

## HIGHLAND HOME CARERS

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Highland Home Carers Ltd was formed in 1994, and became a limited company in April 2001. It has grown to become one of the major providers of Home Care and Support Services within the Highland region. In 2003, in order to broaden the range of domiciliary services, Highland Nursing Services was created and registered with the Care Commission. In July 2004 the ownership of the Company was placed into the hands of the employees, and a Board was elected to oversee the business. The transfer into employee ownership was facilitated by the Baxi Partnership Trust, which remains an active supporter of the Company. (For more details see [www.baxipartnership.co.uk](http://www.baxipartnership.co.uk))

The management team have a depth of experience and qualifications in Social Work and Community Nursing and have lived and worked in the Highlands for many years. The Company prides itself on being locally based with no formal attachment to any national organisation.

The Company's aims are:

- To help people live in their own homes or tenancies rather than be admitted to residential care
- To provide choice by helping people understand the options available to them
- To provide a service that is as flexible as possible to meet people's needs
- To respect people's right to be treated with dignity and to feel safe and secure
- To enable people to achieve all they can, maximising independence and maintaining present lifestyles
- To respect people's right to privacy and confidentiality
- To treat people equally and respect individual difference

## **REGISTRATION AND STANDARDS**

- Highland Home Carers Ltd is registered with the Care Commission under the Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001, to provide a Care at Home Service, a Housing Support Service and as a Nursing Agency. We are inspected by them to make sure that we are meeting the regulations and are following the relevant National Care Standards. The reports they produce are publicly available on their website ([www.carecommission.com](http://www.carecommission.com)) and also from ourselves upon request. Highland Home Carers will consistently abide by the care standards in our operation and will encourage people to complain effectively when they feel that we have failed to meet them.
- Highland Home Carers Ltd has satisfied the conditions to have an approved contract with the Highland Council to provide a Home Care service and Support Work service. In addition we have a contract to provide a Housing Support service under Supporting People.
- Highland Nursing Services, which is a division of Highland Home Carers Ltd, has been approved by NHS Highland and the Care Commission for the provision of nurses and nursing care staff under a nursing agency.
- Highland Home Carers is a member of the United Kingdom Home Care Association (U.K.H.C.A.), which regulates independent providers of domiciliary care and support. We follow their Code of Practice and also adhere to the various subject specific codes of practice that they publish periodically, such as those on the administration of medication and the management of M.R.S.A. We are also members of Scottish Care at Home.
- As an employee owned company, Highland Home Carers is committed to the principle of equal opportunity in all aspects of its service. This applies in our staff recruitment and training policy as well as in the provision of care and support to service users. We would however always respect their right to choose to have this provided by people with whom they feel comfortable.
- Highland Home Carers actively communicates with our service users to encourage a positive dialogue. This ranges from responding to individual comments and suggestions, sending out forms to evaluate our service, and organising occasional day trips.

## **SERVICE PROVISION**

Highland Home Carers Ltd provides a wide range of domiciliary, support and nursing care services:

### **Personal Care**

Assistance with a wide range of personal tasks, such as getting in and out of bed, dressing and undressing, washing and bathing, shaving, toileting, personal hygiene, and feeding. This will include the use of specialist aids e.g. hoists, catheter care, PEG Tubes and feeds

**Domestic Assistance** (where it is identified as a care need and not merely as a cleaning service) Including housecleaning, cooking, laundry, ironing, shopping and prescription collection.

### **General Assistance**

This might include the presence of an escort on social or health matters, provision of overnight sleep-in cover or a waking night service.

