



# Care & Repair Equality and Diversity Handbook

A practical guide for Care & Repair Agency Staff

February 2015

'The Care & Repair Movement in Wales exists to ensure that all older people in Wales receive high quality, bespoke housing services to enhance their quality of life.'

# Contents

Introduction: Our Commitment	3
Diversity and Age	4
Elder Abuse	6
Disability	7
Carers	11
Gender (Sex)	12
Domestic Abuse	13
Gender Identity	14
Race and Ethnicity	16
Hate Crime/Incidents and Harassment	18
Religion or Belief	19
Sexual Orientation	21
What to do if you face discrimination or Harassment	23
Sources and Further Information	23
<b>Appendix:</b>	25
Quick Reference – Chief Officer	26
Quick Reference – Administrator	28
Quick Reference – Case Worker	30
Quick Reference – Technical Officer	32
Quick Reference – Home Maintenance Officer/ Handyperson	34
Guide to Language and the Terms we use	36

## Introduction: Our Commitment

Care & Repair Cymru is committed to equality and ensuring that all service users and employees of the Care & Repair movement in Wales are treated with respect, fairness and dignity. Equality, Inclusiveness and Diversity are core values and principles of Care & Repair Cymru and are central to the aim of the organisations to

**'ensure that all older people in Wales receive high quality, bespoke housing services to enhance their quality of life.'**

To achieve this it is vital that the services we provide are accessible to all who could benefit from them, are free from discrimination, compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and are tailored to meet the individual needs of service users. To help achieve this Care & Repair Cymru, with assistance from Tai Pawb, have put together a practical equality and diversity guide for Care & Repair Agency staff to help you in your day to day work.

## How to Use This Guide

This guide aims to give Care & Repair Agency staff working across Wales:

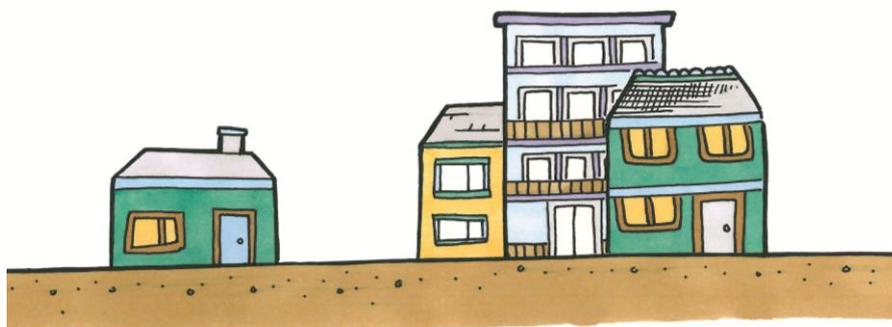
- Information on diversity and age to help challenge perceptions on age and diversity.
- Information and practical tips to assist you in delivering your day to day services to diverse communities living across Wales. Including tips on communication, making appointments, treating individuals with respect and visiting or carrying out work in a person's home.
- Please remember that this is general guidance and that you will need to respond to each person's individual needs as each situation and each service user is very different.
- Some of the information in the guide may seem like common sense, but implementing these small actions can have a huge impact on the quality of customer service a person receives.

## Diversity and Age

It is important to remember that older people are a diverse group. This diversity can impact on people's needs, the barriers they face when accessing services, the potential for them to face discrimination and on their lifestyles. Older people are protected from discrimination and harassment under the Equality Act 2010 on the grounds of Age but also in relation to the following protected characteristics Disability, Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex, Pregnancy and Maternity, Marriage and Civil Partnership and Sexual Orientation.

### Our Top Tips:

- ✓ **Treat everyone with respect.** Be aware of discrimination and disadvantage due to age, disability, gender (sex), gender identity, race, religion and belief, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation, family circumstances and caring responsibilities
- ✓ **Think about the terms and language you use.** Using inappropriate words or terms can cause offence. Language evolves over time and many words that were accepted and common place previously may no longer be acceptable. It is important to keep up-to-date so as to avoid unintentionally offending someone. If someone asks you not to use certain words or phrases, please stop and apologise for any offence caused.
- ✓ **Increase your understanding of diverse customers' needs.** Take time to understand some of the custom, courtesies and needs of the diverse groups and individuals who the agency may work with.



## Age - Practical Tips

- ✓ Remember to show respect to people whatever their age. Avoid making generalisations or stereotyping different age groups. Take care not to use insulting or abusive language when referring to people of different ages.
- ✓ Don't assume people of the same age have the same needs, aspirations and lifestyles. Treat each person as an individual and look to identify and respond to their individual needs. Ask older people to identify what they feel they do or do not need assistance with.
- ✓ It is important to find out how people wish to be addressed. While some people may be happy to be referred to by their first name other people will want to be referred to by title and family name. Be aware that titles and name formulations vary across cultures and religions.
- ✓ You will need to take into account the impact of pre-existing disabilities and age related disabilities on how older people may interact with the service. Think about how appropriate your communication methods are for people with hearing and sight loss.
- ✓ Be aware of the impact bereavement, dementia and social isolation can play in terms of how someone feels and may interact with you. Many older people will have needs associated with caring responsibilities for disabled or unwell family members, a partner or friends or grandchildren.
- ✓ You may find that some older people struggle to engage due to lack of confidence or not wishing to be a nuisance. It is important to reassure service users in order to build trust and this may take some time.
- ✓ If an older person is with a carer, friend or family member, make sure you are speaking and listening to the older person. Ensure they have a chance to speak for themselves, discuss issues or make decisions.
- ✓ Not all older people are computer literate and they may need further assistance to access online services. Be mindful of this if signposting people to information or other organisations where details are only available online.

## Elder Abuse

### What is Elder Abuse?

"A single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, that causes harm or distress to an older person (Action on Elderly Abuse)."

Elder abuse can come in the form of physical abuse, financial abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, psychological abuse and discriminatory abuse.

Often the person will be physically harmed and/or emotionally distressed by the situation.

**Signs to look out for:** Victims may not directly disclose to you the abuse they are facing due to its secretive nature, shame and fear of retribution. There are a number of signs to be aware of that can indicate someone is being subjected to abuse. They include:

- Recurring or unexplained injuries
- Untreated injuries and medical problems
- Being emotionally upset and agitated
- The older person not being allowed to speak for themselves
- Poor personal hygiene, unchanged bedding and/or unsuitable clothing for the conditions or environment
- Unexplained weight loss or gain, or evidence of dehydration noted by poor skin condition
- The older person appearing withdrawn, depressed, having low self-esteem, fearfulness, agitation, or loss of appetite.
- Abrupt or unexplainable changes to bank accounts or wills.

**What to do:** Never assume that someone else will take care of elder abuse issues. You may be the victim's first and only contact. If you witness or someone tells you about abuse they are experiencing make written notes of relevant details. Report it as soon as possible to a senior member of staff or your line manager. Please refer to your agencies procedures on adult protection and safe guarding. You may need to report your concerns to the local authority social services department safeguarding team or the police.

## Disability

It is important to remember that disability covers a range of different impairments and conditions including physical disabilities, sensory disabilities, mental health conditions, learning disabilities, and long term health conditions including cancer and HIV. Some older people will be aging with pre-existing disabilities while others will develop disabilities or health problems as a result of ageing. Agencies need to ensure services are available to people across the disability spectrum and that they comply with the reasonable adjustment duty under the Equality Act 2010.

### Disability - Practical Tips

- ✓ Remember people may have visible and/or non-visible disabilities – so it may not be apparent straight away that a service user has a disability. People may have more than one disability.
- ✓ Don't assume people with similar disabilities have the same needs. It is important to ask a service user what assistance or reasonable adjustments they need so that you can tailor the service to meet their individual needs. Only ask questions about a person's disability if it is relevant.
- ✓ Be flexible when arranging appointment times. Avoid times when care needs are being met. Remember that some medications can affect sleep patterns and as a result people may struggle with meetings and appointments in the morning. This may be a particular issue for service users on medication for mental health conditions.
- ✓ Think about the language that you use. Don't use negative or offensive terms and phrases such as 'retarded', 'defective', 'handicapped', 'crippled' or 'wheelchair bound.' Don't use language that defines someone by their disability.
- ✓ It is important to respect all assistive devices of service users (for example wheelchairs and canes). They are the person's personal property and you should not move or use them without the person's permission.

- ✓ When working with a person who is visually impaired ask the person if they need help and if so how this should be provided. If they ask you to guide them, let them take your arm, don't grab theirs. Mention any potential hazards that lie ahead and say where they are. If you are guiding someone into a seat, place their hand on the back of the seat before they sit down, so they can orientate themselves.
- ✓ If a person has a guide dog or assistance dog, never pat, stroke or feed the dog when it is wearing a harness because it is working.
- ✓ Ensure you give people enough time to be able to answer the door as it may take some people with mobility problems longer to do so.
- ✓ When carrying out work in the home of a person with mobility problem or are blind/ visually impaired, it is important not to restrict their movement. If things in the property are moved or if equipment and tools are brought into the home, this may cause access problems. If you need to move items of furniture, ask the customer where you should place them and ensure that you replace them in exactly the same position afterwards.
- ✓ Remember parking on kerbs can cause a problem for people with sight loss or mobility problems.
- ✓ Ensure you are up to date on the different benefits and grants available to disabled service users. The Turn2us website is a useful resource <http://www.turn2us.org.uk> in relation to this.
- ✓ When working with service users who compulsively hoard remember they may have other mental health conditions such as obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), anxiety, depression or social-phobia. The reasons why somebody hoards is intensely personal and triggering events such as grief and loneliness may play a part and should be considered in your approach.

