



Gofal Cymdeithasol **Cymru**  
Social Care **Wales**



# The adult care home worker

Practice guidance for adult  
care home workers registered  
with Social Care Wales



Noddir gan  
**Lywodraeth Cymru**  
Sponsored by  
**Welsh Government**

# Contact Details

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**Social Care Wales**

South Gate House  
Wood Street  
Cardiff  
CF10 1EW

Tel: 0300 3033 444

Minicom: 029 2078 0680

Email: [info@socialcare.wales](mailto:info@socialcare.wales)  
[socialcare.wales](http://socialcare.wales)

Twitter: [@SocialCareWales](https://twitter.com/SocialCareWales)

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**Other formats:**

This document is available in easy read, large text or other formats, if required.

Copies also available in Welsh.

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# About this guidance

**This guidance is for adult care home workers (workers) registered with Social Care Wales.**

It builds on the *Code of Professional Practice for Social Care* (the Code) and aims to:

- describe what is expected of workers
- support workers to provide a good service.

It is based around relevant National Occupational Standards, the views of people who use care and support, and other stakeholders.

The guidance will be updated from time to time. It doesn't cover everything, and workers are expected to use their professional judgement, applying the general principles and taking advice from managers, where necessary. Workers must keep to their employers' requirements.

Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) may take this guidance into account in their work.

Here, the term **individual** refers to the person the worker supports or cares for in their work.

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# How this guidance applies to you

This guidance is for adult care home workers in Wales. It is also relevant to employers – **the *Code of Practice for Social Care Employers* says that employers will support workers to meet the standards in the guidance.**

The guidance can be used to let individuals, families and the general public know what they can expect from you as a worker.

It is your responsibility to follow this guidance, seeking advice from managers or colleagues, if needed.

If you lead, co-ordinate or support other adult care home workers, you should promote this guidance and address any concerns.

The Code is the principal document used if there are concerns about a worker's fitness to practise. This guidance can be used to illustrate a failure to keep to the Code.

- The term 'you must' is something you are required to do.
- 'You should' is used where there may be things outside your control that affect how you follow this guidance.

# Adult care home workers

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Adult care home workers provide care and support for individuals in a care home service. Workers provide a wide range of support, including:

- support for daily living activities and maintaining independence
- support with social activities, and developing and maintaining relationships
- practical assistance with personal care
- support for health and well-being
- end of life care.

Workers may work in specialist services or with individuals with particular needs.

Adult care home workers have to register with Social Care Wales. They must be registered by April 2022 but can register from April 2020.

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# Person-centred care and support

Person-centred care and support means making sure people receive care and support that responds to their individual needs and choices. It includes a strong commitment to an individual's human rights and fully involving individuals in decisions that affect them. It involves working with the individual to achieve what matters most to them.

The social care values of respect, compassion and dignity, alongside good communication skills, are essential.

# Code of Professional Practice for Social Care

The Code describes the standards expected of workers. These standards reinforce the importance of a person-centred approach.

As an adult care home worker, you must:

1. Respect the views and wishes, and promote the rights and interests, of individuals and carers.
2. Strive to establish and maintain the trust and confidence of individuals and carers.
3. Promote the well-being, choice and control of individuals and carers while supporting them to stay safe.
4. Respect the rights of individuals while seeking to ensure their behaviour does not harm themselves or other people.
5. Act with integrity and uphold public trust and confidence in the social care profession.
6. Be accountable for the quality of your work and take responsibility for maintaining and developing knowledge and skills.
7. In addition to codes 1 to 6, if you are responsible for managing or leading staff, you must embed the Code in their work.

You must use the Code to reflect on your conduct and practice, and identify areas you can continue to improve.

## Good communication

Good communication with individuals is an essential part of your work. It involves verbal and non-verbal communication skills, the ability to establish trust, and adapting communication to suit the individual and the situation. You have an important role making sure individuals have information about their care and support.

To communicate well, you should:

- a. get to know and listen to individuals
- b. respect the individual's views, even if they don't reflect your own
- c. take account of the individual's preferred language and way of communicating
- d. know how to use relevant communication aids
- e. know how to respond if an individual is angry, distressed or upset

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f. support individuals to express their views and wishes

g. respond to questions and concerns.

Good communication is also essential for working with carers, families, colleagues and managers.

You must not use offensive or bad language in your work.

## **Confidentiality**

You must treat an individual's personal information with discretion. Personal information includes all kinds – spoken, written, photographs, and so on.

You must follow your organisation's policies on confidentiality, data protection and information sharing. You should know when you need to share information and with whom, for example, if there are safeguarding concerns. If necessary, you should get advice from managers or senior colleagues.

