

## Health and Safety Procedures

**This procedure must be read in conjunction with the Health and Safety Statement and Policy.**

### **A. First Aid**

- The member of staff who is 1<sup>st</sup> aid trained will treat any injuries in line with their training.
- When treating an injured person the 1<sup>st</sup> aider shall wear appropriate PPE (gloves, face covering etc...).
- 999 will be dialled at the first opportunity if the incident is serious enough to warrant hospital treatment – Where appropriate staff shall arrange for persons to be transported to hospital via non ambulance means.
- The Centre Manager must be informed of any incident where 999 is called. The Centre Manager will then inform the Chair of the board where appropriate to keep them informed.
- Where necessary the 1<sup>st</sup> aider shall clear the area or arrange for the cleaning of the area affected by the incident
- First aid boxes should be stocked following use – request for more stock should be made to office administrator as soon as possible.

### **B. Accident Reporting**

- As soon as possible, anyone witnessing and/or experiencing an accident should personally report it to a member of staff, if this is not possible, ask someone else to do it.
- The details which should be given are:
  - where and when the accident occurred,
  - what happened,
  - if known, how it happened.
- A brief written statement should be prepared as soon as possible thereafter, confirming these details and should be submitted to the Centre Manager.
- The written statement should be stored in the accident file in the Managers Office and a copy and note uploaded to charity log if applicable.
- In order to help prevent a recurrence of the accident, anyone experiencing or witnessing an accident may be asked to discuss it with a member of the staff team or Centre Manager.
- If necessary the Centre Manager will report the accident to the HSE under RIDDOR regulations.

The procedure for reporting a 'near miss' or hazard is exactly the same.

Employees, volunteers and clients are advised to seek treatment for every injury, no matter how small, as any injury, if left untreated, may become serious.

### **C. Fire and General Evacuation**

In the event of the fire alarm going off:

- Leave the building immediately by the nearest exit. Assist others to leave where possible.
- Go immediately to the assembly point which is at the rear of the building in the car park area.
- The fire warden will then check that everyone is present and can be accounted for.
- For your own safety do not delay leaving the building.
- **DO NOT STOP TO COLLECT YOUR BELONGINGS.**
- **DO NOT RE-ENTER THE BUILDING until you have been advised that it is safe to do so by a fire warden.**

Specific Evacuation Plans, including Personal Employee Evacuation Plans (PEEP) and General Emergency Evacuation Plans (GEEP) can be found within the Fire Safety folder on the shared drive. These are updated annually and discussed with any staff members and/or volunteers and/or clients who have any physical disabilities or sensory impairments.

### **D. Manual Handling**

- In order to maintain body balance the feet should be placed apart at approximately hip breadth, with one foot in advance of the other and pointing in the direction of intended travel.
- Use the total gripping surface of the hand. This means that you should use the full length of the fingers and the palm of the hands. Where necessary use protective gloves.
- Keep the back straight when lifting. Use the strong leg and thigh muscles and this will considerably reduce the effort required to lift an object. Tuck the chin in and look forward just before taking the load. This will automatically straighten the back and reduce the strain on the shoulders and back muscles.
- Keep your arms straight and close to the body. This will ensure that you use your leg muscles and prevent shoulder and back strain.
- The weight of the body should be used when handling large and heavy objects. But make sure that the feet are correctly placed.

#### **General advice:**

- Do not lift a load that causes a feeling of strain.
- Do not stand holding a heavy weight.
- Do not twist whilst lifting.
- Seek assistance if the load is too heavy or large.
- Do not change your grip whilst carrying a load.
- Do not carry excessively high loads that obscure your vision.
- Use the necessary protective equipment.
- Remember – foresight, sense and care can save you permanent injury.

