



## **Personal & Intimate Care Policy**

### **Introduction**

The US is committed to ensuring that all employees responsible for the intimate care of children/vulnerable adults will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times.

We recognise that there is a need to treat all children/vulnerable adults with respect and dignity when intimate care is given and no child/vulnerable adult should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or pain. A high level of privacy, choice and control will be provided to them.

Employees that provide intimate care will have awareness of protection issues and will work in partnership with parents or carers to provide continuity of care.

### **Definition**

Intimate care is any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure to intimate personal areas. In most cases, such care will involve procedures to do with personal hygiene and the cleaning of associated equipment as part of the employee's duty of care. In the case of specific procedures, only the employees suitably trained and assessed as competent should undertake the procedure.

### **Best Practice**

- The management of all children/vulnerable adults with intimate care needs will be carefully considered and personal care plans will be drawn up as appropriate to suit the circumstances.
- Employees who provide intimate care will be trained to do so, including Child Protection training and Moving & Handling training. Suitable equipment and facilities will be provided to assist children/vulnerable adults who need special arrangements following assessment from a physiotherapist/occupational therapist.
- Employees will be supported to adapt their practice in relation to the needs of individual children/vulnerable adults taking into account developmental changes such as the onset of puberty, menstruation, or weak/brittle bones.
- The child/vulnerable adult will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. They will be encouraged to do as much for themselves as they are able.
- Each child/vulnerable adult's right to privacy will be respected. Careful consideration will be given to each situation to determine how many carers will need to be present.

- Wherever possible the child/vulnerable adult should be cared for by an adult of the same sex; however, in certain circumstances this principle may need to be waived where the failure to provide appropriate care would result in negligence, e.g. female employees supporting males, as no male employees are available.
- Intimate care arrangements will be discussed with parents or carers on a regular basis and recorded on the personal care plan. The needs and wishes of children/vulnerable adults will be taken into account wherever possible within the constraints of staffing and equal opportunities legislation.

### **The Protection of Children/Vulnerable Adults**

The normal process of assisting with personal care, such as changing a nappy should not raise protection concerns. There are no regulations that state that a second employee must be available to supervise the nappy changing process to ensure that abuse does not take place. DBS checks are rigorous and are carried out to ensure the safety of children/vulnerable adults with employees. All schools/settings have a duty to ensure employees are not employed without a DBS check. This should be checked before allowing employees to change children/vulnerable adults.

It is recommended that the adult who is going to change the child/vulnerable adult informs another employee that they are going to do this. There is no written legal requirement that two adults must be present and schools/settings will need to make their own judgement based on their knowledge of the child/vulnerable adult and family.

If any employees has concerns about physical changes to a child/vulnerable adult's presentation, e.g. marks, bruises, soreness etc. s/he will immediately report concerns to the appropriate designated safeguarding person.

If a child/vulnerable adult becomes distressed or unhappy about being cared for by a particular employee, the matter will be looked into and outcomes recorded. Parents or carers will be contacted at the earliest opportunity as part of the process in order to reach a resolution; employees' schedules will be altered until the issue(s) are resolved.

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