

CP32 - Specialist Needs Policy and Procedure

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1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all Service Users with specialist needs have their Care needs met by knowledgeable, experienced, competent staff who use evidence-based best practice and who have access to specialist services' support and guidance.

This policy sets out the framework and expectations to achieve this purpose and to ensure that the needs of Service Users are recognised and satisfied.

1.2 To support Link Option Agency Limited in meeting the following Key Lines of Enquiry:

Key Question	Key Line of Enquiry (KLOE)
SAFE	S2: How are risks to people assessed and their safety monitored and managed so they are supported to stay safe and their freedom is respected?
EFFECTIVE	E1: Are people's needs and choices assessed and care, treatment and support delivered in line with current legislation, standards and evidence-based guidance to achieve effective outcomes?
EFFECTIVE	E2: How does the service make sure that staff have the skills, knowledge and experience to deliver effective care and support?
RESPONSIVE	R1: How do people receive personalised care that is responsive to their needs?
WELL-LED	W3: How are the people who use the service, the public and staff engaged and involved?

1.3 To meet the legal requirements of the regulated activities that Link Option Agency Limited is registered to provide:

- The Care Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014
- Health Professional Council (Legal Framework)
- The Medical Devices Regulations 2002
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice
- Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Legislation

2. Scope

2.1 The following roles may be affected by this policy:

- Registered Manager
- Care staff

2.2 The following people may be affected by this policy:

- Service Users

2.3 The following stakeholders may be affected by this policy:

- Family
- Advocates
- Representatives
- External health professionals

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3. Objectives

3.1 The objective of this policy is to ensure that the care needs of any Service User with specialist needs can be safely met by Link Option Agency Limited staff who are trained, knowledgeable and competent.

This policy, therefore, aims to provide clarity with regards to:

- Ensuring a robust assessment provides confirmation that needs can be met
- Record-keeping requirements, ensuring Service User involvement
- Staff education, training, and delegation

4. Policy

4.1 Link Option Agency Limited will take account of the following when considering accepting a Service User with specialist needs:

- Can Care be delivered safely to the Service User and without undue risk to the Service User, the staff or others?
- The acceptance by the Service User and each person involved in the Service User's Care of any risks relating to the care service
- It is the Service User's preferred choice
- The suitability, accessibility, and availability of alternative arrangements
- The extent of the Service User's needs (e.g. frequency of staff intervention required)
- The cost of providing the service of choice to ensure the best value and efficient use of resources to suitably meet the Service User's assessed care needs
- The psychological, social and physical impact on the Service User
- The Service User's human rights and the rights of their family
- Ensuring that staff have the appropriate skills, competence, and experience to deliver quality care
- Ensuring that there is a sufficient network of external healthcare professionals available to offer support and guidance

4.2 Link Option Agency Limited will regularly review the needs of the Service User in order to establish that staff can accommodate those needs safely. Any changes in the Service User's condition that cannot be met safely will be responded to in a timely manner by accessing other healthcare professionals. Where services are commissioned by Luton Borough Council or Health Commissioners, discussion will take place with them as soon as Care needs change.

4.3 All care delivered will be individualised and person-centred. Link Option Agency Limited will always seek to promote the Service User's independence in all aspects of care.

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5. Procedure

5.1 Care Assessment Planning

Before the start of any Care service, consideration will be given as to whether or not Link Option Agency Limited can meet the individual specialist needs for that Service User:

- The person delegated to complete the pre-assessment should ensure the pre-assessment documentation is fully complete and be able to communicate the findings to HR Manager
- As well as gathering assessment information from the Service User and/or family members, staff should seek support from the Service User's care manager/social worker or other relevant healthcare professionals currently involved in their care
- HR Manager should then discuss the potential Service User with key staff who would be responsible for the Care of that individual if Care was agreed
- A joint decision should then be made that all staff are competent to meet the specialist needs for that Service User
- Before agreeing to starting a Care service, consideration must be given to ensuring that suitably skilled, competent and experienced staff are available to meet the needs of the Service User. Consideration should also be given to the sourcing and maintenance of any equipment needed, the impact on the dependency level/staffing level at Link Option Agency Limited and the access to healthcare professional support
- Staff should ensure that any equipment necessary to meet the needs of the Service User is available before the commencement of the care package. There should also be a supply of necessary medicinal products available until such time as further stock can be supplied

Care Plans must be available to clearly identify who is involved in the Service User's care, to identify how to access specialist support and equipment and indicate who to escalate concerns to if the condition of the Service User changes.

Funding arrangements must be in place as per the local terms and conditions of The Agency contract.

5.2 Care Planning and Delivery of Care

Every Service User will have a Care Plan in place detailing the ability of the Service User in relation to their specialist needs and the support required from staff to meet those needs.

