



LONE WORKING & OUTREACH POLICY

Introduction

The Leonardo Trust has a legal and moral responsibility to effectively manage the risks associated with individual members of staff and volunteers working on their own.

Our work often involves lone working in the office or visiting service-users in their own home or in the community.

The Trust will raise awareness amongst all staff and volunteers of all systems, procedures and equipment that must be utilised to reduce the levels of risk associated with working alone.

Definition of Lone Working

Lone work is work which is specifically intended to be carried out unaccompanied or without immediate access to another person for assistance. Lone working can occur:

- At an outreach venue or in the community;
- When working during normal working hours at our main office;
- When working in a service-user's home.

Working alone in the Office

- If the member of staff is working alone at our Office, whether it is inside or outside of working hours they should ensure that all external doors and windows ARE LOCKED;
- Do NOT open the door to people you do not know and feel safe with;
- Take extra care when meeting with service-users in the office outside normal working hours or when you are alone;
- The front door should remain locked for security.
- A personal attack alarm is provided to all staff who are Keyholders of the Trust. This attracts a considerable amount of attention due to the noise element and would hopefully draw assistance from members of the public. Additional alarms are available for staff to use when working in the community.

Working in a Service User's Home

- Always carry a mobile phone (an office mobile phone can be provided if necessary) and check it is able to receive a signal in the area you are in;
- Do not enter the house if the appropriate person is not available;
- Wait to be invited in or at least ask to enter;
- Acknowledge that this is their territory; let them lead the way;
- If the service user appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, appears aggressive, behaving suspiciously or there are animals or unknown adults which concern you, make your excuses do not enter or leave as quickly as possible;
- Leave full details of the appointment with a named person in the main office;
- Operate a check in system with a named person in the main office. If the member of staff does not phone in or return by a certain time the named person will take suitable action;
- If at any time the member of staff feels threatened, they should make their excuses and leave as quickly as possible.

Working in the Community

- Always carry a mobile phone and check it is able to receive a signal in the area you are in;
- Always carry a personal attack alarm (these are available in the main office)
- Always arrange to meet at a suitable venue and a named person in the main office;
- Leave full details of the appointment with a named person in the main office;
- Operate a check in system with a named person in the main office. If the member of staff does not phone in or return by a certain time the named person will take suitable action;
- If the service user appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, appears aggressive, behaving suspiciously or there are animals or unknown adults which concern you, make your excuses and leave as quickly as possible;
- If at any time the member of staff feels threatened, they should make their excuses and leave as quickly as possible.

Guidelines to Dealing with Aggressive Behaviour

- Be aware of any delicate issues involved with discussions or interviews. i.e. try to have as much background knowledge before the interview;
- Do not underestimate the importance of body language. Avoid an aggressive stance. Crossed arms, hands on hips or raised hands will challenge and confront;
- Talk yourself out of problems; placate rather than provoke;
- Do not turn your back on someone who is behaving aggressively;
- If someone is becoming aggressive with you try to encourage them into an open space (e.g. suggest that you go outside to continue the conversation);
- Stay calm, speak gently and slowly;
- Do not be enticed into an argument;
- Keep your distance;
- Never try to touch someone who is angry – this will not calm the situation;
- Keep your eye on potential escape routes;
- Try to get away as quickly as you possibly can;
- If the situation does not 'feel right' listen to your gut instinct and make your excuses to leave. There will always be another occasion to hold the meeting in a safer environment.