### **Live in Care**

We supply live in carers who stay in the service user's home for up to a week at a time. The carer's remit might include all of the above services. We reserve the right to determine if such a service is feasible

### **Housing Support**

We provide a floating service to people who are assessed as requiring housing support to enable them to remain in their own homes; as such we meet the designated criteria established by the Highland Council Supporting People Team including assistance with budgeting, liaison with other agencies, and non-therapeutic counselling

### **Support Work**

We provide support workers to engage with the service user to develop his/her own resources. They have a role in educating and enabling the individual to take greater responsibility for aspects of their lives in which they are inhibited. Such areas will impact directly on the person's lifestyle and affect the direction and content of their daily living. Examples include isolation, inability to manage money, lack of social skills, limited communication, fear of dealing with perceived authority as well as needs such as personal hygiene, shopping, domestic tasks, where the emphasis is on the service user taking the lead role.

### **Nursing**

Our trained Care Staff and Nursing Staff are available to work in a variety of settings, including Care of the Elderly, Learning Disability, Physical Disability, Palliative Care and Mental Health. They can also form an adjunctive care component within the Client's own home as part of a mixed Provider care package.

### **Child Care**

We can provide experienced Carers for the care of children, with or without health issues. All of our child carers will have been fully checked through Disclosure Scotland.

## **HOW TO RECEIVE A SERVICE**

- The initial contact can be made either by the individual her/himself or a family member or friend acting on her/his behalf
- Alternatively a referral can be submitted by a social work or health professional; in this case, a Single Shared Assessment or similar must be provided
- Highland Home Carers will endeavour to advise the person making the initial contact whether there are the resources to meet the identified needs before proceeding further e.g. are there carers available in a particular geographical area
- It is important that both parties are clear from the beginning what the cost of the service will be and who will be responsible for funding its provision. Highland Home Carers will therefore provide current lists of charges for each service, and can assist individuals to make contact with the Social Work Service if she/he might qualify for free personal care
- Highland Home Carers will arrange for a suitably qualified member of staff to make an initial visit to the person who might require a service, in order to undertake a comprehensive assessment; any other person can be present at this meeting if the potential service user wishes it e.g. family member, advocate
- An individual care/support plan will be prepared in conjunction with the service user, who will be asked to sign it. Ordinarily a copy will be left in the home, unless there is a specific request not to do so
- When it is agreed that all parties wish Highland Home Carers to provide the required service, the person who is to receive the care/support will be asked to sign a contract; this will be the case even when a third party e.g. the Social Work Service will be funding the service
- Highland Home Carers will agree a start date and provide the service user with a rota to show the names of the staff that will be calling each visit. Each employee of Highland Home Carers will carry an Identity Card and should be asked to show it if there is any question as to whom they are
- Highland Home Carers undertake to review the care/support plan in consultation with relevant parties at least once in the first 6 weeks and 6-monthly thereafter. However the service user or someone acting on her/his behalf can ask for changes to the plan at any time
- If the service is no longer required, it is necessary to give at least 1 week's notice of the termination of the contract. Highland Home Carers require both the service user and the funder of the service to be in agreement over any such cancellation
- If Highland Home Carers have to make changes to a care package or are no longer able to provide a service, we will give notice in writing of 1 week or to the end of the current rota, whichever is longer. Only if it is agreed that it is not in the best interests of either party to continue, will the service be withdrawn immediately

## **RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF STAFF**

All applicants are subject to standard recruitment procedures:

- A full employment history is requested.
- Two written references are required, one of which being from the previous or current employer; if the applicant has care/support experience, Highland Home Carers will in addition seek a reference from that source
- All applicants are required to declare any convictions (Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) Exemptions) and to complete a Disclosure Scotland form with relevant I.D. presented; it will not be possible for any person to commence employment with service users until an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate has been received by Highland Home Carers
- All new Staff attend an induction course including Safer Moving and Handling and Risk Assessment. Then a Contract of Employment is issued, detailing the job description, terms and conditions of employment including the whistle blowing, grievance and disciplinary procedures.
- Each new recruit agrees to adhere to the standards laid out in the UKHCA Code of Conduct.
- All Staff are furnished with a rota, which is sent to their place of residence and lists their contracted work over a two-week period. The rota states the time of arrival and length of visit by the name of the service user. No address details are included, to preserve confidentiality
- Personal details of each staff member are retained in the office and cannot be issued without the express permission of that individual
- All Staff are subject to regular supervision from a suitably qualified member of the management team
- All Staff will be given access to a comprehensive package of in-house training, which is designed to provide the core skills necessary to provide care and support in a safe and competent manner. Attendance at all courses offered is desirable and noted in the Staff file and training register. There are also opportunities to attend external training and certificated courses. Highland Home Carers will endeavour to ensure that all staff will meet the requirements of the Scottish Social Services Council