This should include the following areas:

- The specialist need and how it affects the Service User
- The support staff required to meet the needs of the Service User
- Any equipment necessary to meet the specialist need and the responsibility of the staff (refer to the Management of Medical Devices Policy and Procedure)
- Any specialist healthcare professional contacts involved in the care of the Service User
- Reference to other records in place such as risk assessments, daily records, manufacturers' guidance etc.

Care Plans will be reviewed in accordance with the Care Plan Review Policy. The Service User and/or their family members (with the consent of the Service User) will be fully involved in the Care Plan review as far as is practicable to ensure that the Service User remains at the centre of Care decisions.

Any delegated duties to staff to meet specialist needs will be in line and in accordance with professional codes of conduct standards.

For transfers of care (emergency or planned), staff should ensure there is no delay in treatment due to the transfer and therefore should supply a sufficient amount of medicines and medicinal or other equipment in order to maintain care. A copy of the specialist needs Care Plan should be available for transfer or referenced within any transfer documentation.

5.3 Partnership Working

Service Users with specialist needs may already have associated specialist healthcare professionals involved in their care.

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Staff at Link Option Agency Limited will seek the support, advice, and guidance from any specialist healthcare professionals in a timely manner and refer any medical changes in the Service User to the Service User's GP in the first instance.

Staff will, at all times, ensure that they build up professional relationships in line with their professional codes of conduct to ensure continuity of care and a consistent approach to the delivery of care.

Any sharing of information will only be with the prior consent of the Service User, or in the best interest of the Service User in accordance with the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

The Data Protection Act will be adhered to at all times when discussing information regarding the Service User with other healthcare professionals.

Staff should refer to the GP and Visiting Professionals Policy and Procedure for guidance with the promotion of partnership working.

5.4 Staff Training and Education

Staff supporting Service Users with specialist needs will be provided with the appropriate training needed to meet the needs of the individual. HR Manager will source appropriate, credible training to ensure that staff are suitably skilled.

Staff will, at all times work, within their own professional codes of conduct and scope of competence and will be expected to seek further training as needed in order to meet the needs of the Service Users in their care.

In line with professional codes of conduct, staff will be expected to maintain their knowledge in any training provided and be able to demonstrate this through supervision, appraisal and any revalidation requirements (if necessary).

Link Option Agency Limited will ensure that training plans at Link Option Agency Limited reflect the needs of the Business and will be subject to ongoing review to ensure that they remain current and fit for the Service.



6. Definitions

6.1 Specialist Needs

- Specialist needs may also be known as complex care needs
- Individuals who have specialist needs will have either a combination of multiple chronic conditions, mental health issues, medication-related problems, and social vulnerability or a condition which requires additional special training for staff to support that individual

6.2 Codes of Conduct

- A code of professional conduct is a necessary addition to any profession to maintain standards for the individuals within that profession to adhere to
- It ensures accountability, responsibility, and trust to the individuals that the profession serves



Key Facts -Professionals

Professionals providing this service should be aware of the following:

- It is not uncommon for Service Users to have specialist needs on commencement of a care package, and over time, for dependency and complexity of care needs to change
- With specialist needs, it is necessary to be able to access other healthcare professionals for support, guidance and Care Plan management as needed. Therefore, staff must have the skills required for effective partnership working in order to achieve a united outcome, where the Service User is at the centre
- Staff must have the skills and be prepared to maintain those skills, competency and experience required to safely deliver care

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Key Facts - People Affected by The Service

People affected by this service should be aware of the following:

- You (or your family with your consent) will be fully involved in how you want your care to be delivered and what support you need
- For existing special needs that you may have, you can expect to have support provided from staff who are skilled, experienced and competent to help you
- You can expect to maintain access to any other healthcare professionals involved in supporting you with your condition.
- If your care needs change, staff will ensure that your Care Plans are reviewed (with you where possible) and that support is sought from specialist healthcare professionals as necessary

Further Reading

As well as the information in the 'Underpinning Knowledge' section of the review sheet we recommend that you add to your understanding in this policy area by considering the following materials:

- **NICE** - National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) provides a host of resources and best practice guidelines in relation to many long-term conditions and specialist needs: <https://www.nice.org.uk/>
- **SCIE - Home care providers** can refer to the following link for a video guide on the provision of home care for individuals with complex care needs: <http://www.scie.org.uk/socialcaretv/video-player.asp?v=commissioning-for-older-people-with-complex-needs>

Outstanding Practice

To be 'Outstanding' in this policy area you could provide evidence that:

- Documentation reflects Service User involvement and Care Plans provide clear guidance to ensure a consistent delivery of high-quality care
- Visiting health care professional feedback is used to monitor the effectiveness of this policy and review practice
- Themed audits take place to review the efficiency of meeting specialist needs at Link Option Agency Limited
- A rolling training programme is available for staff development that is reviewed periodically and as necessary to meet the changing needs of the Service User
- The wide understanding of the policy is enabled by proactive use of the QCS App

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