



Document Control

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

All people using Sunbeam House Services will be supported to manage their own personal care. However, in circumstances where this is not possible or the service user chooses not to, Sunbeam House Services will provide support in line with a person centred approach.

This Intimate & Personal Care policy applies to staff in the provision of such care for the adults availing of our services. The individual's dignity should always be preserved with the highest level of privacy, choice, control and respect. Intimate & Personal Care is a sensitive area and will require all staff to be respectful to the individual's needs. As part of our person centred approach, staff should have sufficient time to get to know the individual and build up a trusting relationship before providing such care

In keeping with Sunbeam House Services mission statement, individual's will be supported to become as independent as possible in managing their own intimate and personal care needs.

2.0 POLICY

The aims of the policy and associated guidelines are:

- To safeguard the dignity, rights and well being of the adults we support.
- To ensure that the adults we support are treated consistently when they experience intimate personal care in all settings.
- To provide guidance and reassurance to employees.

3.0 SCOPE

This Personal / Intimate Care policy applies to all employees in the provision of such care for clients availing of our services.

4.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- The management of intimate care needs to be carefully planned.
- The dignity and respect of the individual is paramount.
- All staff who provide intimate care are appropriately trained.
- Suitable equipment and facilities will be provided to assist those who need it.
- Employees will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of the individual.
- Each individual will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and ability
- Employees will encourage each individual to do as much for himself/herself as he/she can.
- Careful consideration will be given to each situation to determine how many support staff might need to be present when an individual is toileted.
- Intimate care arrangements should be discussed with parent(s)/guardian(s) on a regular basis and recorded.

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5.0 DEFINITIONS

Personal Care involves assisting and supporting individuals with their personal presentation. It is of a less intimate nature as it does not invade personal, private or social space to the same extent as intimate care.

Personal care tasks specifically identified (but not exhaustive) as relevant include:

Skin care / applying external medication	Hair care
Supported eating / Peg Feeding	Washing non intimate body parts
Dressing and undressing (clothing)	Shaving
Dental care	Applying deodorant.

There may be circumstances where a client's personal care may need to be carried out in a specific and consistent manner in accordance with their wishes and their personal goals. This needs to be captured in the personal care plan where appropriate.

Intimate Care is defined as "care tasks associated with bodily functions, body products and personal hygiene which demand direct or indirect contact with or exposure of the sexual parts of the body".

Direct contact involves physical contact between the service user and the staff. It may involve the touching of both intimate and non-intimate body parts. Intimate body parts include the person's breasts, buttocks and genitals.

Indirect contact involves the supervision, observation and prompting of the service user to complete personal and intimate care tasks.

Intimate care tasks specifically identified (but not exhaustive) as relevant include;

Dressing and undressing (underwear)	Washing intimate body parts
Support with using the Toilet	Bathing / Showering
Changing incontinence wear	Menstrual care/Changing sanitary wear
Catheter or Stoma Care Suctioning	Administering Enemas, Inserting suppositories, pessaries
Medical care involving intimate body parts e.g. pressure sore treatment	Help with feeding Oral Care (brushing teeth)

Massage carried out by SHS employees should only involve massage of face, hands and feet and as such is not covered by this policy.

It is necessary that once intimate care needs are identified and agreed, they must be captured in each client's personal care plan where appropriate.

6.0 PROTECTING SERVICE USERS AND EMPLOYEES

- When delivering personal / intimate care to a service user, every effort should be made by staff to explain what aspect of personal / intimate care is being delivered in appropriate

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language so that the individual can understand where possible and make an informed choice.

- Employees should ask the individual if it is in order to proceed. If it is not, the individual must be asked whether he/she would like someone else to help him/her e.g. a staff member of the same gender.
- The staff member must refer to the individual's care plan and risk assessment(s).
- Employees must recognise the right of the individual to privacy and deliver care in such a way that the dignity and safety of the service users are protected.
- Reporting Managers should ensure that any employee who is required to provide personal / intimate care is made aware of this policy and receives the appropriate on site training prior to supporting an individual in personal / intimate care.
- Employees should protect themselves from allegations and must endeavour to deliver personal/ intimate care in a manner and an environment that is not open to misinterpretation.
- In a situation where lack of resources result in intimate care being delivered in a way which contravenes an individual's Intimate Care Plan the employee concerned should inform their reporting manager at the first opportunity.
- In a situation where an issue of concern arises while carrying out an intimate care task the employee should report this concern immediately to their reporting manager or in their absence the "Person in Charge" and Senior Services Manager at the time.

7.0 ENSURING THE SAFETY OF THE SERVICE USER AND EMPLOYEE

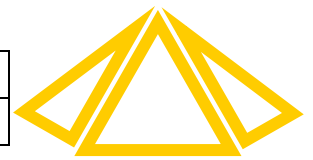
- The environment should support the implementation of the individual's care plan in a safe and dignified way.
- Any equipment which is required to carry out the process should be in good working order.
- Employee's should ensure that they are fully trained in any specific procedures which need to be undertaken in the delivery of intimate care for an individual.
- Employee's should use protective clothing such as disposable gloves and aprons as appropriate when carrying out intimate care tasks

8.0 EMPLOYEE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Every individual has their safety, dignity, privacy and right to exercise choice respected at all times.

- All aspects of personal / intimate care should be directed and guided by the Individual.
- All interactions are individualised to promote the health, well-being and fulfilment of the individual.
- Individuals are encouraged to develop a level of independence through skill teaching and the use of assistive aids which promotes their dignity and privacy.
- Before commencing to assist the individual and throughout, explain in a reassuring way what is happening and in a manner that the person understands. In this way, the person is prepared for and can anticipate your assistance
- If, during personal / intimate care, staff / supports accidentally hurt the individual or suspect that the individual has/or is being abused, they must follow the appropriate policies:
 - [Action/Incident Reporting Policy](#)
 - Follow the [adult protection framework policy](#)

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- [Adult Protection Procedure](#)
- In most situations, personal / intimate care is carried out by one employee. Where an issue of concern arises for the first time, employees must report to their reporting manager and follow organisational procedures.
- It is important to ensure that staff/ supports are self-critical and aware of their verbal and non-verbal communication. A conflict between these forms of communication may cause confusion and lead to distress.

9.0 CONFIDENTIALITY

Individuals have the right to expect that information about themselves is only shared to enable care. This should be with their agreement. Where a client is unable to give permission, the provider must act in their best interest.

10 POLICY SUMMARY

This policy is essential, not only to increase knowledge, enhance skills and promote good practice, but also to provide a forum for staff to reassess their own attitudes and values in this sensitive area. The effectiveness of this policy, its contents and our approach will be informed by maintaining and advocating for every individual's right to privacy, dignity and respect regarding their personal and intimate care.

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