## Disability - Communication Tips

- ✓ People may have a range of communication needs related to their disability. As a result it is important that you can identify the communication barriers they face to ensure their needs are met. To assist with this ensure you know how to source information in alternative formats or request a British Sign Language interpreter.
- ✓ Some service users may require written information and forms in accessible formats such a large print, braille, audio format or easy read. Remember to take into consideration language preferences English/Welsh/Community Language when getting suitable alternative formats. Ensure all documents are written in plain English and Welsh.
- ✓ **When communicating with someone who has speech and language difficulties:** Ensure there are minimal background noises and distractions. Be patient and concentrate on listening to what someone is saying, rather than how they say it. Check with the person that you understand what they are saying. Don't correct or speak for people or try to finish people's sentences.
- ✓ **When communicating with someone who has a learning disability:** Ensure there are minimal background noises and distractions. Ask open questions. Take your time and don't rush your communication. Check with the person that you understand what they are saying. Observe what the person's body language and facial expressions may be telling you. If a family member, friend or carer is present make sure you speak directly to the service user and not their companion. If possible use visual aids to reinforce what is being said.
- ✓ **In some circumstances when communicating with a person who has a mental health condition:** Be patient and give the person plenty of time to make decisions. You may need to repeat some information or ask questions in a different way. Be sensitive to someone's distress when they are unwell. People can feel frightened and overwhelmed by appointments, forms and financial decisions. If they have a support worker, always ask if they would like them present if a decision has to be made.

- ✓ **When communicating with a person who has dementia:** Ensure that there is minimal background noises and distractions. Make sure you have the person's full attention and that the person can see you clearly. Try to make eye contact. Speak clearly and calmly.
- ✓ **When communicating face to face with a person who is blind or partially sighted:** Remember to introduce yourself and any one accompanying you when greeting the person. If on a home visit explain the purpose of your visit and where appropriate, use an agreed password. Let the person know if you need to move on or are ending the conversation.
- ✓ **When communicating with a person who is Deaf and uses British Sign Language (BSL):** You will need to arrange a BSL interpreter to be present for face to face meetings. Remember to speak directly to the service user and not to the interpreter. English or Welsh may be their second language and they may struggle with writing things down.
- ✓ **When communicating with a person who is deaf or hard of hearing that does not use BSL:** Make sure that you have attracted the person's attention. Face the person when you are talking to them. Talk clearly and use your usual tone. Only raise your voice, if the customer asks you to speak up. Be prepared to write things down, if this is appropriate. Please note some deaf and hard of hearing people now prefer to use sms text messaging rather than textphones.
- ✓ **When communicating with someone with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD):** Keep language, clear, calm, short and directive. Avoid raising your voice or using language that may be seen as provocative. Keep facial and hand gestures to a minimum. Always allow extra time for the person to process the request that has been made of them. Avoid speaking hypothetically, using acronyms and abbreviations, making jokes or employing sarcasm. Many people with ASD will take what is said to them very literally. Do not touch the person if this can be avoided. Many people with ASD find touch an unpleasant or even painful sensation. If possible, use visual aids or written instructions to reinforce what is being said.

- ✓ **When communicating with a person who had a stroke:** Be aware that their communication may have been affected in terms of aphasia, dysarthria and dyspraxia. For people who have aphasia keep your language clear and simple. You may need to assist them if they can't think of a word. For example ask how it is spelt and write down the first letter or syllable as a prompt. Or you could guess the word they can't find and ask if it's correct. However if they are keen to find the right word, give them more time to respond, or guess their meaning and check if you're correct. Otherwise, if they prefer and you've understood the message, just carry on the conversation.

## Carers

You may have service users who have caring and support responsibilities for disabled or unwell family members, partners or friends. They may also be providing child care for grandchildren.

- ✓ Be flexible when arranging appointments times. People who are providing care will have limited times when they are available and may need to stick to a strict schedule. It is very important to keep on time and not be late for appointments, as being delayed will impact on this schedule.
- ✓ Carers will be under a lot of pressure. Some service users may be providing care for adult family members, including their own parents or older relatives and may also have some child care responsibilities for grandchildren. Be aware of signs that they may be struggling or not coping. In these cases you may need to signpost them to other agencies or contact other agencies for them.
- ✓ It can be very isolating being a carer and you may be the first person someone has had contact with outside the household for a long time. Take time to listen to their concerns as they may want to talk about wider issues than the topic the original appointment was arranged for.
- ✓ Carers are entitled to a number of benefits, ensure that service users are aware and accessing ones they are eligible for.
- ✓ Carers who are digitally excluded may not be aware of services and support available to them.

## Gender (Sex)

It is important that services are responsive to the needs of both men and women and that sexist and stereotyped language and assumptions are challenged.

### Gender – Practical Tips

- ✓ Language and attitudes that are acceptable to you may not be acceptable to others. Avoid sexist jokes and behaviour and personal comments that may be viewed as sexist or as stereotyping particular genders.
- ✓ Not all people are comfortable with terms of endearment e.g. Love, Darling, etc. It's important that you think about the kind of language you use when working in people's homes and communicating with service users. However be aware that service users may also use colloquial terms of endearment when communicating with you.
- ✓ Some people aren't comfortable with being in the house on their own with a person of the opposite sex, for any number of reasons. It's important to be flexible about appointment times so that a friend or family member can be there if needed. Otherwise you could offer to send a member of staff of the same sex to the appointment. Always carry your identification.
- ✓ People experiencing the death of a partner may face new challenges if their partner took on particular roles such as looking after the finances, taking care of the garden or cleaning the house. As a frontline service provider you may need to sensitively identify areas where someone is struggling in order to link them up with the assistance and support they need.

## Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can affect women and men. Women are disproportionately more likely to be affected by and report domestic abuse. People can face domestic abuse from other family members such as adult children not just partners. Domestic abuse affects same sex couples. Older women often do not report domestic abuse. The abuse people face can be long-term and have persisted for many years. However it may occur in a new relationship, for example, following the death or divorce from a previous partner. Some of the service users you work with may be in this situation. Older people subject to domestic abuse may be particularly vulnerable if the perpetrator is their care giver.

### What is Domestic Abuse?

'Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality (Home Office) '

Domestic abuse also covers issues such as forced marriage, female genital mutilation and 'honour violence'.

### Signs to look out for include:

- bruising,
- change in behaviour,
- substance misuse,
- self harm and suicide attempts,
- missed appointments,
- appearing frightened, ashamed, embarrassed,
- reluctance to speak with you or see you alone.

**What to do:** Only ask service users about domestic abuse when they are on their own and in a private place. Never assume that someone else will take care of domestic abuse issues. You may be the victim's first and only contact. If you are working with a service user who discloses that they are experiencing domestic violence or you have concerns about an individual please refer to your safeguarding procedures and inform your agency manager. If you need further or expert advice please contact the All Wales Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Helpline on 0808 80 10 800. If it is an emergency call 999. In some cases it may be appropriate to complete the CAADA Risk Identification Checklist with the service user - [http://www.caada.org.uk/marac/RIC\\_with\\_guidance.pdf](http://www.caada.org.uk/marac/RIC_with_guidance.pdf) .

## Gender Identity

When we talk about gender identity we are talking about how people view their gender and sometimes this may conflict with the gender they were assigned at birth. As a result some people will be in the process of or have transitioned from one gender to another (from female to male and male to female). People in this situation are protected from discrimination by the Equality Act 2010 under the protected characteristic gender reassignment. Some people who have transitioned or are in the process of transitioning may identify with the label trans and transgender (however this is not always the case).

### Gender Identity - Practical Tips

- ✓ People who are in the process of or have transitioned from one gender to another face high levels of discrimination and harassment. This often includes banter, name calling or even physical abuse. As a result people may be wary of or have low expectations of services due to past experiences. It is important to promote your agency as a Trans friendly service that is sensitive to the potential needs of this group.
- ✓ Often a lack of understanding of this area can lead to people making offensive comments or terms. Do not ask inappropriate questions that you would never consider asking someone who hasn't transitioned. Do not ask trans people about their bodies, what previous first names they might have had or what they used to look like. Don't let any natural curiosity about trans people override your usual politeness and sensitivity. Do not use terms such as 'tranny' or 'transvestite' when talking about someone who is in the process of or has transitioned.
- ✓ Don't make assumptions about someone's gender based on their appearance or what their voice sounds like on the phone. If you are unsure it is best to avoid using any gendered terms (such as he or she) rather than risk insulting them by guessing wrong. Always ask someone how they wish to be addressed and the title they wish you to use for them.

- ✓ If a person transitions while you are providing services to them and notifies you of this and their new name and gender, ensure all records are amended to reflect this. It is very offensive and hurtful to deliberately use a service users previous name or refer to them in their previous gender. If you make a mistake apologise.
- ✓ Confidentiality is a key issue for people who have or are in the process of transitioning. If someone discloses information relating to their gender identity you must not disclose this information to anyone else without their permission. To do so could result in you being in breach of the Data Protection 1998 and Gender Recognition Act 2004. This is important because disclosure without permission can place someone at risk of discrimination and harassment.
- ✓ Isolation can be a big issue for older people who are in the process of or have transitioned. Link in with local Trans organisations such as Unique or Tawe Butterflies so that you can then sign post service users to them if appropriate.
- ✓ It is important to remember that gender identity is not the same as sexual orientation. People who have or are undergoing gender reassignment will also have a sexual orientation.
- ✓ Be respectful of people when they are not there and when referring to a service user always use their preferred pronoun. This is important in order to be respectful of their identity. Maintaining this consistency will also help to prevent confusion, uncertainty and embarrassment for everyone.
- ✓ Do not ask to see someone's gender recognition certificate. If your general practice is to ask for a statutory declaration as evidence for any name changes then you can ask for a statutory declaration. A service user can get a statutory declaration from a solicitor.

## Race and Ethnicity

You may come into contact with service users from a variety of different ethnicities and cultures. It is important to show respect to different cultures and ensure people do not face racism when accessing the service. People from certain ethnic groups may face greater barriers to accessing services and as a result you will need to be responsive in recognising and removing these barriers.

