



**APRIL COMPLETE CARE SOLUTIONS LTD  
(The “Company”)**

**Individual’s Home Security Policy/Key Safe Policy**

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## **Introduction**

The Company is committed to supporting individuals to keep their home safe and secure at all times.

## **Entering the home of an Individual**

- All staff calling to the individual's home will knock/ring the bell and wait to be invited to enter. Staff should not let themselves into individual's homes unless there is a clear agreement in place as to why this is necessary. Any such agreement should be made in consultation with the individual, their representatives and the Registered Manager and should be reviewed every 3 months.
- There will be clear guidelines in place for staff to follow should they not be able to gain entry to a individual's home to provide the required support.
- Individuals who need help to greet callers at the door will be supported to do so. The help individuals require will be clearly documented in their care plans.
- Individuals will be supported to secure all doors and windows at night or when they leave their home unattended. The help individuals require will be clearly documented in their care plans.

## **Safe storage and handling of keys**

- Every effort must be taken to promote the independence of individuals in gaining access to their home and their private living accommodation.
- There should be clear documented reasons why any individual is unable to keep and use their own keys together with a plan for their development.
- Where individuals require support with the safekeeping and the use of their keys, there will be clear guidelines in place for each individual.
- There will be procedures set down for the reporting of lost or stolen keys.
- Staff working in supported living schemes must not be issued with front door keys unless there is a specific agreed plan on this issue.

## **Staff Identity cards**

- All staff will be provided with a Company identity card prior to commencing work with individuals.
- Cards will be produced in large print where required.
- Support staff will have their identity card available for inspection at all times whilst supporting individuals.
- For people with special communication requirements there will be clear agreed ways of supporting them to identify support staff i.e. passwords etc.

- All staff will be issued with identity cards which have:
  - a) A photograph of the support worker
  - b) The name of the support worker
  - c) The name of the organization
  - d) Contact number of the organization
  - e) Issue date of the card
  - f) Expiry date of the card

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF KEYS AND KEYSAFE CODES FOR LOCAL HEALTHCARE TEAM WORKERS**

### **Introduction**

The security of clients homes is vital in providing high quality and safe domiciliary care and community healthcare. Staff have a responsibility to ensure their actions do not place the security of clients, their families or their homes at risk.

A key-safe is a safe protected with combinations to hold keys of different kinds. These are mainly house keys but other keys, such as drug box keys, may also be stored there. They are available with manual dial combination input system or digital input system and are usually mounted on the wall in any space that is hidden or mostly unnoticed.

Some of the key-safes available in the market look like utility boxes, which makes them camouflaged/ covered and are often mounted near the meter box. Some, by necessity, are more obvious.

Key safes are used to enable safe entry to clients' houses by health professionals (and other agencies) where clients are unable to open the door themselves due to physical or mental impairment / illness or disability

A number of members of staff are responsible for accessing clients' homes with their consent and permission, in order to provide care. Community Health Team staff may be issued with codes for accessing key-safes in order to gain authorised entry into clients' homes.

## **Purpose Of Policy**

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 places several duties on employers including the following: “It shall be the duty of every employer to ensure, in so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all his employees and “The provision and maintenance of plant and systems of work that are, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and without risks to health.

The purpose of this policy, therefore, is to ensure all community healthcare staff providing care to clients at home are able gain access to and exit their homes safely ensuring the safety, security & well-being of clients & staff.

## **Scope**

Key-safes are a device that can be fitted externally to a property to enable access into the property. In order to gain access most key safes require a code that will release the cover and therefore display the keys

Community Staff / Worker - all members of the Community Health Team

## **Cross Reference To Other Related Policies**

- Consent Policy
- Record Keeping Policy
- Professional Boundaries Policy
- Moving and Handling Policy
- Confidentiality Code of Practice
- Incident Reporting Policy

## **Policy Statement**

April recognises the duty of care to those members of community based staff who have access to codes for key-safes.

The Organisation recognises their duty to maintain the security of clients’ homes and to protect such assets along with the contents.

In order to maintain the security of clients’ keysafe codes, the security of the building where the codes are kept should be maintained and only properly authorised persons should be able to access the key-codes.

Staff who have clients' keysafe codes to let themselves in should always remember that they are entering someone else's home; always knock or ring the bell on entering and produce identification. The clients will need to be told that bona fide staff will carry identification which they must be prepared to show at all times.

