

# Heritage Care at Home Ltd

## Abuse of Drugs/Alcohol at Work Policy

Policy reviewed and valid from: 01/01/20

### Introduction

Heritage Care at Home Ltd is committed to the promotion of the good health and well being of its employees and the safety and welfare of its Service Users. No alcohol consumption is permitted in any customer's homes and staff must not drink alcohol before coming to work.

Alcohol misuse can have disastrous consequences for individuals, their families and, in some circumstances, the public at large. The evidence suggests that employees who drink excessively are more likely to have accidents and are, therefore, a danger to themselves, their colleagues and possibly customers. Research also shows that heavy drinkers have four times as many days off work as other workers. Even when they are working, they may not be operating at or near their optimum level of efficiency. Even drinking moderately will affect people's ability to work and result in less effective job performance.

Drug abuse, in this policy, is defined as the use of any drug forbidden by law such as heroin or the unauthorised use of prescribed drugs, e.g. tranquillisers and slimming tablets, or the misuse of other substances in order to obtain a drug-like effect, e.g. glue sniffing. Any incidents of drug misuse before work or whilst on duty will be dealt with severely under appropriate procedures.

### Aims of the Policy

To set out conditions for the use of alcohol, by staff whilst at work in Service Users homes. To ensure the availability to staff and managers of appropriate advice information, education and training on any matters relating to alcohol and drug abuse where circumstances require it. To alert employees to the risk associated with alcohol and drug abuse and to promote a change of attitude and behaviour.

To encourage and assist employees who suspect or know they have an alcohol or drug problem to seek help at an early stage. To encourage the managers to refer the employee, with his/her consent to an appropriate helping agency for assessment, and, if necessary, treatment where it is suspected that an alcohol or drug problem exists.

### Implementation of the Policy

This section looks at how the policy is to be implemented; it covers training and health promotion; and the procedure for dealing with people who develop problems relating to alcohol or drug abuse.

### Responsibility

Directors will have overall responsibility for the implementation of the policy, including ensuring that adequate training takes place. However, day-to-day responsibility will be delegated to relevant managers. Who will have the responsibility for identifying employees who may be in need of help because of drink or drug related problems, and referring them on where appropriate.

### Training and Health Promotion

It is an important part of health promotion to encourage people to make informed decisions about whether or how much to drink and on what occasions. Every member of staff is a potential health educator and has a duty of care and a responsibility to ensure that they do not put themselves or others at risk. New employees will be informed about the existence of an alcohol and drug abuse policy and will be issued along with all other company policies at induction training, a master copy is always available in the office for carers to read or copy if required.

## **The Procedure for Employee Assistance**

Members of staff will be expected to take appropriate action themselves if their drinking or drug abusing is affecting their work in any way. Where that does not happen and it becomes evident, in whatever way, or is suspected that an employee has a drink or drug related problem affecting conduct at work or work performance, that employee will be asked to discuss the matter with the line manager. The employee concerned will have the right to be accompanied by a Trade Union Representative or a friend.

After initial assessment and counselling, the employee will be offered the opportunity to seek an outside assessment of the problem, and if necessary, treatment from appropriate agency.

This assessment would be carried out by the Health Service outside Heritage Care at Home Ltd. A register of appropriate agencies will be kept, to which the employee may wish to be referred. When counselling employees, the desire of the employer to assist the employee will be uppermost, at all times, in the mind of the line manager. The manager will make it clear to the employee that during any period of treatment, all benefits and rights laid down in the Contract of Employment will be safeguarded. When the employee is judged to be fit to resume working, it will endeavour to be in that person's original post with the same Customers, although due to changes in requirement, choice etc it may not always be possible. This will be discussed with your Co-ordinator / Manager. Should the employee not be satisfied with the arrangements being offered, they may have recourse to the grievance procedure.

The procedure established by this agreement for assisting an employee with a drink or drug related problem is quite distinct from the Disciplinary Procedure though may be used in conjunction with the Capability Procedure. Where an employee with an identified drinking or drug-related problem, which affects conduct at work or which prevents the achievement of a satisfactory level of work performance, refuses the opportunity to receive help, the Disciplinary will be invoked.

An employee in a similar situation, who accepts the opportunity to receive help, but whose conduct or work performance afterwards reverts to the problem level, will have the new situation considered on its merits. If the manager, after taking advice from a legal source and Directors, considers it appropriate, a further opportunity to accept help and treatment will be offered. Alternatively, the matter may be referred to the agreed disciplinary procedure. Absence from work to obtain help or treatment with a drinking or drug-related problem will be regarded in the same way as absence that complies with the sickness provisions of the individual's contract of employment.

Unless individual circumstances dictate otherwise, this policy will not apply to any employee who, because of excessive indulgence on an isolated occasion, behaves in a manner contrary to the standards of conduct required by the company. Such behaviour may need to be dealt with in accordance with normal administrative or disciplinary rules and procedures.

## **Drug Abuse**

Heritage Care at Home Ltd will take firm action with regard to any instance where employees are involved with illicit drugs, whether through possession, distribution, sale or use. Such acts may constitute gross misconduct and could involve the police.