### Race and Ethnicity – Practical Tips

- ✓ Avoid making assumptions, generalisations and stereotyping people from particular ethnic or cultural backgrounds. There will be variations within cultures of practices. Be aware of how your own background may affect how you view someone else's cultural background.
- ✓ If you are unsure how to behave with a person from a different background from you ask. For example ask if you are uncertain about whether to remove your shoes when visiting a customer's home. In some cases you may need to explain that for health and safety reasons you will need to wear shoe coverings.
- ✓ It is important to identify language needs of service users who speak English as a second language or have no/limited English language skills. For people where English is their second language you may need to change the speed at which you speak or how you say things. Take care and be patient when an accent or language hinders communication. Don't assume that if someone answers in English, they fully understand English. Be prepared to provide a wider explanation of what is meant by unfamiliar or technical terms.
- ✓ Check to see if your agency has access to a telephone interpreting service for when service users phone the office or when you do home visits. In some cases you will need to arrange for an interpreter to be present. Do not rely on family members or friends when discussing sensitive or financial matters, always use an interpreter. When arranging an interpreter ensure you are clear on the language and in some cases dialect required (don't assume someone's language is the same as that of their country of origin.) Remember to speak directly to the service user and not to the interpreter. When using an interpreter remember you will need to give more time for the appointment. Leave breaks when speaking to allow the interpreter time to interpret.

- ✓ Before having documents or forms translated check with the client the language and script that the document needs to be in and their literacy level in relation to the language.
- ✓ Remember that memory loss and dementia can result in individuals reverting back to their first language. As a result someone who previously could communicate in English may no longer be able to do so and may need to communicate in a community language or Welsh when accessing the service.
- ✓ Body language and the gestures used are different across cultures. For example in some cultures it's not acceptable to shake hands with people or to make a lot of eye contact. In some cultures raised voices or large gestures form a key part of communication. Try not to be offended if a person's body language appears to be rude or seems unfamiliar to you. As you work with a service user you are likely to become more accustomed with their day to day body language and gestures.
- ✓ Be aware that titles and name formulations vary across cultures and religions. When asking people for their name remember not everyone relates to 'Christian name' or 'Surname.' Ask people for their first or family/ second name instead. In some cultures people don't have a family name or the family name does not come last. Find out how they wish to be addressed and ask how to pronounce a name correctly should this be required.
- ✓ Avoid making racist generalisation and off-hand comments or using offensive language in relation to different cultures. Be aware of language that may cause offence, such as 'coloured' and 'half caste'. Terms that can be used instead include 'Black and Minority Ethnic (BME),' 'Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME)' and 'mixed ethnic origin'. If you make a mistake, apologise. Remember acceptable language changes over time so when in doubt, ask what the appropriate language is. Remember it is particularly offensive to describe people by their nationality in a derogatory way, for example, the Irish as 'Paddy's,' or Pakistanis as 'Pakis.'

- ✓ If you are looking to promote the services you offer to people from Black and Minority Ethnic communities get in touch with local community organisations and faith based groups that work within these communities, advertise in shops serving particular communities and local radio stations. Face to face contact and word of mouth are key to spreading the word about services.
- ✓ Be aware that in some cultures it is not considered appropriate for a man who is not a family member to be alone with a woman. When arranging appointments you may need to be flexible about times if a service user needs to arrange for a friend or relative to be present.
- ✓ Remember isolation and lack of local support networks can be a big issue for older BME people in rural areas or areas where there is small number of people from ethnic minorities.

## Hate Crime/Incidents and Harassment

People may face harassment that is targeted at them due to their protected characteristics. A hate incident/crime is any incident/crime which is perceived by the victim or any other person, as being motivated by prejudice or hate.

Sometimes people may not be aware that they are experiencing hate crime and may be reluctant to report it. Harassment and hate crime often can happen in the locality of a person's home and this can have a negative impact on a person in relation to feeling safe and secure and on their mental health. The Fiona Pilkington case (EHRC, Hidden in Plain Sight - <http://bit.ly/1Anitar>) highlighted that low level Anti Social Behaviour targeted at a household is not always taken seriously by agencies or that patterns are not picked up and this can have negative impacts and consequences for the targeted households.

**What to do:** If you come into contact with an individual who tells you that they are experiencing hate crime and incidents encourage them to report the incidents to the police, local community safety partnership and third party reporting agencies. If you feel that a service user is particularly vulnerable or their mental health is deteriorating contact the relevant social services departments, follow your safe guarding procedures and inform your agency manager. If you witness an incident it is also vital that you report it. It is also worth signposting service users to relevant agencies who can provide support such as Victim Support (08456 121 900) or local equality and race councils.

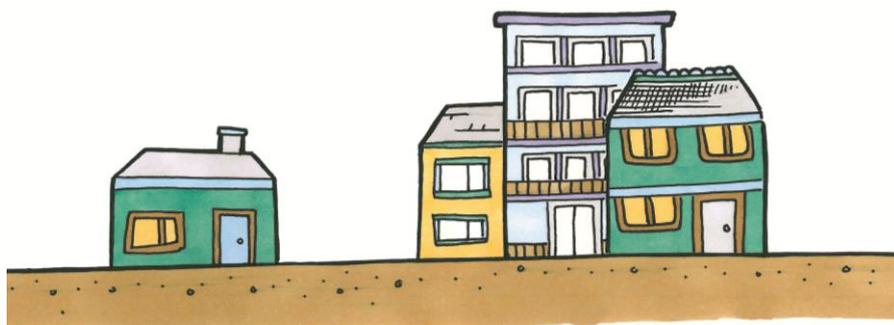
## Religion or Belief

Religion and belief will play a central part in the lives of some of the people you work with and assist. As a result it is important that when delivering services you are able to be responsive to people with diverse religious beliefs. Not taking into account the impact religion has on a person's daily life can result in you offending service users or placing barriers to them being able to access the service.

### Religion or belief – Practical Tips

- ✓ Do respect other people's beliefs as being valid to them and not inferior to your own. Don't assume that people belonging to the same faith will practice or follow their faith in the same way. Remember that people who have no religion or belief are also protected from discrimination.
- ✓ Be careful of the language you use. Some common expressions may cause offence, for example those naming Jesus or Christ.
- ✓ Avoid making generalisation, offensive or off hand comments in relation to different religions or beliefs. In particular it is important to recognise that extremists in any religion are a minority and do not represent the views of the majority.
- ✓ Remember to think about timings of appointments and be mindful of different religious holy days and festivals celebrated throughout the year. Details of religious festivals and holy days celebrated by people are available here: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/tools/calendar/>
- ✓ Remember that people may have items of religious significance in their homes, for example home shrines, prayer mats or books. Ask before moving any items around. If you need to bring equipment, tools and materials into the property, agree a place to store them before you start work.
- ✓ Don't enter a room unless you are invited to do so. It may be a prayer room where important customs should be adhered to. If you need to access a part of the home to work it's important to discuss this with the service user first.

- ✓ Remember to check when carrying out home visits whether a service users requires you to remove your shoes when entering their homes. This may be due to religious beliefs. In some cases you may need to explain that for health and safety reasons you will need to wear shoe coverings.
- ✓ If you are looking to promote the services you offer get in touch with local places of worship, religious leaders, faith based groups and organisations. They will often have a diverse captive audience who could benefit from your services.
- ✓ Be aware that in some faiths it is not considered appropriate for a man who is not a family member to be alone with a woman. When arranging appointments you may need to be flexible about times if a service user needs to arrange for a friend or relative to be present at the appointment.
- ✓ Do be aware that people may need to have a water supply if they wash before they pray. If you need to turn off the water supply discuss this with the service user as you may be able to be flexible in terms of timings.
- ✓ If providing benefit, debt or financial advice it is important to be mindful of how religious beliefs can influence financial choices and options and may forbid certain practices.
- ✓ When addressing people or asking people for their name remember not everyone relates to 'Christian name' or 'Surname.' Ask people for their first or second/family name instead. Ask them how they wish to be addressed.



## Sexual Orientation

A person's sexual orientation can be towards people of the same sex, the opposite sex, or both. It is a combination of romantic, emotional and physical attractions towards others. People whatever their age will have a sexual orientation. Perceptions people may have about sexual orientation and age can often lead to the needs of older lesbian, gay and bisexual people being overlooked. It can also lead to people making the wrong assumptions or making inappropriate comments without thinking.

### Sexual Orientation – Practical Tips

- ✓ Older Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) people may be wary of services or have low expectations of services due to past experiences. Often older people engaging with support note that they feel they have been forced to go back into the closet. Older LGB people will remember a time when homosexuality was criminalised, faced high levels of discrimination and where some people were forced to undergo mental health treatment such as electroconvulsive therapy. Be aware of how this may impact on how a service user views services, their reluctance to disclose information and the long term trauma this may have caused. It is important to promote your agency as an LGB friendly service that is sensitive of the potential needs of this group.
- ✓ Using inappropriate words, off hand comments or terms can, even inadvertently, cause offence. Language evolves over time and many words that previously were commonly used are no longer acceptable. Terms such as homosexual may be seen as offensive by some due to it links in relation to when homosexuality was criminalised. However some older LGB people may only identify and be aware of older terms. Terms such as Queer have been adopted by some people within the LGB community. However it is likely that if you use this terms when communicating with service users it will be viewed as offensive.
- ✓ People may need to disclose information about their sexual orientation to you if you are assisting them with benefit or grant claims. It is important that older LGB people feel comfortable that they will not be judged when sharing information about their lives.

- ✓ Never assume a service users sexual orientation and do not assume everyone is heterosexual. Do not assume that when someone is talking about their partner, that their partner is of the opposite sex. This is particularly important when dealing with older LGB people who may be bereaving or caring for a partner. Also remember that older LGB people may have children. Remember people have a sexual orientation even if they do not have a partner. Use open questions to encourage service users to be open about their sexual orientation and needs if they want to be.
- ✓ Remember to include same sex couples in your promotional material.
- ✓ Remember Domestic Violence can happen in same sex relationships.
- ✓ Isolation can be a big issue for older LGB people. Link in with local LGBT dinner clubs and other organisations so that you can then sign post service users to them if appropriate.
- ✓ Some older people may be offended when you ask equality monitoring questions in relation to sexual orientation. It is important that you explain why you are collecting this information. In that it will be used to ensure that people are not discriminated against and that everyone is treated fairly by the organisation.
- ✓ Staff should not discuss their personal views about lesbian, gay and bisexual people or issues. It is important that as a staff member you comply with the organisations equal opportunity policy even when for example your religious views may conflict with aspects of service provision for LGB people. The needs of the service user must come first.