## **Welsh language needs**

Some individuals can only communicate their needs effectively using the Welsh language. You should try and use any Welsh language skills you have, however basic, if it helps you communicate with an individual.

Your employer may have a legal obligation to treat English and Welsh equally, and to be proactive in offering services in Welsh.

## **Family members**

You must show respect to family members and others important to the individual.

You should be familiar with the individual's preferences about involving relatives and others in their care and support, and respect these.

If you have any difficulties working with relatives, you should get advice from managers or senior colleagues.



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## Professional boundaries

The quality of your relationship with the individual is very important. It is essential to create a warm, kind and friendly environment. Sometimes, however, this 'closeness' can blur professional boundaries and create difficulties. Examples include things like sharing too much personal information or taking on tasks outside your role.

You should work with your manager to:

- a. make sure you understand your professional role and your limits
- b. understand and keep to your organisation's policy on professional boundaries
- c. address any potential crossing of professional boundaries.

You must make sure all your actions with individuals and families are out in the open for discussion with your manager.

Some things clearly breach acceptable boundaries. While not a complete list, unacceptable things include:

- a. having a sexual or other improper relationship with an individual
- b. using your personal beliefs – for example, political, religious or moral – in a way that exploits or causes distress
- c. borrowing from or lending money to an individual
- d. acting in any way that harms an individual.

The consent of the individual is never a defence for these things.

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## Rights and protections

Your employer will have legal obligations to protect individuals' rights and ensure people are not discriminated against. The relevant legislation includes the:

- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998.

As well as associated protocols, such as the:

- United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2008
- UN Principles for Older Persons 1991
- Declaration of Rights for Older People in Wales 2014.

You must know about and keep to your organisation's policies on rights and protections. You must work with your employer to uphold the rights of people in your care. You must not unfairly discriminate against any person using the service.

The factors that older people use to determine whether they have a good quality of life and reported by the Older People's Commissioner for Wales are:

- I have voice, choice and control
- I live in a place that suits me and my life
- I can get the help that I need
- I feel safe and listened to, valued and respected
- I feel my life has value, meaning and purpose
- I can do the things that matter to me.

It also includes the right for individuals to:

- live in a home-like environment
- have their identity, culture, beliefs and sexuality respected
- have their privacy and personal space respected
- have security for their money and belongings
- have a voice, including about the running of the home
- be supported to have friendships, and be included in meaningful activities and experiences
- know how to access independent advocacy.

# Good adult care home practice

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Good adult care home practice is based on putting the individual at the centre of their care and support, working with the person to achieve their outcomes. As well as assisting with care and support, the quality of your relationship with the individual is critical, contributing to quality of life and well-being.

Your professional relationship with an individual may continue over time. You may support them through difficult situations and illnesses. You will know intimate details about their circumstances.

Individuals expect you to be:

- kind
- respectful
- honest
- trustworthy
- polite
- discreet
- knowledgeable
- caring
- understanding
- friendly
- reliable
- hard working
- flexible.

Individuals expect you to respect their life choices, culture and beliefs. They expect you to try and understand their world from their point of view. You need to have a good understanding of the individual's background and which approaches will work best when supporting them. This is particularly important where the individual is living with a condition such as dementia.

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## Knowing your limits

You must be willing to recognise and work within the limits of your competence, taking advice from managers and colleagues, as appropriate. You must seek help if you cannot carry out an aspect of your work, or if you are not sure how to go ahead. You should be willing to learn and carry out the full range of tasks for your role.

If you make a mistake, you must be open and honest about it, including giving your manager a full and prompt explanation about what happened. You should be willing to learn from mistakes.

## Personal plans

Most individuals want their care and support to help them live as independently as possible. As appropriate, you should take part in developing personal plans that:

- are led by, and fully involve, the individual
- are based on their strengths and the outcomes they want to achieve.

You should:

- a. understand the personal plan and your role in it
- b. make every effort to work well with others in the personal plan (such as colleagues, social workers and other professionals)
- c. contribute to reviewing the personal plan, for example, highlighting progress and any difficulties.

## Providing care and support

You should carry out your role in the personal plan.

This may involve a range of care and support activities, such as:

- support with daily living activities
- helping with personal care
- support with continence management
- help with eating and drinking
- support with social activities
- support with mobility
- oral care and foot care.

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When providing care and support, you must:

- a. work with the individual to understand the level and type of support they need
- b. maintain safety, comfort, respect and dignity
- c. support the individual to understand the reasons for safety and hygiene precautions
- d. know how to use relevant aids and assistive technology
- e. follow risk assessments
- f. seek feedback from the individual about how well their needs are being met
- g. use agreed ways to monitor, record and report progress
- h. observe changes or difficulties and report these.

