

## Policy Statement

TruComfort Homecare is committed to maintaining a safe, healthy and respectful environment for everyone service users, visitors, staff and contractors. This policy outlines our approach to the use of alcohol and drugs across all our settings.

Our core aims are:

- To protect the health and safety of all individuals involved in our services.
- To reduce risks linked to substance misuse.
- To comply fully with legal obligations.

## Legal Context

As an employer, TruComfort Homecare recognises its duty under:

- The **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974**
- The **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999**
- The **Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and 2001**

It is illegal for any employer to knowingly allow the use, supply, or production of controlled drugs on its premises.

## Staff: Drugs and Alcohol Misuse

TruComfort has a zero-tolerance policy towards employees or contractors working under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

- Staff must not consume, possess or be impaired by drugs or alcohol while on duty or on TruComfort premises.
- Any misuse that affects performance or behaviour will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

## Distinction Between Misuse and Addiction

We distinguish between:

- **Substance dependency** (ongoing addiction), which is treated as a health matter and
- **Single incidents** or misconduct related to alcohol or drug use, which will be managed under our disciplinary policy.

## Procedure for Staff Incidents

If a staff member is found under the influence or misusing substances:

1. They'll be immediately removed from duty and sent home.
2. Disciplinary procedures will follow.
3. In cases involving illegal substances, the police may be informed.

For staff with suspected dependency:

- Support and guidance toward professional counselling will be encouraged.
- Time off for treatment may be permitted in line with statutory sick pay.
- Efforts will be made to support job retention during treatment, with adjustments made where needed.

Counselling services accessed will remain confidential. No information will be shared without a proper written consent.

Dismissal may occur only where performance remains below standard or risks persist and all support options have been exhausted.

## **Service Users, Visitors and Relatives**

TruComfort values the independence and personal choice of our service users including decisions around moderate alcohol consumption. However, these freedoms must not compromise safety or wellbeing.

## **Alcohol Use by Service Users**

Permitted only when:

- Consumption is responsible and not excessive.
- It poses no risk or disruption to others.
- It does not conflict with prescribed medications or existing conditions.

Where concerns arise:

- Discussions will involve the service user (or advocate), healthcare professionals and the care team.

## **Drugs**

- TruComfort reserves the right to decline care services to new applicants with known unmanaged substance misuse.
- Disputes will be addressed through meetings involving the service user, key worker and manager.
- Suspected illegal drug use will be reported where necessary.

## **Identifying Substance Concerns in Staff**

Where behaviour raises concern:

1. A private discussion will be held with the staff member (with representation, if requested).
2. The policy will be reviewed with the employee.

3. An assessment will be made to determine whether the issue is controlled or part of a pattern.

If a possible health issue is identified:

- The staff member will be encouraged or required to seek help.
- Paid time off for treatment may be approved.
- Job roles may be adjusted for safety.
- Disciplinary steps will be a last resort.

A formal performance review will take place upon the staff member's return to work.

**Training**

All new team members are required to review this policy during induction and will be reminded of their contract's no-drugs and alcohol clause.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_