## What to do if you face discrimination or harassment

As an employee you are also protected from discrimination, harassment and victimisation under the Equality Act 2010. Your employer has obligations to ensure that you do not face discrimination in the work place and has duties under health and safety law to assess and take measures to control risks from work-related stress. If you are experiencing discrimination or harassment please refer to your agencies equal opportunity policy and bullying and harassment policy. The following organisations can also provide you with further advice and information:

- Equality Advisory Support Service - <https://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com/>  
Telephone: 808 800 0082
- ACAS - <http://www.acas.org.uk>  
Telephone: 0300 123 1100

## Sources and further information and advice:

Information in this guide was adapted from the following sources:

Action on Elder Abuse (<http://bit.ly/1isgued>)

Action on Elder Abuse and UKHCA, Adult Protection Toolkit For Domiciliary Care Agencies (<http://bit.ly/1h6p5OM>)

Age UK, Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual, Planning for Later Life, Money Matters (<http://bit.ly/1eMEx8r>)

Age UK, Safeguarding older people from abuse (<http://bit.ly/1ns6fqS>)

Alzheimer's Society, Communicating, (<http://bit.ly/1m9wbde>) Berkshire east domestic abuse cue card, (<http://bit.ly/1r22QiC>)

Department of Health, Responding to domestic abuse: a handbook for health professionals, (<http://bit.ly/1ndtsQ6>)

East Durham Homes, Your Guide to Equality and Diversity (<http://bit.ly/1gKDynM>)

EHRC, Trans People your Right to change your name (<http://bit.ly/1hXKjOY>)

Gentoo Group, Diversity Matters, Part 1: Cultural Awareness and Part 2: Disability Equality (<http://bit.ly/Rr2WWG> and <http://bit.ly/1eMDENj>)

James Taylor, Working with older lesbian, gay and bisexual people, A Guide for Care and Support Services, Stonewall, (<http://bit.ly/1h6qc10>)

Mencap, Communicating with people with a learning disability: a guide, (<http://bit.ly/Rr44cX>)

Mole Valley Housing Association, Staff and Contractor Diversity Guide 2013 ( <http://bit.ly/1h6m4xT>)

Paradigm Housing, Quick guide to faiths and cultures (<http://bit.ly/1tdwWDL>)

RNIB, Guiding a blind or partially sighted person, (<http://bit.ly/1kCFLmL>)

Stroke Association, Communication problems after stroke, (<http://bit.ly/1kCGF2v>)

The Scottish Transgender Alliance (<http://bit.ly/1isj2sA>)

Wales and West- Customer Service Guidance for Contractors

Welsh Government, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, A Guide to Housing Management for Practitioners and People in Rented Housing , (<http://bit.ly/1qNZHoz>)

Welsh Women's Aid, What is domestic abuse, (<http://bit.ly/1h6pG30>)

All Wales Hate Crime, Research Project, What is Hate Crime? (<http://bit.ly/1hXNuGC>)



# Appendix

You will find in the Appendix quick reference sheets specifically developed for the different roles within Care & Repair Agencies and also a guide to assist you in relation to the language and terms to use:

- Quick Reference – Chief Officer
- Quick Reference – Administrator
- Quick Reference – Case Worker
- Quick Reference – Technical Officer
- Quick Reference – Home Maintenance Officer/Handyperson
- Guide to Language and the Terms we use

# Care & Repair Agency Chief Officer

## Conduct and Behaviour

- Always be respectful, friendly and polite.
- Treat each person as an individual and identify and respond to their individual needs. For example people with similar disabilities may have different needs.
- Don't make assumptions, generalisations or stereotype people from particular backgrounds. For example don't assume someone's partner is of the opposite sex or that people belonging to the same faith practice it in the same way.
- When talking (or having banter) with service users and colleagues don't use offensive terms and language or make offensive comments. Avoid voicing your personal opinions in a way which might cause offence to people.

## Communication Tips

- Don't make assumptions about how an older person should be communicated to, based on standard stereotypes. Instead respond to the individual communication needs of each service user.
- Speak clearly, face the customer when you talk to them and do not obstruct your face.
- Be prepared to write things down if needed or use gestures to explain things.
- Do not raise your voice unless asked to by the service user.
- Look out for expressive behaviours, such as facial expressions, body language and pointing.
- Use plain language with familiar words and short sentences. Avoid jargon.
- Check that you have understood what the person is saying to you and that they understand you. Repeat or rephrase if necessary.
- Don't assume that people with non-British accents or from ethnic minorities have difficulties with English. However, don't assume that because someone speaks English, they can read it or that they fully understand what you're saying.
- Speak directly with the service user if they are present with a carer, personal assistant, friend or family member. Ensure they have a chance to speak for themselves and discuss issues or make decisions.
- Some service users may require face to face or telephone interpreting services. Ensure you and staff members know how to access either service (including British Sign Language interpreters.) Language identification cards provided by interpreting services can be useful. These cards have a message in multiple languages that a service user can point to in order to identify the language they speak.
- Ensure you know how text relay (text to voice) services work. This service enables textphone users to access your telephone systems. Ensure your agency can receive and send SMS messages as this has become a popular alternative to textphones.
- Regularly test the office and portable hearing loops to ensure they work properly.

## Safeguarding

- Remember to report and follow safeguarding procedures if you have concerns that a service user may be experiencing Elder Abuse, Hate Crime or Domestic Abuse.

## Publicising the Service

- Face to face contact and word of mouth play a key role in spreading the word about services to diverse communities. For example get in touch with local community groups working with minority ethnic groups, faith based groups and local LGBT groups and dinner clubs. Advertise in shops serving particular communities and local radio stations.
- Remember to use diverse images in your marketing material. This help people identify with the service and promotes the agency as somewhere which is friendly and sensitive to the needs of diverse groups. For example include images of same sex couples in your promotional material.

## Responsibility for Staff

- As chief officer it is important that you ensure that employees do not face discrimination in their day to day work and that they are able to work in a positive environment.
- Ensure you are up to date with current Human Resources and equality developments in areas such as recruitment, maternity and paternity leave and reasonable adjustments for staff.
- You need to ensure staff know how to procure accessible formats and interpreters/ translation services. Budgets need to be adequate to enable this to happen.
- Ensure your staff have Equality & Diversity training as a core requirement and sign up to your associated policies.
- Provide effective support for staff that have concerns or are communicating issues; and if necessary seek to provide counselling support for staff that might be affected by issues.
- Make sure staff carrying out home visits are provided with shoe coverings.

## Producing Documents

- If you are producing documents, remember to follow clear print standards. Always use font size 12 or above. Avoid italics, underlining, and decorative typefaces and blocks of capital letters in titles or body of texts.
- People may request documents in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, easy read or in community languages. Make sure you always know how to get these formats and how long it will take.

## Keeping Records Up to Date and Tailoring Services

- If a person transitions (is changing gender) while your agency is working with them and they tell you about it, including their new name and gender, ensure all records are amended to reflect their new title, name and gender. If you know that someone changed gender, do not share this with colleagues without their permission. It is illegal to do so under the Gender Recognition Act 2004. Do not request to see a Gender Recognition Certificate. Ensure all records are up to date and reflect any assistance, communication needs or other reasonable adjustments service users may require.
- Be flexible when arranging appointments times. Be mindful of different religious holy days and festivals celebrated throughout the year. Avoid times when care needs are being met or mornings in relation to service users on medication that affect sleep patterns. Some people may need to arrange for a family member or support worker to be present.
- Some older people may be offended when your agency asks equality monitoring questions in relation to sexual orientation or other characteristics. It is important that you explain why you are collecting this information. In that it will be used to ensure that people are not discriminated against and that everyone is treated fairly by the organisation.

# Care & Repair Agency Administrator

## Conduct and Behaviour

- Always be respectful, friendly and polite.
- Treat each person as an individual and identify and respond to their individual needs. For example people with similar disabilities may have different needs.
- Don't make assumptions, generalisations or stereotype people from particular backgrounds. For example don't assume someone's partner is of the opposite sex or that people belonging to the same faith practice it in the same way.
- When talking (or having banter) with service users and colleagues don't use offensive terms and language or make offensive comments. Avoid voicing your personal opinions in a way which might cause offence to people.

## Top Tips for Creating Accessible Documents

- Follow clear print standards. Always use font size 12 or above. Avoid italics, underlining, and decorative fonts and blocks of capital letters. Keep design simple and uncluttered. Allow plenty of space on forms including boxes. Avoid putting text over images. Contrast dark text against a light background.
- For posters and leaflets keep the design simple. Avoid background graphics that make text difficult to read. Keep essential information grouped together. Use lower case rather than capitals.
- People may request documents in alternative formats such as Braille or in community languages. Make sure you always know how to get these formats and how long it will take.
- Large Print documents have a font size of 16 and above. Simple large print documents can be produced in-house from a Word document. Don't use photocopiers to enlarge documents. Send more complex jobs to a commercial printer so that picture and print quality are consistent at larger sizes. Proof read all large print versions to amend any formatting issues.

## Greeting People

- Ask people how they wish to be addressed and the title they want you to use. Titles and name formulations vary across cultures and religions. In some cultures people don't have a family name or the family name does not come last. Ask people for their first name instead of asking for their Christian name.
- Remember body language and the gestures used are different across cultures. Don't offer a hand to shake wait for the service user to offer.
- Avoid making assumptions about someone's gender based on their appearance or what their voice sounds like on the phone. If you are unsure avoid using gendered terms such as he or she.

