
- i) Building good relationships with key stakeholders in the social care sector, to uphold and maintain the public perception of homecare services.



Appendices

Regulators and other sources for information on good practice in homecare

Appendix A. Statutory Regulators

The statutory regulators at the time of writing are:

In England: Care Quality Commission (CQC). www.cqc.org.uk

In Wales: Care Inspectorate Wales. www.careinspectorate.wales

In Scotland: Care Inspectorate. www.careinspectorate.com

In Northern Ireland: The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA). www.rqia.org.uk

Appendix B. Workforce Regulators

The workforce regulators at the time of writing are:

In England: There is currently no formal workforce regulator in England.

In Wales: Social Care Wales.: www.socialcare.wales

In Scotland: The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). www.sssc.uk.com

In Northern Ireland: Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC). www.niscc.info

Appendix C. Resources to support best practice

Other good practice guides recommended by the Homecare Association that member organisations should also be familiar with and, where and to the extent appropriate, adopt the principles and practice within, include:

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2015). Home care: delivering personal care and practical support to older people living in their own homes.

www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng21

Skills for Care. Resources to support adult social care employers.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/home.aspx

Think Local Act Personal. Resources on personalised care and support:

<https://www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/>

Social Care Wales. Codes of Practice and guidance.

<https://socialcare.wales/dealing-with-concerns/codes-of-practice-and-guidance>



Scottish Government (2017). Health and Social Care Standards: My support, my life.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/health-social-care-standards-support-life/>

Scottish Social Services Council (2016). Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers.

<https://www.sssc.uk.com/the-scottish-social-services-council/sssc-codes-of-practice/>

Northern Ireland Social Care Council Standards of Conduct and Practice for Social Care Workers.

<https://nisc.info/standards-and-guidance/>

Please note that the information contained in these Appendices may be updated from time to time, before the next full revision of the Code of Practice.

For more information

To find Homecare Association members in your area, please visit:

homecareassociation.org.uk/find-care

Standard text size version – other sizes available upon request

If you have particular needs which make it difficult for you to read this document, please contact 020 8661 8188 or enquiries@homecareassociation.org.uk and we will try to find a more suitable format for you.



Shaping homecare together

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