



## **ON-CALL POLICY & PROCEDURE**

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# ON-CALL POLICY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Many of ELCAP's care and support services assist people during the evenings and weekends, as well as during our core business hours of 9.00am to 5.00pm. To support staff and manage risks that may arise out with core hours, ELCAP operates an on-call service.

The on-call service provides a single point of contact for Support Practitioners to access advice, guidance and support out with core business hours. As well as ensuring the safety of the people we support and our staff, the on-call service helps to maintain the quality of our services.

The on-call service does not replace the requirement for Support Practitioners, in emergency situations, to make informed decisions, based on their experience, knowledge and learning. Where the situation allows, the service provides an opportunity for staff to seek guidance from an Operational Lead or to seek post-incident support if an emergency prevents earlier contact.

## 2. HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE STANDARDS

The application of this policy is guided by the Health and Social Care Standards and by the following standards in particular:

- I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. (3.20)
- I am protected from harm because people are alert and respond to signs of significant deterioration in my health and wellbeing, that I may be unhappy or may be at risk of harm (3.21)
- I am listened to and taken seriously if I have a concern about the protection and safety of myself or others, with appropriate assessments and referrals made (3.22)
- If I go missing, people take urgent action, including looking for me and liaising with the police, other agencies and people who are important to me (3.23)
- If I might harm myself or others, I know that people have a duty to protect me and others, which may involve contacting relevant agencies (3.24)
- I am helped to feel safe and secure in my local community (3.25)

## 3. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are to provide:

- A system which helps to ensure the safety of people we support and staff out with core business hours.
- A consistent approach to the implementation of the on-call service.

ELCAP's on-call procedure, which sets out how to use the service, should be read alongside this policy.

## **4. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **4.1 Senior Managers**

Senior Managers – the Chief Executive, Business Manager and Registered Manager – must:

- Ensure that on-call rotas meet business requirements.
- Ensure that on-call rotas abide by the Working Time (Amendment) Regulations 2003, in particular rest periods, compensatory rest and health assessments for night work.
- Review regularly the operation of the on-call service against business requirements to ensure it is being delivered in the safest and most cost effective way.
- Ensure Operational Leads have sufficient notice of the dates they are required to work on the on-call rota.
- Ensure equal treatment of staff, applying pro-rata rules to part-time workers in line with the needs of the service.

### **4.2 Operational Leads**

Operational Leads who are on-call must:

- Ensure that they are available at all times during the on-call period.
- Ensure that they are fit to attend work and remain in a fit state while on call.
- Not present themselves for duty in an unfit state – for example, through alcohol or drugs.
- Ensure that alternative on-call arrangements are in place if they are unable to provide the service.
- Ensure that any health-based request to come off the on-call rota, on a permanent or temporary basis, is agreed with the Registered Manager, following advice from Occupational Health.

### **4.3 Support Practitioners**

Support Practitioners must:

- Draw on their experience, knowledge and skills to manage, wherever possible, issues which arise out with core business hours, in line with ELCAP's commitment to self-organising teams.

## **5. HOW THE ON-CALL SERVICE OPERATES**

### **5.1 Operating times**

The on-call service operates from 5.00pm till 9.00am from Monday to Thursday, from 4.00pm till 9.00am on Fridays, and for 24 hours at weekends.

## **5.2 Role of Operational Leads who are on-call**

On-call support is telephone-based and there is no requirement for Operational Leads to attend the homes of people ELCAP supports in the normal course of the service.

Operational Leads who are on-call will:

- Provide advice, guidance and support to staff who need assistance out with core business hours.
- Provide advice, guidance and support in out-of-hours emergencies involving ELCAP's care and support services.
- Notify regulatory bodies and senior managers when reportable incidents occur.
- Maintain an accurate and up-to-date on call log.

## **5.3 Staffing**

The on-call service is staffed by Operational Leads.

Operational Leads are expected to cover the on-call service for a week at a time. The frequency of providing the on-call service will be determined by staffing levels.

To ensure compliance with the Working Time Directive, the provision of the on-call service by individual Operational Leads will be monitored using a 17 week reference period. Where an individual Operational Lead has averaged more than 48 hours per week in any 17 week period, they can choose to sign an "opt out" agreement to enable them to continue working additional hours.

## **5.4 Equipment and resources**

Operational Leads who are staffing the on-call service will be provided with a laptop and smart phone for the purpose of carrying out on-call duties.

The smart phone will be used to respond to calls for advice, guidance and support out with core business hours. The laptop will be used to access the files of people ELCAP supports and send emails about issues which arise on-call to ELCAP's leadership team and the on-call folder.

While providing the on-call service, Operational Leads must ensure they have access to adequate mobile phone reception to enable staff to contact them, and vice versa.

## **6. POLICY REVIEW**

ELCAP undertakes to review this policy regularly – at least every three years – with regard to:

- Relevant guidance, legislation and regulation.
- Changes in the organisation.
- Changes in good practice.

## **ON-CALL PROCEDURE**

This procedure should be read in conjunction with the On-call Policy

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The on-call service provides a single point of contact for Support Practitioners to access advice, guidance and support out with core business hours. As well as ensuring the safety of the people we support and our staff, the on-call service helps to maintain the quality of our services.

### **2. ACCESSING ADVICE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT**

The on-call service can be accessed by Support Practitioners in a situation where they require assistance to determine the best course of action or need to share information with management.

In the event that a member of staff requires advice, guidance or support out with core business hours, s/he should contact the on-call service on **07443 815356** and speak to an Operational Lead.

If the on-call telephone is not answered immediately, a message should be left. The Operational Lead who is staffing the on-call service will return the call as soon as the message is received.

It is the responsibility of individual Support Practitioners to call back to ensure that messages are not missed. It is recognised that Operational Leads who are staffing the on-call service cannot always be instantly available.

### **3. INCIDENT REPORTING**

In the event that an incident occurs out with core business hours, Support Practitioners should contact the on-call service to advise of the incident and any subsequent actions or issues.

The Operational Lead who is staffing the on-call service will notify the Care Inspectorate, other appropriate bodies and the Registered Manager of any reportable incidents.

### **4. ABSENCE REPORTING**

Normal absence reporting procedures should be followed in core business hours (9.00am till 5.00pm, Monday to Thursday and 9.00am till 4.00pm on Fridays).

Where a Support Practitioner is unable to carry out an out of hours shift or becomes unwell during an out of hours shift, s/he should contact members of their team to arrange cover and advise their line manager of the situation.

Where a Support Practitioner is too unwell to arrange cover, s/he should contact the on-call service to seek the assistance of an Operational Lead.