## Safeguarding

- Remember to report and follow safeguarding procedures if you have concerns that a service user may be experiencing Elder Abuse, Hate Crime or Domestic Abuse.

## Communication Tips

- Don't make assumptions about how an older person should be communicated to, based on standard stereotypes. Instead respond to the individual communication needs of each service user.
- Speak clearly, face the customer when you talk to them and do not obstruct your face.
- Be prepared to write things down if needed or use gestures to explain things.
- Do not raise your voice unless asked to by the service user.
- Look out for expressive behaviours, such as facial expressions, body language and pointing.
- Use plain language with familiar words and short sentences. Avoid jargon.
- Check that you have understood what the person is saying to you and that they understand you. Repeat or rephrase if necessary.
- Don't assume that people with non-British accents or from ethnic minorities have difficulties with English. However, don't assume that because someone speaks English, they can read it or that they fully understand what you're saying.
- Speak directly with the service user if they are present with a carer, personal assistant, friend or family member. Ensure they have a chance to speak for themselves and discuss issues or make decisions.
- Some service users may require face to face or telephone interpreting services. Ensure you know how to access either service (including British Sign Language interpreters.) Language identification cards provided by interpreting services can be useful. These cards have a message in multiple languages that a service user can point to in order to identify the language they speak.
- Ensure you know how text relay (text to voice) services work. This service enables textphone users to access your telephone systems. Ensure your agency can receive and send SMS messages as this has become a popular alternative to textphones.
- Regularly test the office and portable hearing loops to ensure they work properly.

## Keeping Records Up to Date

- If a person transitions (is changing gender) while your agency is working with them and they tell you about it, including their new name and gender, ensure all records are amended to reflect their new title, name and gender. If you know that someone changed gender, do not share this with colleagues without their permission. It is illegal to do so under the Gender Recognition Act 2004. Do not request to see a Gender Recognition Certificate.
- Ensure all records are up to date and reflect any assistance, communication needs or other reasonable adjustments service users may require.

# Care & Repair Agency Case Worker

## Conduct and Behaviour

- Always be respectful, friendly and polite.
- Treat each person as an individual and identify and respond to their individual needs. For example people with similar disabilities may have different needs.
- Don't make assumptions, generalisations or stereotype people from particular backgrounds. For example don't assume someone's partner is of the opposite sex or that people belonging to the same faith practice it in the same way.
- When talking (or having banter) with service users and colleagues don't use offensive terms and language or make offensive comments. Avoid voicing your personal opinions in a way which might cause offence to people.

## Communication Tips

- Don't make assumptions about how an older person should be communicated to, based on standard stereotypes. Instead respond to the individual communication needs of each service user.
- Speak clearly, face the customer when you talk to them and do not obstruct your face.
- Be prepared to write things down if needed or use gestures to explain things.
- Do not raise your voice unless asked to by the service user.
- Look out for expressive behaviours, such as facial expressions, body language and pointing.
- Use plain language with familiar words and short sentences. Avoid jargon.
- Check that you have understood what the person is saying to you and that they understand you. Repeat or rephrase if necessary.
- Don't assume that people with non-British accents or from ethnic minorities have difficulties with English. However, don't assume that because someone speaks English, they can read it or that they fully understand what you're saying.
- Speak directly with the service user if they are present with a carer, personal assistant, friend or family member. Ensure they have a chance to speak for themselves and discuss issues or make decisions.
- Some service users may require face to face or telephone interpreting services. Ensure you know how to access either service (including British Sign Language interpreters.) Language identification cards provided by interpreting services can be useful. These cards have a message in multiple languages that a service user can point to in order to identify the language they speak.
- Ensure you know how text relay (text to voice) services work. This service enables textphone users to access your telephone systems. Ensure your agency can receive and send SMS messages as this has become a popular alternative to textphones.

## Safeguarding

- Remember to report and follow safeguarding procedures if you have concerns that a service user may be experiencing Elder Abuse, Hate Crime or Domestic Abuse.

## Home Visits

- Show your I.D and introduce yourself and any colleagues to the customer by name.
- Call ahead whenever possible to let the customer know when to expect you. If you are running late always notify the customer.
- Be flexible when arranging appointment times. Be mindful of different religious holy days and festivals celebrated throughout the year. Avoid times when care needs are being met or mornings in relation to service users on medication that affect sleep patterns. Some people may need to arrange for a family member or support worker to be present.
- Give people enough time to answer the door as it may take some people longer to do so.
- Some people aren't comfortable with being in the house on their own with a person of the opposite sex, for any number of reasons. Appointments may need to be arranged so that a friend or family member can be there if needed. Otherwise you could offer to send a staff member of the same sex to the appointment.
- Ask service users whether they want you to remove your shoes when entering their homes. Always carry shoe coverings, so you can wear them if you cannot remove your shoes for health and safety reasons.

## Support and Signposting

- It is important people feel comfortable that they will not be judged when sharing information about their lives. For example older lesbian, gay and bisexual service users may need to disclose information about their sexual orientation to you if you are assisting them with benefit or grant claims.
- When providing benefit, debt or financial advice it is important to be mindful of how religious beliefs can influence financial choices and options and may forbid certain practices such as the use of interest bearing loans.
- Don't signpost people to online resources only.
- Isolation can be a big issue for older people and especially for people from minority groups or carers, particularly if they live in rural areas. You may be able to link in with support or community groups such as local LGBT dinner clubs, which may be able to help.

## Producing Documents

- If you are producing documents, remember to follow clear print standards. Always use font size 12 or above. Avoid italics, underlining, and decorative typefaces and blocks of capital letters in titles or body of texts.
- People may request documents in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, easy read or in community languages. Make sure you always know how to get these formats and how long it will take.

## Keeping Records Up to Date

- If a person transitions (is changing gender) while your agency is working with them and they tell you about it, including their new name and gender, ensure all records are amended to reflect their new title, name and gender. If you know that someone changed gender, do not share this with colleagues without their permission. It is illegal to do so under the Gender Recognition Act 2004. Do not request to see a Gender Recognition Certificate.
- Ensure all records are up to date and reflect any assistance, communication needs or other reasonable adjustments service users may require.

# Care & Repair Agency Technical Officer

## Conduct and Behaviour

- Always be respectful, friendly and polite.
- Treat each person as an individual and identify and respond to their individual needs. For example people with similar disabilities may have different needs.
- Don't make assumptions, generalisations or stereotype people from particular backgrounds. For example don't assume someone's partner is of the opposite sex or that people belonging to the same faith practice it in the same way.
- When talking (or having banter) with service users and colleagues don't use offensive terms and language or make offensive comments. Avoid voicing your personal opinions in a way which might cause offence to people.

## Communication Tips

- Don't make assumptions about how an older person should be communicated to, based on standard stereotypes. Instead respond to the individual communication needs of each service user.
- Speak clearly, face the customer when you talk to them and do not obstruct your face.
- Be prepared to write things down if needed or use gestures to explain things.
- Do not raise your voice unless asked to by the service user.
- Look out for expressive behaviours, such as facial expressions, body language and pointing.
- Use plain language with familiar words and short sentences. Avoid jargon.
- Check that you have understood what the person is saying to you and that they understand you. Repeat or rephrase if necessary.
- Don't assume that people with non-British accents or from ethnic minorities have difficulties with English. However, don't assume that because someone speaks English, they can read it or that they fully understand what you're saying.
- Speak directly with the service user if they are present with a carer, personal assistant, friend or family member. Ensure they have a chance to speak for themselves and discuss issues or make decisions.
- Some service users may require face to face or telephone interpreting services. Ensure you know how to access either service (including British Sign Language interpreters.) Language identification cards provided by interpreting services can be useful. These cards have a message in multiple languages that a service user can point to in order to identify the language they speak.
- Ensure you know how text relay (text to voice) services work. This service enables textphone users to access your telephone systems. Ensure your agency can receive and send SMS messages as this has become a popular alternative to textphones.

## Advising Contractors

- When instructing contractors ensure relevant equality considerations are included. For example if they will need to turn off the water, gas or electricity supplies advise them to discuss this with the service user as they may need to be flexible in terms of timings.

## Home Visits

- Call ahead whenever possible to let the customer know when to expect you. If you are running late always notify the customer.
- Show your I.D and introduce yourself and any colleagues to the customer by name.
- Be flexible when arranging appointment times. Be mindful of different religious holy days and festivals celebrated throughout the year. Avoid times when care needs are being met or mornings in relation to service users on medication that affect sleep patterns. Some people may need to arrange for a family member or support worker to be present.
- Give people enough time to answer the door as it may take some people longer to do so.
- Some people aren't comfortable with being in the house on their own with a person of the opposite sex, for any number of reasons. Appointments may need to be arranged so that a friend or family member can be there if needed. Otherwise you could offer to send a staff member of the same sex to the appointment.
- Ask service users whether they want you to remove your shoes when entering their homes. Always carry shoe coverings, so you can wear them if you cannot remove your shoes for health and safety reasons.
- Let the customer know what you are doing, where you will need to work, and how long you expect the job to take. Let the customer know if you're leaving the property for any reason for any period of time. Don't leave the property unsecured.
- Don't touch or move any furniture or any other items without informing the customer. If you do move an item ensure you place it back in the same place once you have finished.
- Agree with the customer a place in the property to store tools and materials before you start work. Don't leave anything lying around which could cause an obstruction or a hazard. Clear up rubbish or spillages as quickly as possible.

## Producing Documents

- If you are producing documents, remember to follow clear print standards. Always use font size 12 or above. Avoid italics, underlining, and decorative typefaces and blocks of capital letters in titles or body of texts.
- People may request documents in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, easy read or in community languages. Make sure you always know how to get these formats and how long it will take.

## Keeping Records Up to Date

- If a person transitions (is changing gender) while your agency is working with them and they tell you about it, including their new name and gender, ensure all records are amended to reflect their new title, name and gender. If you know that someone changed gender, do not share this with colleagues without their permission. It is illegal to do so under the Gender Recognition Act 2004. Do not request to see a Gender Recognition Certificate.
- Ensure all records are up to date and reflect any assistance, communication needs or other reasonable adjustments service users may require.