## **COMPLAINTS POLICY**

Highland Home Carers is committed to providing a transparent service that reacts in a positive manner towards complaints or suggestions. To this end, we adopt the following specific policies:

- We keep detailed records of all complaints received. These are dated, actioned and recorded in a folder for that purpose.
- Investigations of all complaints will begin within 24 hours of the complaint being received. It is preferable that the service user or their advocate makes their complaint in writing, but we recognise the potential difficulty for people who are unable to write, and will accept verbal complaints on that basis.
- We will continue to provide a service during the investigation of a complaint unless we are expressly asked not to do so.
- If the complaint is sufficiently serious against a staff member, we reserve the right to suspend that person while the investigation is pursued.
- We undertake to inform all involved Social Workers/Care Managers of relevant complaints received within 24 hours, if the complainant wishes it.
- All complaints will be investigated by the General Manager or designated Depute.
- The investigating manager will report back to the complainant of actions taken and will agree any further necessary steps.
- If the complainant remains unsatisfied, she/he has the right to make complaint direct to the Scottish Care Commission at any time:

**Scottish Commission for the Regulation of Care  
Highland Office  
First Floor  
Castle House  
Fairways Business Park  
Inverness, IV2 6AA  
01463 227630**

## **ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS**

We recognise that risk, to either the service user or worker, will be minimised through rigorous assessment and care/support planning. However there remain situations when things will go wrong. We record such incidents/ accidents and a designated Coordinator will carefully examine what happened, so that we can learn the lessons.

Should we become involved in a critical incident, we will report this promptly to the relevant authorities, and work closely with them in any investigation and subsequent management of the situation.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Highland Home Carers respects the right of every person to privacy and confidentiality. All our staff are instructed at interview and at induction training in their individual responsibility not to disclose any information about service users to anyone outwith the Company, except with the expressed permission of the person his/herself. Confidentiality should only be broken in exceptional circumstances e.g. in cases where the abuse of a vulnerable person is suspected, a criminal act has taken place etc.

At the same time, the service user needs to understand that information does have to be shared between care/support staff in order to ensure a coherent service. Equally management and supervisory staff have access to such information so that they can properly advise and guide those providing direct care and support.

At the commencement of service provision, you will be asked to confirm or otherwise whether information can be shared with health and social care professionals who have responsibility for your care or support. The names of such persons will be noted on our records.

## **RECORD KEEPING**

Highland Home Carers maintain records that enable us to promote better communication between ourselves and our staff and the service users and key persons in their lives. Information is held on computer files and in locked filing cabinets. We abide by the Data Protection Act 1984, which permits any service user to have access to their records and any information held by the company about them. In most cases, daily records of contact by carers/ support workers is retained in the service users own home, along with a copy of the care plan.

All written records also provide valuable evidence of the quality of the service when we are subject to inspection by the statutory authorities. However we would always seek permission to use any individual records in such circumstances.

## **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

All employees of Highland Home Carers are discouraged from handling service user's money. However we recognise that on occasions this is not possible to sustain and a carer may, for example, need to go to the shop on behalf of a service user. In such circumstances, it is important to safeguard both our employee and the service user. Accordingly we would expect both parties to sign a record of the sum of money initially handed over and the receipt upon return, noting the change provided.

## **GIFTS**

Employees of Highland Home Carers are not permitted to accept gifts except with the expressed permission of their manager.