### **E. Guidelines for Employees Dealing with the Public** **(Please also refer to Lone Working policies)**

- When making home visits to clients, enter it into your Outlook diary, stating clearly the name of the person(s) you are visiting and when you expect to be back in the office.
- Ensure a member of staff is aware of your visit and the time you are expected back.
- If you feel unhappy about the way an interview or visit is going, either in the office or someone's home, terminate the interview as soon as possible even if it is not completed, but try to avoid raising anxiety levels.
- Interviews or meetings should not be held with a member of the public if you are alone in the office. An appointment should be made for them to return at a more suitable time.
- All incidents of actual physical or verbal abuse must be reported to the Centre Manager, recording full details of what occurred, when, where and any subsequent action to be taken. You must follow this procedure even if no incident occurred, but you are concerned about possible future behaviour.
- An entry should be made on Charity Log flagging as a risk.
- When making home visits ensure dogs are suitably confined.
- When making home visits, let the individual lead the way; avoid entering a room first and never sit with your back to the door. Avoid going out onto balconies or into bedrooms.

#### **F. Handling Money**

Always follow the recommended procedures for handling and collecting cash. If you are collecting money and you are threatened, hand over the money immediately. On no account should you endanger yourself or others to prevent the money being taken or in trying to retrieve it. Employees and volunteers should avoid carrying large amounts of cash on their person.

#### **G. Office Safety & Security – Staff and Volunteers**

The importance of office security to New Mills & District Volunteer Centre cannot be overstated. The reception areas are particularly vulnerable since they are open to the public (albeit behind a locked door when not manned). In general terms volunteers and employees should remember the following points;

- Always make sure that the door into the building is locked when you are in the building alone.
- Ensure that the front door is locked if no one is sat on reception.
- Take care of the office keys – if you do lose a key, report it immediately to the Centre Manager. All keys must be signed for.
- Take great care of your personal belongings; particularly handbags, purses etc. New Mills & District Volunteer Centre cannot accept responsibility for these items, so make sure you do not leave them lying around.
- The back door must not be propped open unattended and must be securely closed to prevent unauthorised access.
- If you hear the back door open, do not assume that another member of staff or volunteer will check who it is. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure that the building is secure.

- The person on the main reception desk must ensure that everyone coming into the building signs in and makes sure they have a legitimate reason for being in the building.
- All volunteers and members of staff leaving the building, must ensure that they sign out of the building on the relevant sheet.
- If you see a stranger wandering around the reception/office, do not assume that they have the right to be there; ask who they are, who they wish to see, whether you can help.
- Do not allow visitors to wander around the building. Ensure that the member of staff they are visiting is informed of their arrival and collects them.
- If you are leaving a computer, always press window key + L to lock it so that sensitive information cannot be accessed.
- Ask for identity cards of people claiming to be telephone engineers, computer engineers, gas/electricity/water board officials, etc. They all carry such cards and do not object to producing them for inspection.
- Ensure that your office is safe and secure when you leave it at night (e.g., make sure windows are shut, doors locked, and that all lights, heaters etc., are switched off).

## **H. Escorting People**

The golden rule when escorting someone is to make sure you know what help they need before you set off. Check with your supervisor if the person has a specific disability, injury or illness.

Volunteers are expected at all times to conform to the guidelines and training they have received with regard to safe escorting of people with disabilities. Main points include;

### **1. Falls**

If the person you are escorting falls over;

- General advice is to avoid doing anything without the advice of 999/111,
- do not attempt to pick them up,
- call an ambulance even if they say they do not want one,
- advise them to stay still until the ambulance arrives.

If they still insist on getting up;

- do not physically lift them as you may well cause them more damage by falling on top of them as well as causing injury to yourself,
- if possible find them a chair to help themselves up.

### **2. Assisting wheelchair users**

- Always ensure the wheelchair brakes are on before anyone gets out of or into the wheelchair. Also ensure there are no heavy bags on the back of the wheelchair which could cause it to tip as someone gets up.
- Always move footrests into the folded back position before the person gets into the wheelchair. Once they are sitting, secure the footrests in the front position and make sure the person's feet are properly in place before setting off.