## Safeguarding

- Remember to report and follow safeguarding procedures if you have concerns that a service user may be experiencing Elder Abuse, Hate Crime or Domestic Abuse.

## Care & Repair Home Maintenance Officer/Handyperson

### Arranging Appointments

- Be flexible when arranging appointment times, different older people's daily routines will vary. For example check to see whether early starts are appropriate and avoid times when care needs are being met or mornings in relation to service users on medication that affect sleep patterns. Some people may need to arrange for a family member or support worker to be present. Be mindful of different religious holy days and festivals celebrated throughout the year.
- Some people aren't comfortable with being in the house on their own with a person of the opposite sex, for any number of reasons. Appointments may need to be arranged so that a friend or family member can be there if needed. Otherwise you can arrange with the agency for a staff member of the same sex to attend the appointment.

### Home Visits

- **You will be carrying out practical work in someone's home environment. It is important that when carrying out work you are respectful to the individual, any family members and their possessions.** Quite often an older person's personal possessions are a product of a lifetime's experience and simple things can be cherished for the associations they carry.
- Call ahead whenever possible to let the customer know when to expect you. If you are running late always notify the customer.
- Give people enough time to answer the door as it may take some people longer to do so.
- Show your I.D and introduce yourself and any colleagues to the customer by name.
- Ask service users whether they require you to remove your shoes when entering their homes. Always carry shoe coverings, so you can wear them if you cannot remove your shoes for health and safety reasons.
- Communicate what the job entails and talk through any associated challenges. Let the customer know what you are doing, where you will need to work, and how long you expect the job to take. Let the customer know if you're leaving the property for any reason for any period of time. Don't leave the property unsecured.
- Don't play loud music or radios where this will cause annoyance to the service user.
- Agree with the customer a place in the property to store tools and materials before you start work. Don't leave anything lying around which could cause an obstruction or a hazard (trailing wires, tools left on the floor, dust sheets.) Clear up rubbish or spillages as quickly as possible. Not taking care to do this could result in service users not being able to move around their property or lead to accidents and falls.
- Don't touch or move any furniture or any other items without informing the customer. If you do move an item ensure you place it back in the same place once you have finished.
- Tell the customer if you need to interrupt their, gas, electricity (people may depend on machines running on electricity such as a dialysis unit) or water supply and let them know when you reconnect it. You may need to be flexible in terms of timings.

### Safeguarding

- Remember to report and follow safeguarding procedures if you have concerns that a service user may be experiencing Elder Abuse, Hate Crime or Domestic Abuse.

## Conduct and Behaviour

- Always be respectful, friendly and polite.
- Treat each person as an individual and identify and respond to their individual needs. For example people with similar disabilities may have different needs.
- Don't make assumptions, generalisations or stereotype people from particular backgrounds. For example don't assume someone's partner is of the opposite sex or that people belonging to the same faith practice it in the same way.
- When talking (or having banter) with service users and colleagues don't use offensive terms and language or make offensive comments. Avoid voicing your personal opinions in a way which might cause offence to people.

## Producing Documents

- If you are producing documents, remember to follow clear print standards. Always use font size 12 or above. Avoid italics, underlining, and decorative typefaces and blocks of capital letters in titles or body of texts.
- People may request documents in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, easy read or in community languages. Make sure you always know how to get these formats and how long it will take.

## Communication Tips

- Don't make assumptions about how an older person should be communicated to, based on standard stereotypes. Instead respond to the individual communication needs of each service user.
- Speak clearly, face the customer when you talk to them and do not obstruct your face.
- Be prepared to write things down if needed or use gestures to explain things.
- Do not raise your voice unless asked to by the service user.
- Look out for expressive behaviours, such as facial expressions, body language and pointing.
- Use plain language with familiar words and short sentences. Avoid jargon.
- Check that you have understood what the person is saying to you and that they understand you. Repeat or rephrase if necessary.
- Don't assume that people with non-British accents or from ethnic minorities have difficulties with English. However, don't assume that because someone speaks English, they can read it or that they fully understand what you're saying.
- Speak directly with the service user if they are present with a carer, personal assistant, friend or family member. Ensure they have a chance to speak for themselves and discuss issues or make decisions.
- Some service users may require face to face or telephone interpreting services. Ensure you know how to access either service (including British Sign Language interpreters.) Language identification cards provided by interpreting services can be useful. These cards have a message in multiple languages that a service user can point to in order to identify the language they speak.
- Ensure you know how text relay (text to voice) services work. This service enables textphone users to access your telephone systems. Some service users may prefer to send SMS messages.

## Language and the Terms We Use

Think about the language and terms you use. The use of outdated or offensive terminology in the workplace with colleagues or with service users can demonstrate a lack of understanding and respect. Repeat or deliberate use of inappropriate language could amount to bullying, harassment and discrimination. Remember, acceptable terms change over time and this can sometime cause confusion. The table below hopes to give you some guidance in relation to this:

Ethnicity and Race	
To Use	Don't Use
Black (should be used as an adjective e.g. Black people.) It refers to people of African or African/Caribbean ethnic origin. People may also identify as Black British or Black Welsh. Black is often used as a general term, however people may prefer to describe themselves in relation to their national, religious or other ethnic identity.	Coloured, Negro, Black shouldn't be used as a noun as in 'Blacks' or 'there's another black.'
Identity can be complex and that is why, when you need to refer to someone's origin, it is always better to ask them what term they use in relation to their ethnic, cultural or national background to avoid offence. This enables you to use the term preferred by the individual.	Although broad classifications are used in equality monitoring for ethnic origin such as Asian and African, people may not identify with these terms. They may prefer to be identified by national and other ethnic or religious distinctions and may come from distinct minorities within countries.
Welsh, Scottish, Irish, Pakistani, Chinese	Taffs, Jocks, Paddies, Pakis, Chinks etc.
Mixed Ethnicity, Mixed Ethnic Group or Mixed Ethnic Origin, Mixed Race	Half caste
Black and Minority Ethnic communities (BME), Ethnic Minorities/ Minority Ethnic communities, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME)	Other, non-white, Ethnic Welsh and British shouldn't be used as a synonym for White.
Gypsies and Travellers	Gippos, Tinkers, Pikies,

Gender Identity	
To Use	Don't Use
Trans, Transgender	Tranny, Transvestite, She-male
Always refer to people in their preferred gender	Be careful with your usage of pronouns.

Disability	
To Use	Don't Use
Disabled people	The disabled, the handicapped, people with disabilities, invalid
Has Parkinson's disease	Afflicted by, Suffers from, Victim of Parkinson's disease
Wheelchair user	Confined to a wheelchair, wheelchair-bound
Person with a learning disability (singular) with learning disabilities (Plural)	Mentally handicapped, mentally defective, retarded, mongol, cretin, subnormal
Person with cerebral palsy	Spastic
Non- disabled	Able-bodied, Normal
Person with a mental health condition/ mental health problem	Mental patient, insane , mad, crazy, loony
deaf, user of British Sign Language (BSL), person with a hearing impairment	Deaf and Dumb, deaf mute
People with visual impairments, blind people, blind and partially sighted people	The Blind
Person with epilepsy, Person with depression, Someone who has epilepsy etc.	An epileptic, A diabetic, A depressive etc.
Someone with restricted growth or short stature	Dwarf , midget
Accessible Toilet	Disabled Toilets

Sexual Orientation	
To Use	Don't Use
Lesbian/ Gay Women, Gay/ Gay Man, Bisexual, Heterosexual	Use of words such as gay in derogatory or negative way. Offensive terms such as Poof, Dyke. Homosexual is seen as offensive by some people however some older LGB people may define themselves as homosexual rather than gay. Calling someone queer is usually offensive (unless they expressly define themselves as Queer)
When asking someone about partners/ spouses etc. ask in a gender neutral manner, for example "Where does your partner work" or "Where do they work?"	Avoid terms/phrases that assume everyone is heterosexual.

<b>Age</b>	
<b>To Use</b>	<b>Don't Use</b>
Older People, Services for Older People, Elders (this terms is often used in ethnic minority communities)	The Elderly, the Aged, Grandad/ Grandma (when out of context,) Old Fool, Old Codger, Old Dear, Old Bidy, Just like an old women/ Spinster, past it
Young Person/ People	Child, Kid (when referring to an adult),(a)Youth/ Youngster

<b>Religion and Belief</b>
<b>Don't Use</b>
The inappropriate use of names which are held to be sacred may cause offence to some people e.g. outcries of 'oh God' and 'Jesus Christ' in sentences.
Calling someone a fundamentalist or extremist because they belong to a particular religion.
Making derogatory and prejudice sectarian comments in relation to people of different denominations within a faith/religion you belong to. Examples of different denominations include Protestants and Catholics in Christianity, Sunni and Shia in Islam and Orthodox and Reform in Judaism.

<b>Gender</b>
<b>Don't Use</b>
Some people are uncomfortable with terms of endearment such as love and darling.
Avoid gender specific titles such as Chairman/Policeman; use Chairperson/Police Officer instead.

# Care & Repair Agency Administrator

## Conduct and Behaviour

- Always be respectful, friendly and polite.
- Treat each person as an individual and identify and respond to their individual needs. For example people with similar disabilities may have different needs.
- Don't make assumptions, generalisations or stereotype people from particular backgrounds. For example don't assume someone's partner is of the opposite sex or that people belonging to the same faith practice it in the same way.
- When talking (or having banter) with service users and colleagues don't use offensive terms and language or make offensive comments. Avoid voicing your personal opinions in a way which might cause offence to people.

