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An Introductory Guide to Responding



Introduction

This guide has been created to provide you, at this current time, with the key principles you need to know to respond appropriately in the event of an alert call received into a TEC monitoring service. It is designed to be used in conjunction with your organisation's policies and procedures particularly with reference to protecting vulnerable people from harm, managing information and confidentiality.

The Role of the Responder

A Responder is someone who can physically attend in the event of an emergency.

Getting help quickly can positively change the outcome of a potentially life critical situation. Equally, early intervention through routine visits and checks on a service users health and wellbeing are a key factor to prevent situations developing and/or escalating into crisis situations. Response services offer peace of mind to both service users and their loved ones with help available within a short period of time.

What will you be responding to?

There are different types of calls that you will be responding to:

- Emergency Calls - where a service user needs immediate support as a result of something that has happened outside their control, for example, they have fallen.
- Non-Emergency Calls – Visits for routine maintenance, equipment faults or reassurance calls are not classed as emergencies and can be carried out as part of a planned programme, however the priority for these types of calls may escalate if there is a risk of harm to a service user.
- Welfare Calls – this could be checking on someone who has contacted the monitoring centre but is not responding
- Lifting Service – Your organisation may also provide a service for lifting non-injury fallers and it is important for both the service user and yourself that these services are carried out in accordance with your organisation's procedures, including relevant training to handle patients safely using appropriate lifting technologies.



Gaining Access

How you will gain access to a service user's home should be recorded on the customer record held at the monitoring centre, this information will be passed to you by the monitoring centre staff. Follow your organisation's policies and procedures should you need to gain emergency access.

Key Safes

Service users may have a key safe installed at their home. Details of the location and the key safe code, needed to access the keys, should be stored on the customer record.



Risk Assess as You Enter the Property

As a Responder, you should risk assess every call you attend. The monitoring centre should inform you if there are any known risks on the property risk assessment, such as pets in the home.

You are responsible for your personal safety, so always use the relevant personal protective equipment (PPE) provided to you in accordance with your organisation's policies and procedures.

Appropriate Contact with Emergency Services

TEC services work closely with emergency services to ensure an appropriate response is achieved to support a service user and reduce the risk of harm. In your role as a Responder, you are required to make contact with the emergency services and it is important that these contacts are made effectively and in a timely manner, calling the appropriate contact numbers and sharing relevant information in the interests of the service user's health and wellbeing. Calls to the emergency services should be clear and concise.

Using 999 Emergency

This number is specifically used to contact all emergency services, including the police, ambulance and fire services. It is essential that this number should only be used for life critical situations, fires and when a crime is in progress to raise an alert that immediate assistance is needed.

Using 112 Emergency

This number is for calls from mobile phones and works exactly the same as the 999 service, with calls going through to the same emergency call centre. It is a requirement of this service that all emergency call centres must provide a translation service if English is not the service users native language.

All 999 and 112 calls can be made from a locked mobile telephone and 112 will also work on landlines.

101 – The Non-emergency Number for the Police

This number is used for non-emergency calls to the police or to report a crime that is not in progress. It can also be used to give information, or for any other general enquiries.

As a Responder, you are expected to carry out actions that ensure the health, wellbeing and safety of the service user in accordance with your organisation's policies and procedures.

Always be prepared – you will be asked questions like:

Ambulance

- the location where you are, including the area or postcode
- the phone number you are calling from
- exactly what has happened



You will also be asked to give some extra information, including:

- the patient's age, gender and any medical history
- whether the patient is awake/conscious, breathing and if there is any serious bleeding or chest pain
- details of the injury and how it happened

An ambulance or paramedic response will start being arranged whilst these questions are being asked. Answering these questions will not delay the ambulance response; it will help give important information whilst emergency staff are on their way. The extra information also helps to make sure you get the most appropriate help.

You may also be asked to:

- stay with the person until help arrives
- call back if their condition changes
- call us again if your location changes
- if you are able, open the doors and signal where the ambulance staff are needed
- shut away any pets
- advise if the person has any allergies
- stay calm

The ambulance service may also require the following information:

- name, full address and date of birth of the service user
- name, address and contact number of their GP

- their NHS number
- past medical history
- details of any known allergies
- how long they have been on the floor/suffering from the current symptoms
- medications they are currently taking
- any treatments you have given the service user, e.g. CPR (if you are trained to do so), and the times these were started
- is there a care plan in situ?
- next of kin details
- social situation, e.g. lives alone, carer for other, mobility aids, details of any care package, etc.
- does the service user have an active Do Not Attempt Resuscitation (DNAR) statement or Treatment Escalation Plan (TEP) in place? If so, where is this located? – always follow your local procedure for dealing with this

Fire

If you are in a situation where you need to contact the Fire and Rescue Service, you may be asked the following questions:



- what is the full address?
- what is on fire?
- is there anybody trapped?
- are there any nearby landmarks?
- what telephone number are you dialing from?

Responsibility and Accountability

All organisations have policies and procedures that set out how services are provided and managed to ensure practice is within the relevant legislative frameworks, and appropriate behaviours and actions are taken to ensure service users are not put at risk through the delivery of the service. Along with relevant training and ongoing support, these provide a clearly defined framework to enable you to carry out your role. It is important that you are fully aware of and adhere to the policies and procedures for your organisation at all times.