

Date: 10/10/2012
Review Date: 10/10/2013

Health and Safety Policy 2

Myhomecare.ie has enclosed a comprehensive Health and Safety Policy and Statement which represents our group offering including Homecare.

People are at the centre of our organisation and we consider safety, health and welfare to be of fundamental importance in continually improving the quality of services provided and the standard of safety in the workplace. In striving for excellence in employment, we recognise and accept our responsibilities for safety, health and welfare. We believe that workplace injuries and illnesses are preventable, and as a consequence we are totally committed to ensuring the safety, health and welfare of all our employees and those affected by our work activities.

We ensure appropriate channels of communication are in place for effective consultation with employees and those who are affected by our activities. The consultation processes promotes a positive safety culture by facilitating our employees to contribute to decisions affecting their safety, health and welfare at work.

The health and safety policy is evaluated and reviewed on a continuous basis to ensure work systems and environments continue to be safe for staff and all those who are affected by our activities.

Collective Responsibility

The Health & Safety Authority state "When a business uses agency workers, the business and the agency have a shared duty to protect their health and safety". The Health and Safety policy and statement is in line with the current British Health & Safety Executive in line with EU legislation and all our policies and statements will be revised in line with the Irish guidelines once agreed and issued.

Myhomecare.ie operates a policy of collective responsibility towards our agency employees. We believe that it is the Agency's (myhomecare.ie), the Business's (Health Service Executive) and the Employee's (agency care workers) collective responsibility to ensure Health & Safety in the workplace.

Guidelines from the British Health & Safety Executive in Line with EU Legislation make the following recommendations;

Businesses using agency workers

If agency workers are on your site (either under your direct employ or through another company), your assessment needs to take them into account. You should consider the special problems they may face. For example, they will know less about your business than ordinary employees, and so could be at greater risk.

You must also give the agency and agency workers information about risks and measures taken to control them before the start of the placement.

Agencies

If you provide agency workers to other businesses, you too have responsibilities. You should firstly ensure the user business has carried out an assessment, and given you the findings, which you should pass on to agency workers. You may also need to assess the risks that workers face in the user business' workplace before you place workers with that business for the first time. If the user business does not volunteer the information you need, you will have to decide whether you need to make a site visit to complete your own risk assessment.

You should also monitor user businesses' overall health and safety performance. For example, you could ask them to give you copies of all accident and illness reports involving your agency workers, together with an indication of the causes and what they have done to stop them happening again.

Myhomecare.ie will request a copy of the hospital's or organisations health & safety policy and any policies which will affect the agency Healthcare Assistant in carrying out their duties.

Myhomecare.ie actively encourages feedback after each agency placement. We would also request to be informed of any incidents, accidents or illness reports relating to our agency Healthcare Assistants.

Health Checks

All agency Healthcare Assistants are obliged to attend for a medical with an Occupational Health Physician and must provide a letter of fitness to work, a completed confidential health declaration and an occupational health checklist.

Prevention of transmission of blood-borne diseases

Myhomecare.ie has made available the Department of Health & Children's 2005 publication 'The prevention of transmission of blood-borne diseases in the health-care setting' both on line and in print to our employees. As a requirement of their registration, they must indicate and sign that they have read and understood the booklet and are aware of the risk factors for acquiring blood-borne diseases, and the legal-ethical duties to disclose any blood – borne infection or risk of infection to appropriate authorities.

Homecare clients

Myhomecare.ie will ensure that all homecare clients are assessed in line with all legislation relating to Health and Safety. As a service provider we will ensure that all requirements in line with Health and Safety legislation and guidance documents are in place:

- The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005
- The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007. Chapter 4 of Part 2: Manual Handling of Loads
- HSA Guidance on the Management of Manual Handling in the Workplace (2005)
- HSA Guide – Care with Minimal Lifting (2007)
- HSA Guide - Ergonomics in the Workplace (2006)
- HSE Guidance on Manual Handling in the Health Services
- Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act, 1998 (and relevant amendments 2000-2010)

All clients will have a comprehensive assessment prior to the commencement of service and this will include the following:

- Client assessment of physical needs
- Medication assessment and requirements
- Manual Handling/Patient Manoeuvring assessment
- Environmental assessment including equipment
- Risk assessment score
- Client finance assessment
- Medication Assistance consent
- Key Safe consent

Staff training

Staff who work with myhomecare.ie undertake the following training prior to working and each staff member has a renewal of training every 2 years. Staff that are non compliant in any aspects cannot be placed with a client. The training courses including Health and Safety are:

- Patient Manual Handling
- CPR including AED
- Infection Control
- Elder Abuse
- Basic First Aid Awareness
- Basic Food Hygiene
- Care Documentation
- Safe supervision of medication
- Lone working

Our system records the name, date of completion and expiry date of each training course. All staff carry an identification badge with a photograph which cannot be altered; each card also has a list of training courses and dates of training for clients to view.

Safety Policy

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 require myhomecare.ie to prepare and issue a safety statement setting out its policy on safety, health and welfare. This statement, together with the following, will be known collectively as the 'Safety Statement':

- Hazard identification and risk reduction guidelines
- Allocation of responsibilities
- Consultation procedures

We recognise the paramount importance of safety, health and welfare, to all employees, in the successful conduct of business. This Safety Statement, in accordance with the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, outlines the policy of myhomecare.ie for ensuring, in so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees, patients, the public, contractors and visitors. Myhomecare.ie will comply with the requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, General Application Regulations 2007 and all other statutory requirements, Codes of Practice, HAS Guidance documents and national standards.

Myhomecare.ie will ensure, in so far as is reasonably practicable;

- Safe and healthy working conditions
- Safe equipment and systems of work
- Provision of appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision
- Provision, where necessary, of a competent person to provide advice and assist in securing the health, safety and welfare of employees and others

The detailed arrangements for achieving these objectives are set out in the main body of the Safety Statement.

The Manager has overall responsibility for health and safety within myhomecare.ie. Day to day management of health and safety on site is the responsibility of the Managers. Employees share a responsibility with management in ensuring their own safety whilst at work. Persons other than employees e.g. visitors, contractors also share in this responsibility.

Sufficient authority and resources, both financial and otherwise, will be made available to enable employees to carry out their responsibilities in a reasonable and efficient manner.

All employees will be made aware of, and have access to, this Safety Statement/Risk Assessments and arrangements for consultation with the employee representatives on health and safety matters will be an integral part of the safety policy.

The Safety Statement will be subject to revision and is liable to amendment, should circumstances change. While the Safety Statement is managements' programme in writing for safeguarding safety and health in the workplace, it is also a proactive document and is part of a wider continual improvement and learning process in the area of safety, health and welfare at work.

Signed: _____

Date: 23/08/11

Name:

Title: General Manager

**Signed copy available on file in myhomecare.ie main office
Quayside Business Park, Mill Street, Dundalk, Co. Louth.**