## Top Tips for Creating Accessible Documents

- Follow clear print standards. Always use font size 12 or above. Avoid italics, underlining, and decorative fonts and blocks of capital letters. Keep design simple and uncluttered. Allow plenty of space on forms including boxes. Avoid putting text over images. Contrast dark text against a light background.
- For posters and leaflets keep the design simple. Avoid background graphics that make text difficult to read. Keep essential information grouped together. Use lower case rather than capitals.
- People may request documents in alternative formats such as Braille or in community languages. Make sure you always know how to get these formats and how long it will take.
- Large Print documents have a font size of 16 and above. Simple large print documents can be produced in-house from a Word document. Don't use photocopiers to enlarge documents. Send more complex jobs to a commercial printer so that picture and print quality are consistent at larger sizes. Proof read all large print versions to amend any formatting issues.

## Greeting People

- Ask people how they wish to be addressed and the title they want you to use. Titles and name formulations vary across cultures and religions. In some cultures people don't have a family name or the family name does not come last. Ask people for their first name instead of asking for their Christian name.
- Remember body language and the gestures used are different across cultures. Don't offer a hand to shake wait for the service user to offer.
- Avoid making assumptions about someone's gender based on their appearance or what their voice sounds like on the phone. If you are unsure avoid using gendered terms such as he or she.

## Safeguarding

- Remember to report and follow safeguarding procedures if you have concerns that a service user may be experiencing Elder Abuse, Hate Crime or Domestic Abuse.

## Communication Tips

- Don't make assumptions about how an older person should be communicated to, based on standard stereotypes. Instead respond to the individual communication needs of each service user.
- Speak clearly, face the customer when you talk to them and do not obstruct your face.
- Be prepared to write things down if needed or use gestures to explain things.
- Do not raise your voice unless asked to by the service user.
- Look out for expressive behaviours, such as facial expressions, body language and pointing.
- Use plain language with familiar words and short sentences. Avoid jargon.
- Check that you have understood what the person is saying to you and that they understand you. Repeat or rephrase if necessary.
- Don't assume that people with non-British accents or from ethnic minorities have difficulties with English. However, don't assume that because someone speaks English, they can read it or that they fully understand what you're saying.
- Speak directly with the service user if they are present with a carer, personal assistant, friend or family member. Ensure they have a chance to speak for themselves and discuss issues or make decisions.
- Some service users may require face to face or telephone interpreting services. Ensure you know how to access either service (including British Sign Language interpreters.) Language identification cards provided by interpreting services can be useful. These cards have a message in multiple languages that a service user can point to in order to identify the language they speak.
- Ensure you know how text relay (text to voice) services work. This service enables textphone users to access your telephone systems. Ensure your agency can receive and send SMS messages as this has become a popular alternative to textphones.
- Regularly test the office and portable hearing loops to ensure they work properly.

## Keeping Records Up to Date

- If a person transitions (is changing gender) while your agency is working with them and they tell you about it, including their new name and gender, ensure all records are amended to reflect their new title, name and gender. If you know that someone changed gender, do not share this with colleagues without their permission. It is illegal to do so under the Gender Recognition Act 2004. Do not request to see a Gender Recognition Certificate.
- Ensure all records are up to date and reflect any assistance, communication needs or other reasonable adjustments service users may require.

# Care & Repair Agency Case Worker

## Conduct and Behaviour

- Always be respectful, friendly and polite.
- Treat each person as an individual and identify and respond to their individual needs. For example people with similar disabilities may have different needs.
- Don't make assumptions, generalisations or stereotype people from particular backgrounds. For example don't assume someone's partner is of the opposite sex or that people belonging to the same faith practice it in the same way.
- When talking (or having banter) with service users and colleagues don't use offensive terms and language or make offensive comments. Avoid voicing your personal opinions in a way which might cause offence to people.

## Communication Tips

- Don't make assumptions about how an older person should be communicated to, based on standard stereotypes. Instead respond to the individual communication needs of each service user.
- Speak clearly, face the customer when you talk to them and do not obstruct your face.
- Be prepared to write things down if needed or use gestures to explain things.
- Do not raise your voice unless asked to by the service user.
- Look out for expressive behaviours, such as facial expressions, body language and pointing.
- Use plain language with familiar words and short sentences. Avoid jargon.
- Check that you have understood what the person is saying to you and that they understand you. Repeat or rephrase if necessary.
- Don't assume that people with non-British accents or from ethnic minorities have difficulties with English. However, don't assume that because someone speaks English, they can read it or that they fully understand what you're saying.
- Speak directly with the service user if they are present with a carer, personal assistant, friend or family member. Ensure they have a chance to speak for themselves and discuss issues or make decisions.
- Some service users may require face to face or telephone interpreting services. Ensure you know how to access either service (including British Sign Language interpreters.) Language identification cards provided by interpreting services can be useful. These cards have a message in multiple languages that a service user can point to in order to identify the language they speak.
- Ensure you know how text relay (text to voice) services work. This service enables textphone users to access your telephone systems. Ensure your agency can receive and send SMS messages as this has become a popular alternative to textphones.

## Safeguarding

- Remember to report and follow safeguarding procedures if you have concerns that a service user may be experiencing Elder Abuse, Hate Crime or Domestic Abuse.

## Home Visits

- Show your I.D and introduce yourself and any colleagues to the customer by name.
- Call ahead whenever possible to let the customer know when to expect you. If you are running late always notify the customer.
- Be flexible when arranging appointment times. Be mindful of different religious holy days and festivals celebrated throughout the year. Avoid times when care needs are being met or mornings in relation to service users on medication that affect sleep patterns. Some people may need to arrange for a family member or support worker to be present.
- Give people enough time to answer the door as it may take some people longer to do so.
- Some people aren't comfortable with being in the house on their own with a person of the opposite sex, for any number of reasons. Appointments may need to be arranged so that a friend or family member can be there if needed. Otherwise you could offer to send a staff member of the same sex to the appointment.
- Ask service users whether they want you to remove your shoes when entering their homes. Always carry shoe coverings, so you can wear them if you cannot remove your shoes for health and safety reasons.

## Support and Signposting

- It is important people feel comfortable that they will not be judged when sharing information about their lives. For example older lesbian, gay and bisexual service users may need to disclose information about their sexual orientation to you if you are assisting them with benefit or grant claims.
- When providing benefit, debt or financial advice it is important to be mindful of how religious beliefs can influence financial choices and options and may forbid certain practices such as the use of interest bearing loans.
- Don't signpost people to online resources only.
- Isolation can be a big issue for older people and especially for people from minority groups or carers, particularly if they live in rural areas. You may be able to link in with support or community groups such as local LGBT dinner clubs, which may be able to help.

## Producing Documents

- If you are producing documents, remember to follow clear print standards. Always use font size 12 or above. Avoid italics, underlining, and decorative typefaces and blocks of capital letters in titles or body of texts.
- People may request documents in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, easy read or in community languages. Make sure you always know how to get these formats and how long it will take.

## Keeping Records Up to Date

- If a person transitions (is changing gender) while your agency is working with them and they tell you about it, including their new name and gender, ensure all records are amended to reflect their new title, name and gender. If you know that someone changed gender, do not share this with colleagues without their permission. It is illegal to do so under the Gender Recognition Act 2004. Do not request to see a Gender Recognition Certificate.
- Ensure all records are up to date and reflect any assistance, communication needs or other reasonable adjustments service users may require.

# Care & Repair Agency Chief Officer

## Conduct and Behaviour

- Always be respectful, friendly and polite.
- Treat each person as an individual and identify and respond to their individual needs. For example people with similar disabilities may have different needs.
- Don't make assumptions, generalisations or stereotype people from particular backgrounds. For example don't assume someone's partner is of the opposite sex or that people belonging to the same faith practice it in the same way.
- When talking (or having banter) with service users and colleagues don't use offensive terms and language or make offensive comments. Avoid voicing your personal opinions in a way which might cause offence to people.

## Communication Tips

- Don't make assumptions about how an older person should be communicated to, based on standard stereotypes. Instead respond to the individual communication needs of each service user.
- Speak clearly, face the customer when you talk to them and do not obstruct your face.
- Be prepared to write things down if needed or use gestures to explain things.
- Do not raise your voice unless asked to by the service user.
- Look out for expressive behaviours, such as facial expressions, body language and pointing.
- Use plain language with familiar words and short sentences. Avoid jargon.
- Check that you have understood what the person is saying to you and that they understand you. Repeat or rephrase if necessary.
- Don't assume that people with non-British accents or from ethnic minorities have difficulties with English. However, don't assume that because someone speaks English, they can read it or that they fully understand what you're saying.
- Speak directly with the service user if they are present with a carer, personal assistant, friend or family member. Ensure they have a chance to speak for themselves and discuss issues or make decisions.
- Some service users may require face to face or telephone interpreting services. Ensure you and staff members know how to access either service (including British Sign Language interpreters.) Language identification cards provided by interpreting services can be useful. These cards have a message in multiple languages that a service user can point to in order to identify the language they speak.
- Ensure you know how text relay (text to voice) services work. This service enables textphone users to access your telephone systems. Ensure your agency can receive and send SMS messages as this has become a popular alternative to textphones.
- Regularly test the office and portable hearing loops to ensure they work properly.

## Safeguarding

- Remember to report and follow safeguarding procedures if you have concerns that a service user may be experiencing Elder Abuse, Hate Crime or Domestic Abuse.

### Publicising the Service

- Face to face contact and word of mouth play a key role in spreading the word about services to diverse communities. For example get in touch with local community groups working with minority ethnic groups, faith based groups and local LGBT groups and dinner clubs. Advertise in shops serving particular communities and local radio stations.
- Remember to use diverse images in your marketing material. This help people identify with the service and promotes the agency as somewhere which is friendly and sensitive to the needs of diverse groups. For example include images of same sex couples in your promotional material.

### Responsibility for Staff

- As chief officer it is important that you ensure that employees do not face discrimination in their day to day work and that they are able to work in a positive environment.
- Ensure you are up to date with current Human Resources and equality developments in areas such as recruitment, maternity and paternity leave and reasonable adjustments for staff.
- You need to ensure staff know how to procure accessible formats and interpreters/ translation services. Budgets need to be adequate to enable this to happen.
- Ensure your staff have Equality & Diversity training as a core requirement and sign up to your associated policies.
- Provide effective support for staff that have concerns or are communicating issues; and if necessary seek to provide counselling support for staff that might be affected by issues.
- Make sure staff carrying out home visits are provided with shoe coverings.