- Agree a set of signals so you can still communicate in noisy environments.
- Encourage the person in the wheelchair to use the seatbelts.
- Always use dropped kerbs whenever possible. If you have to go down a steep kerb or step, always go down backwards and tell the person this is what you are going to do before you begin.
- Do not rest anything on the back of the wheelchair which may get caught in the wheels or interfere with your control of the wheelchair.
- Keep your back straight whenever pushing the wheelchair.
- Never physically lift a person out of or into a wheelchair – provide them with a stable surface on which to rest their weight (such as a table) and assist them into the chair.
- Never go down a steep hill or across an uneven surface unless you are confident that you can control the wheelchair – find an alternative route.
- Do not go too fast.
- Be aware of where the person's hands are – it is very easy to cause an injury by moving off before the person has had a chance to withdraw their hands.
- Leave plenty of room at the front to allow space for the footrests – these cannot be seen from your position at the back- so you need to have a good idea of how far they project.
- Be careful of other pedestrians – they are often unaware of your presence and may suddenly turn into your path.
- When the wheelchair is no longer in use fold it and put to the side of the room so that it does not become a hazard.

### **3. Assisting People with Impaired Vision**

- Allow them to take your elbow if required so that they can walk at your side, slightly behind you.
- Talk them through obstacles – steps, overhead signs, and doors.
- Be aware that with someone walking at your side you need to leave more space to negotiate narrow places and doorways.
- Be aware that an obstacle clearly visible to you may not be obvious to someone with partial sight because it may be a similar colour to its background.
- For more information on evacuation of people with disabilities, please see the General Emergency Evacuation Plan (GEEP) for people with mobility issues, visual impairment and hearing impairment.

### **4. Assisting People with Shopping**

- Do not carry bags that are too heavy for you. Arrange to leave some of them in the shop and take them back to base in shifts or get help from another volunteer. Volunteers should tell clients that they are not to purchase very heavy items as they cannot be lifted by volunteers.
- Point out dangers in the shop or street to the person you are escorting. Be aware that you may need to speak more clearly/slowly/loudly to someone with impaired hearing.

#### **I. Handling Refreshments**

- Always take care when carrying hot refreshments and always put the cup down on the table rather than handing it to someone.

- Clear up any spills immediately.
- Do not overfill the cups.
- Do not put cups close to the edge of the table.
- Tell the person that the cup is in front of them especially if they are visually impaired.
- Ensure that kettles and urns are kept on a secure surface and not overfilled, and are turned off when not in use.

## **J. Driving**

Mandatory speed limits must be adhered to at all times and it is expected that all our staff and volunteer drivers will drive carefully and observe all aspects of the Highway Code. It is also an offence to drive a vehicle whilst under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

- Drivers must not at any point whilst the engine is turned on, hold or use their mobile devices including phones, sat navs and tablets. This includes using it to select music, take pictures or using it to scroll social media. The only exceptions are when using contactless payments when the car is at a stop e.g. a toll road or drive thru restaurant, to dial 999 if it is not safe to stop to make the call, or if the vehicle is safely parked.
- Seatbelts – these should be worn at all times and it is the driver's responsibility to ensure that they are in use before the journey begins
- In the event of dangerous weather conditions the journey should not be undertaken.
- In the event of a breakdown passengers should not leave the car – they should be kept warm and comfortable unless it is not safe and you are advised to get out of the vehicle.
- In the event of an accident first check whether you are injured – if so you must stay with your car and wait for assistance to arrive, providing that does not put you in further danger. If you are not injured you should check your passenger and always call an ambulance whether the client wants it or not. You are not a paramedic and cannot say whether someone is injured.
- All accidents must be reported to New Mills & District Volunteer Centre as soon as possible.

***(More detailed guidance is to be found in the volunteer driver's handbook.)***