### **KeySafe Security**

Key-safe codes should be unique to individual clients and unique to that particular property. There should be no duplication of numbers or group numbers used for specific rounds.

The same key-safe code must never be used in multiple for different clients.

Clients & their families/ carers must be requested to advise April of any changes made to the codes.

### **KeySafe Code Holder Responsibilities**

Key-safe code holders are those members of community team who have the designated responsibility and authority to gain access to a clients home, using a security code, in order for staff to be able to open the key-safe, obtain the key to gain access to the property and to secure the same at the end of the contracted time.

The Manager is responsible for designating members of staff to act as responsible keysafe code holders.

No unauthorised members of staff will be issued with the confidential Key-Safe code.

Key-safe code holders will be responsible for the confidentiality of the key-safe code. The key-safe code holders will also be responsible for maintaining the security of the codes whilst in the community.

### **Issuing/ Collection Of Keysafe Codes/ Record-Keeping**

Staff will be required to collect clients' key-safe codes from Office staff. Staff must then ensure the safety and security of the key-safe codes at all times whilst in their possession. cabinet in the locked community office along with an individual Kardex with all patient contact details including the key-safe code.

Where community staff are still using diaries, there may be the need to occasionally record a copy of the key-safe code here. Diaries are confidential documents and should be treated as such. It is also important that the number and address are recorded separately so as they cannot be associated with each other.

The key-safe code holder will be responsible for maintaining the security of the key-safe codes when/ if diaries are in their own home and they must ensure they do not come into contact with any other person.

When a member of a community health team from the same or another team providing care, requires a key-safe code to a Clients home, the authorisation of such a request should be made via the Manager, team leader or appropriate deputy. The Client should also consent to this information being shared. Staff must follow the policies and procedures if there are any issues/ concerns around Mental Capacity and the ability of the Client to provide informed consent.

#### Key-safe Codes.

In the event of the key not being present in the key safe, staff member will initially make contact with any relatives/ carers & other members of the community to ascertain whether they have removed the key.

In the event of loss of keys the staff member will liaise with the family/ carer/Manager, the manager will liaise with social care services to provide a replacement.

In the event of theft the staff member will be required to inform the manager and put in place arrangements for the locks to be changed. This is done via social care services if they have been responsible for the issuing of the key-safe or in consultation with the service user and their family.

#### **Entry And Exit Procedures**

Clients will have been informed by the Community Health Team about their first visit and should be aware of when it will happen.

Staff will be given information prior to the first visit about the method of access required to gain entry to the home and if a key-safe is in situ.

On entering the house staff will call out to announce his/her arrival taking into account people who may have sensory problems (e.g. hearing/ vision difficulties)

During the visit the key should be either replaced in the key-safe or kept on the staffs person to ensure it is not left in the house on leaving.

Before leaving the home make sure the Client has everything at hand that they require for their safety (e.g. personal alarm, telephone etc)

After completing the current episode of care the staff member will ascertain the clients wishes regarding securing the house (e.g. closing windows, ensuring pets are either in or out as desired) and remember to return the key(s) to the key-safe.

If leaving a property after dark, check with the Client which lights they want on/off, whether they want the curtains drawn and the door locked.

### **Procedure If Unable To Gain Entry/ Patient Not At Home**

If the regular arrangement with a particular client is such that you use the key from the keysafe to access the property and you then find the client to not be at home, first check everywhere thoroughly to ensure that they have not fallen and injured themselves.

Staff should initially examine clients held records to ascertain if the client has been transferred elsewhere.

Should the client normally facilitate access to the property themselves and on this occasion does not open the door, first telephone the client. If there is no response contact your manager. It is the Registered Managers responsibility to contact next of kin (NOK)/ neighbour/ GP/ Hospital. If there is no reason to suspect that the client has been transferred elsewhere, and there is a concern for their safety, enter the property with a colleague NOK (if possible). If there is no second person available, and it is safe and appropriate to do so, call your Manager to inform them of the situation and then enter the property.

Staff will also leave a signed compliment slip to inform the client/ family that they have visited the home.

### **Procedure In Case Of Untoward Client Incident**

In the case of a major incident/ accident phone 999/ 112 requesting a paramedic, the police and any other emergency service deemed necessary.

Staff should then follow the Organisations Incident Reporting Policy to inform their line manager and other appropriate staff members.