

Policy Statement

This policy provides guidance for staff in event they discover a service user who may have passed away. It makes sure the situation is handled respectfully, lawfully and with sensitivity to all involved.

Procedure

If a care worker arrives at a service user's home and suspects that the individual may be deceased, they must follow these steps:

- **Call 999 immediately** and follow the advice of the emergency services.
- **Inform your Coordinator or Operations Manager** as soon as practical.
- If it is **outside normal office hours**, contact the on-call manager.
- Do **not move or touch** the service user unless specifically instructed by emergency services or a medical professional.
- The **Senior Manager** will contact the **next of kin**, using details from the care records, to notify them of an emergency (staff must not confirm or declare the service user deceased).
- **Remain at the property** until the emergency services have attended and advised that you may leave.
- The **Operations Manager or Registered Manager** will notify the **Care Quality Commission (CQC)** without delay.
- In all communication with CQC the service user must be referred to using a **unique identifier** rather than by name.

Information to Report to CQC

The following details must be added in the report:

- Unique identifier for the service user
- Start date of their care with TruComfort
- Services provided
- Time and location where they were found
- Steps taken following discovery
- Emergency service professionals who attended
- Whether the next of kin attended or were contacted
- Any known concerns regarding their health or any medication
- GP name and address
- Known personal information:

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- Date of birth
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

All records must be handled in line with our **Confidentiality Policy**. Any care documents or medication stored at the service user's home should be collected at an appropriate time and processed according to our medication protocol.

Staff Support

TruComfort recognises that encountering the death of a service user can be distressing. Emotional support, debriefing, and access to counselling will be made available to any staff affected.

Procedure for Detention under the Mental Health Act 1983

In the event of a death involving a person hinder under the **Mental Health Act 1983**:

- TruComfort will seek guidance from appropriate professional authorities.
- All relevant information will be reported to **CQC without delay**, using the service user's unique code only.
- All Records must be kept of all actions taken, regarding the detentions.
- If a detained person is **absent without authorisation** and remains missing **after midnight on the same day**, this becomes a notifiable event.
- If the death occurs while the person is detained, the following must be included in the CQC report:
 - Unique service user code
 - Date of admission or start of care
 - Relevant dates and summary of the death (coded as required)
 - Personal data as listed above

Training

All staff will receive training on handling the death of a service user, both through induction and refresher courses. This includes internal guidance and, where available, accredited external training.