### **Tasks delegated by another professional**

Depending on the service, some adult care home workers may help with or carry out tasks delegated by another professional such as a nurse or occupational therapist. If it is agreed you will carry out a task on behalf of another professional, you must complete the required training, assessment of your competence and on-going supervision. If you don't feel able to do the task, you must tell your manager.

### **Working in teams**

Good team work depends on all team members, not just senior staff. When working in a team, you must make every effort to:

- a. understand roles and responsibilities
- b. communicate well
- c. respect colleagues' skills and contributions
- d. prepare for and contribute positively to meetings
- e. manage disagreements constructively.

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You should be willing to raise concerns about practice.

You should use agreed communication methods, such as staff meetings, email and recording systems, to support a co-ordinated and safe service.

You should comply with handover procedures to your colleagues.

## Records and reports

Individuals have a right to expect that information about them is recorded accurately and used appropriately. You must keep to agreed procedures for completing records and reports. You should make sure records and reports:

- a. are factual, clear, complete and up-to-date
- b. reflect the individual's views and wishes
- c. are stored and shared in a way that meets your organisation's requirements, including data protection requirements.

If you are unsure about recording information, you must seek advice from your manager.

You must not falsify, manipulate or backdate records or reports.

## Comments and complaints about services

It is important that individuals know how to comment or complain about their service. Receiving and discussing feedback is an opportunity for everyone to learn and develop together.

If there is a complaint about you, you should act professionally and co-operate with the investigation.

# Safeguarding individuals

Safeguarding is about protecting individuals from abuse. One of the most important principles of safeguarding is that it is everyone's responsibility. Each professional and organisation must do everything they can to make sure individuals are protected.

As an adult care home worker, you have an important role to play and need to know how to respond to a range of potential risks:

- neglect
- abuse
- financial exploitation
- inappropriate restrictive practices
- bullying.

## Understanding safeguarding

You should be familiar with:

- a. the factors that may lead to harm or abuse
- b. the signs of potential harm or abuse
- c. your organisation's procedures, including whistleblowing
- d. your professional responsibility.

You must keep to your organisation's policies and procedures on safeguarding. You must report any concerns you have about the safety of a child, young person or adult.

## Supporting individuals to keep themselves safe

You should do your job in a way that helps people stay safe. This includes:

- a. promoting person-centred care and support
- b. following risk management plans
- c. supporting individuals to express concerns or make complaints
- d. supporting individuals to recognise when behaviour towards them is inappropriate.

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## **Female genital mutilation**

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is a criminal offence in England and Wales under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. All social care workers, including adult care home workers, are under a duty to notify the police if, in the course of their work, they discover that an act of female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.

## **Preventing people from being drawn into terrorism**

Your organisation may have a legal duty to have regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The UK Government has published guidance on this. You should support your employer to implement the guidance, for example, by attending training.



# Health and safety

Your employer has a range of responsibilities to support health, safety and well-being, and to minimise unacceptable risk to you and others. You have a responsibility to cooperate with your employer on health and safety.

## Meeting health, safety and security requirements

You must keep to statutory and organisational health, safety and security requirements including, among others, the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.

You must:

- a. keep to your organisation's policies and procedures on infection control, cleaning and waste management, and moving and positioning individuals
- b. undertake mandatory training on health and safety topics
- c. keep to the individual's personal plan, including any health and safety measures.

## Medication

You must be clear about your role and responsibilities in supporting the use of medication. If you are authorised to support the use of medication, you must keep to your organisation's policies and procedures on medication, including:

- a. safe administration
- b. recording
- c. safekeeping
- d. disposal.

This includes prescription and non-prescription 'household' medication. You must never give your own or their family's medication to an individual, even if it is non-prescription. You must not give advice on medication.

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## Safety and well-being

All employees have a responsibility to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and reasonable care not to put other people at risk by what they do or don't do as they carry out their roles. You therefore need to work with your employer as they carry out their duty of care to you.

You must keep to relevant policies and procedures, such as:

- incident reporting
- first aid
- lone working
- supporting positive behaviour
- violence against staff.

Your work may be emotionally demanding and stressful at times. You should find ways to support your own well-being, such as accessing support offered by your manager or employer.

## Supporting health and safety

You should work with your employer to monitor, review and improve health, safety and security practices.

# Learning and development

Learning and development of knowledge and skills is essential to providing a good service for individuals. You are responsible for achieving the required qualification for your role, engaging in mandatory training and undertaking on-going learning.

## Keeping up-to-date

You should keep your knowledge and skills up-to-date, working with your employer to find ways to meet your learning and development needs.

