

Policy Statement

At TruComfort Homecare, we are committed to ensuring that our service environment remains safe, accessible, and welcoming for all individuals—our service users, their families, visitors, and staff. We particularly prioritise the needs of individuals who may use mobility aids, have sensory challenges, or experience mobility difficulties.

TruComfort recognises that access is a fundamental consideration, especially in homecare settings where service users often include the elderly, those with disabilities, or individuals with reduced mobility.

In line with the **Equality Act 2010**, we actively take reasonable steps to adapt our services to meet the needs of people with disabilities. This includes making physical adjustments or changing the way services are delivered. Building Regulations also guide our standards—ensuring any new facilities are inclusive, and that existing properties do not reduce accessibility.

Our head office has been reviewed to meet current accessibility standards, which includes disabled parking spaces, ramps instead of steps, secure door access systems, clear signage, non-slip surfaces, and the removal of physical barriers.

We embrace an equal opportunity approach in recruitment, employing individuals based on merit. Adjustments in work systems or environments will be made as necessary to support staff with disabilities.

During initial care planning, access to the service user's home, entry arrangements, and safety measures are carefully evaluated and agreed upon with the user, their representatives, or relevant bodies. This is formally recorded in the care plan for staff to follow.

TruComfort staff must always follow our security, key holding & ID badge procedures when accessing any property.

Procedure

Accessing a Service Users Home

When approaching a home, staff should visually assess and note for any potential risks including:

- Obstructed and/or slippery paths
- Loose fixtures such as tiles and/or guttering
- Damaged locks and/or insecure entry points
- Unsafe or worn steps

Action Steps:

1. Report any hazards in the communication log and notify head office.
2. If the service user is unable to unlock the door, a key safe may be used.
3. Key safe codes will be stored securely and shared only with authorised personnel.

4. Access codes are encrypted; their method of calculation is confidential and shared only within TruComfort.
5. Staff must not agree to use unsafe key-hiding methods (e.g., string behind letterbox); such requests must be reported.
6. ID badges must be worn and shown immediately upon entry.

When Leaving the Home

Before exiting the premises, staff must:

1. Ensure all appliances are off or safely left.
2. Check heaters are placed safely.
3. Remove any cloths from near gas hobs.
4. Properly store leftover food and label meals as needed.
5. Lock all windows and doors unless otherwise instructed.
6. Confirm the date/time of next visit with the service user.
7. Lock the agreed door and activate the alarm if necessary.
8. Return the key to the safe and reset the code.

No Response at the Door

If there is no answer:

1. Try to determine why (e.g., appliances making noise, back door unlocked, etc.).
2. Ask neighbours discreetly if the service user has gone out.
3. Look for signs of absence (e.g., uncollected post or milk).
4. Contact the office if concerns remain after all attempts.
5. Management will review the care plan for emergency instructions and notify family if needed.
6. Forced entry is only permitted with prior consent from the service user or in an emergency by professionals.
7. All incidents must be logged.

Burglary or Attempted Burglary

If staff suspect or confirm a burglary:

1. Call 999 immediately and do not enter if unsure of safety.
2. If the user is present, ensure their comfort and safety without disturbing evidence.

3. Inform next of kin or advocate.
4. Assist in listing any stolen items.
5. If the home is insecure and no advocate is available, contact emergency services or arrange temporary repairs via the service user's preferred contractor or TruComfort's approved list.
6. Notify the on-call team for further support.

Training

All team members will be trained on:

- Responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010
- Basic health and safety and safeguarding principles
- Identifying and reporting hazards

New staff will undergo an induction that includes best practices for safe and accessible service delivery, with emphasis on inclusive care and adapting procedures to meet the needs of all service users.