

Policy Statement

At TruComfort Homecare we are committed to maintaining accurate, clear and confidential records to support the delivery of safe and effective care. Our goal is to ensure that both employee and service user data is securely handled and retained only for as long as necessary.

This policy outlines our responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and ensures transparency in how information is recorded, accessed, stored and disposed of.

Service User Records

1. With consent, staff must record the date, time, care delivered and any significant observations during each visit.
2. Records may include:
 - Medication assistance (time and dosage)
 - Financial transactions
 - Changes in condition or care needs
 - Accidents or incidents
 - Notes for continuity of care
3. All entries must be legible, accurate, signed and dated.
4. Records should be completed with the service user present, wherever possible.
5. Records are stored securely in the home for one month (or until care ends), then returned to TruComfort for safe storage (up to 3 years) before secure disposal.
6. Service users have the right to view and participate in maintaining their personal records.
7. Personal data is processed to support scheduling, billing, compliance and care management.

Employee Records

Employee files may include:

- Applications, CVs, references
- Contracts, appraisals, grievances
- Medical reports and training history
- Payroll and absence data

These records are retained for three years after employment ends and are used for operational, compliance and payroll purposes. Consent is obtained during the application process.

Rights of Access

Service users and employees have the right to:

- View and request copies of their personal data
- Correct inaccuracies or request deletion
- Withdraw consent for data storage or sharing
- Request data transfers to another provider

Requests should be forwarded or directed to the Registered Manager (Data Protection Coordinator) & will be processed within 10 days, free of charge.

Confidentiality Responsibilities

All staff must:

- Handle personal data respectfully and only share it when necessary for care provision.
- Never disclose confidential information without consent unless its in the interest of safety.
- Keep records securely stored and inaccessible to unauthorised individuals.
- Avoid leaving sensitive data visible or unattended.
- Ensure all records are completed accurately and securely.

Managerial Responsibilities

Managers must:

- Provide safe storage for records e.g lockable cabinets, password protected systems.
- Monitor record keeping practices through supervision & regular audits.
- Ensure only authorised personnel access sensitive data.
- Oversee retention periods & ensure timely secure disposal e.g shredding or incineration.

Document retention examples:

- Care records: 3 yrs post care
- Duty rota: 4 yrs
- Incident logs policy: 3 yrs
- Final accounts: 30 yrs

Data Breaches

TruComfort take data breaches seriously. Detection system include:

- Security alerts on staff devices
- Lockout mechanisms after several failed login attempts

- Regular physical checks of data storage areas

Suspected breaches should and must be reported immediately to Registered Manager, who will investigate and notify relevant authorities and affected individuals.

Training

All staff receive training on record-keeping and data protection during induction and through regular updates. Breaches of confidentiality are considered a serious disciplinary matter.

TruComfort Homecare