### Producing Documents

- If you are producing documents, remember to follow clear print standards. Always use font size 12 or above. Avoid italics, underlining, and decorative typefaces and blocks of capital letters in titles or body of texts.
- People may request documents in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, easy read or in community languages. Make sure you always know how to get these formats and how long it will take.

### Keeping Records Up to Date and Tailoring Services

- If a person transitions (is changing gender) while your agency is working with them and they tell you about it, including their new name and gender, ensure all records are amended to reflect their new title, name and gender. If you know that someone changed gender, do not share this with colleagues without their permission. It is illegal to do so under the Gender Recognition Act 2004. Do not request to see a Gender Recognition Certificate. Ensure all records are up to date and reflect any assistance, communication needs or other reasonable adjustments service users may require.
- Be flexible when arranging appointments times. Be mindful of different religious holy days and festivals celebrated throughout the year. Avoid times when care needs are being met or mornings in relation to service users on medication that affect sleep patterns. Some people may need to arrange for a family member or support worker to be present.
- Some older people may be offended when your agency asks equality monitoring questions in relation to sexual orientation or other characteristics. It is important that you explain why you are collecting this information. In that it will be used to ensure that people are not discriminated against and that everyone is treated fairly by the organisation.

## Care & Repair Home Maintenance Officer/Handyperson

### Arranging Appointments

- Be flexible when arranging appointment times, different older people's daily routines will vary. For example check to see whether early starts are appropriate and avoid times when care needs are being met or mornings in relation to service users on medication that affect sleep patterns. Some people may need to arrange for a family member or support worker to be present. Be mindful of different religious holy days and festivals celebrated throughout the year.
- Some people aren't comfortable with being in the house on their own with a person of the opposite sex, for any number of reasons. Appointments may need to be arranged so that a friend or family member can be there if needed. Otherwise you can arrange with the agency for a staff member of the same sex to attend the appointment.

### Home Visits

- **You will be carrying out practical work in someone's home environment. It is important that when carrying out work you are respectful to the individual, any family members and their possessions.** Quite often an older person's personal possessions are a product of a lifetime's experience and simple things can be cherished for the associations they carry.
- Call ahead whenever possible to let the customer know when to expect you. If you are running late always notify the customer.
- Give people enough time to answer the door as it may take some people longer to do so.
- Show your I.D and introduce yourself and any colleagues to the customer by name.
- Ask service users whether they require you to remove your shoes when entering their homes. Always carry shoe coverings, so you can wear them if you cannot remove your shoes for health and safety reasons.
- Communicate what the job entails and talk through any associated challenges. Let the customer know what you are doing, where you will need to work, and how long you expect the job to take. Let the customer know if you're leaving the property for any reason for any period of time. Don't leave the property unsecured.
- Don't play loud music or radios where this will cause annoyance to the service user.
- Agree with the customer a place in the property to store tools and materials before you start work. Don't leave anything lying around which could cause an obstruction or a hazard (trailing wires, tools left on the floor, dust sheets.) Clear up rubbish or spillages as quickly as possible. Not taking care to do this could result in service users not being able to move around their property or lead to accidents and falls.
- Don't touch or move any furniture or any other items without informing the customer. If you do move an item ensure you place it back in the same place once you have finished.
- Tell the customer if you need to interrupt their, gas, electricity (people may depend on machines running on electricity such as a dialysis unit) or water supply and let them know when you reconnect it. You may need to be flexible in terms of timings.

### Safeguarding

- Remember to report and follow safeguarding procedures if you have concerns that a service user may be experiencing Elder Abuse, Hate Crime or Domestic Abuse.

## Conduct and Behaviour

- Always be respectful, friendly and polite.
- Treat each person as an individual and identify and respond to their individual needs. For example people with similar disabilities may have different needs.
- Don't make assumptions, generalisations or stereotype people from particular backgrounds. For example don't assume someone's partner is of the opposite sex or that people belonging to the same faith practise it in the same way.
- When talking (or having banter) with service users and colleagues don't use offensive terms and language or make offensive comments. Avoid voicing your personal opinions in a way which might cause offence to people.

## Producing Documents

- If you are producing documents, remember to follow clear print standards. Always use font size 12 or above. Avoid italics, underlining, and decorative typefaces and blocks of capital letters in titles or body of texts.
- People may request documents in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, easy read or in community languages. Make sure you always know how to get these formats and how long it will take.

## Communication Tips

- Don't make assumptions about how an older person should be communicated to, based on standard stereotypes. Instead respond to the individual communication needs of each service user.
- Speak clearly, face the customer when you talk to them and do not obstruct your face.
- Be prepared to write things down if needed or use gestures to explain things.
- Do not raise your voice unless asked to by the service user.
- Look out for expressive behaviours, such as facial expressions, body language and pointing.
- Use plain language with familiar words and short sentences. Avoid jargon.
- Check that you have understood what the person is saying to you and that they understand you. Repeat or rephrase if necessary.
- Don't assume that people with non-British accents or from ethnic minorities have difficulties with English. However, don't assume that because someone speaks English, they can read it or that they fully understand what you're saying.
- Speak directly with the service user if they are present with a carer, personal assistant, friend or family member. Ensure they have a chance to speak for themselves and discuss issues or make decisions.
- Some service users may require face to face or telephone interpreting services. Ensure you know how to access either service (including British Sign Language interpreters.) Language identification cards provided by interpreting services can be useful. These cards have a message in multiple languages that a service user can point to in order to identify the language they speak.
- Ensure you know how text relay (text to voice) services work. This service enables textphone users to access your telephone systems. Some service users may prefer to send SMS messages.

# Care & Repair Agency Technical Officer

## Conduct and Behaviour

- Always be respectful, friendly and polite.
- Treat each person as an individual and identify and respond to their individual needs. For example people with similar disabilities may have different needs.
- Don't make assumptions, generalisations or stereotype people from particular backgrounds. For example don't assume someone's partner is of the opposite sex or that people belonging to the same faith practice it in the same way.
- When talking (or having banter) with service users and colleagues don't use offensive terms and language or make offensive comments. Avoid voicing your personal opinions in a way which might cause offence to people.

## Communication Tips

- Don't make assumptions about how an older person should be communicated to, based on standard stereotypes. Instead respond to the individual communication needs of each service user.
- Speak clearly, face the customer when you talk to them and do not obstruct your face.
- Be prepared to write things down if needed or use gestures to explain things.
- Do not raise your voice unless asked to by the service user.
- Look out for expressive behaviours, such as facial expressions, body language and pointing.
- Use plain language with familiar words and short sentences. Avoid jargon.
- Check that you have understood what the person is saying to you and that they understand you. Repeat or rephrase if necessary.
- Don't assume that people with non-British accents or from ethnic minorities have difficulties with English. However, don't assume that because someone speaks English, they can read it or that they fully understand what you're saying.
- Speak directly with the service user if they are present with a carer, personal assistant, friend or family member. Ensure they have a chance to speak for themselves and discuss issues or make decisions.
- Some service users may require face to face or telephone interpreting services. Ensure you know how to access either service (including British Sign Language interpreters.) Language identification cards provided by interpreting services can be useful. These cards have a message in multiple languages that a service user can point to in order to identify the language they speak.
- Ensure you know how text relay (text to voice) services work. This service enables textphone users to access your telephone systems. Ensure your agency can receive and send SMS messages as this has become a popular alternative to textphones.

## Advising Contractors

- When instructing contractors ensure relevant equality considerations are included. For example if they will need to turn off the water, gas or electricity supplies advise them to discuss this with the service user as they may need to be flexible in terms of timings.

## Home Visits

- Call ahead whenever possible to let the customer know when to expect you. If you are running late always notify the customer.
- Show your I.D and introduce yourself and any colleagues to the customer by name.
- Be flexible when arranging appointment times. Be mindful of different religious holy days and festivals celebrated throughout the year. Avoid times when care needs are being met or mornings in relation to service users on medication that affect sleep patterns. Some people may need to arrange for a family member or support worker to be present.
- Give people enough time to answer the door as it may take some people longer to do so.
- Some people aren't comfortable with being in the house on their own with a person of the opposite sex, for any number of reasons. Appointments may need to be arranged so that a friend or family member can be there if needed. Otherwise you could offer to send a staff member of the same sex to the appointment.
- Ask service users whether they want you to remove your shoes when entering their homes. Always carry shoe coverings, so you can wear them if you cannot remove your shoes for health and safety reasons.
- Let the customer know what you are doing, where you will need to work, and how long you expect the job to take. Let the customer know if you're leaving the property for any reason for any period of time. Don't leave the property unsecured.
- Don't touch or move any furniture or any other items without informing the customer. If you do move an item ensure you place it back in the same place once you have finished.
- Agree with the customer a place in the property to store tools and materials before you start work. Don't leave anything lying around which could cause an obstruction or a hazard. Clear up rubbish or spillages as quickly as possible.

## Producing Documents

- If you are producing documents, remember to follow clear print standards. Always use font size 12 or above. Avoid italics, underlining, and decorative typefaces and blocks of capital letters in titles or body of texts.
- People may request documents in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, easy read or in community languages. Make sure you always know how to get these formats and how long it will take.

## Keeping Records Up to Date

- If a person transitions (is changing gender) while your agency is working with them and they tell you about it, including their new name and gender, ensure all records are amended to reflect their new title, name and gender. If you know that someone changed gender, do not share this with colleagues without their permission. It is illegal to do so under the Gender Recognition Act 2004. Do not request to see a Gender Recognition Certificate.
- Ensure all records are up to date and reflect any assistance, communication needs or other reasonable adjustments service users may require.

## Safeguarding

- Remember to report and follow safeguarding procedures if you have concerns that a service user may be experiencing Elder Abuse, Hate Crime or Domestic Abuse.