You should:

- a. keep updating your knowledge of adult care home practice
- b. listen and learn from others, including professionals, individuals and families
- c. seek help with gaps in your learning
- d. keep a record of your learning
- e. make sure you meet the training requirements for your professional registration.

You should use a variety of ways of keeping up-to-date, such as reading, attending training, and taking part in team meetings, groups and forums.

## Supervision and appraisal

You should use supervision and appraisal available from your employer to:

- a. identify your work and personal development objectives
- b. get feedback on, advice and support for your work
- c. agree actions
- d. reflect on and improve your practice.

You should take part in supervision and appraisal in-line with your organisation's policy and with a positive attitude.

You should raise any urgent issues with your manager, not wait for a supervision meeting.

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## Supporting the learning of colleagues

Supporting the learning, training, assessing and mentoring of colleagues is crucial for the service now and in the future. This includes those undertaking induction and qualifications. You should be willing to contribute to these activities and, if involved, to develop the necessary competence.

# Contributing to service improvement

Adult care home workers may contribute to a range of activities to ensure a good service for individuals. These may include developing policies, contributing to service planning, review and evaluation.

If you are involved, make sure your contribution is focused on quality and improvement. You should use feedback from individuals and families to inform the activity.

## Resources

You should contribute to identifying the resources needed to provide a good service. You should minimise waste and remember your responsibility to make good use of limited resources.

## Raising concerns

You must inform your manager or employer if you have any concerns about:

- a. ineffective policies or procedures, or gaps in these
- b. available resources
- c. work overload
- d. your safety or that of others
- e. safeguarding
- f. bullying or harassment
- g. equipment
- h. team skills
- i. poor practice
- j. breaches of the law
- k. breaches of the Code of Professional Practice.

You should be familiar with policies and procedures for reporting concerns, for example, bullying and harassment, and whistleblowing.

If your manager or employer doesn't take adequate action, you should get independent advice from an appropriate organisation such as Care Inspectorate Wales, Social Care Wales, a trade union or Public Concern at Work. Record your concerns and the steps taken to try and resolve them.

# Good conduct

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Good conduct includes being honest and trustworthy, and acting with integrity. It requires you, at all times, to behave in a way that justifies the trust individuals, families and the public place in you.

## Professional registration

You must keep your professional registration with us up-to-date.

You must tell us without delay about anything that may call into question your suitability to work in adult care. This includes:

- a. criminal proceedings
- b. cautions, fixed penalties or convictions
- c. disciplinary proceedings
- d. any change in your mental or physical condition that may affect your ability to work in social care.

Note: telling us about these things will not necessarily affect your registration.

To keep your registration, we must be able to contact you. You must tell us about any changes to your contact details, including:

- name
- title
- home address
- work address
- email
- employment details.

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## Gifts and donations

You must keep to your organisation's policies about gifts, donations and bequests.

You mustn't encourage individuals or their families to lend or give property, money or gifts that will directly or indirectly benefit you personally.

You must not put pressure on individuals or families to make donations to other people or organisations.

## Social media

It is recognised you may use social media sites, in your personal and professional life, such as Facebook, Twitter and so on, and you may use these to receive general information from your employer. If you do, you must not discuss or post inappropriate comments online about any persons connected with your work. This is to protect confidentiality, personal and professional integrity.

Think carefully how you present yourself on social media and how your online presence may be seen by others including individuals and their families, members of the public and other professionals. The way you behave on social media should be at the same high standard as your day-to-day behaviour and you must maintain professional boundaries at all times.

You must keep to your organisation's policy on social media use.

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## Supporting positive behaviour

You must work in ways that support positive behaviour based on a person-centred approach. This includes complying with relevant policies and procedures.

Restrictive practices refer to activities that stop individuals doing the things they want to do and encourages them to do the things they don't want to do. The term covers a range of activities, including restraint.

Restraint is an "act carried out with the purpose of restricting an individual's movement, liberty and / or freedom to act independently"<sup>1</sup>. It includes:

- physical, chemical, environmental or mechanical restraint
- seclusion
- long-term segregation
- coercion.

If you have to use restrictive practices, you must make sure you:

- use the least restrictive option
- can justify it legally and ethically
- openly acknowledge it
- record and report it.

You must not use restrictive practices to:

- punish
- inflict pain or suffering, or humiliation
- force an individual to comply with you.

For more information about this guidance, the *Code of Professional Practice for Social Care* and learning materials, visit [socialcare.wales](https://socialcare.wales) and [socialcare.wales/hub/home](https://socialcare.wales/hub/home).

1. *Human Rights Framework for Restraint, Equality and Human Rights Commission* 2019





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