

Case Study 7

Policy Development

A residential service for young adults with learning disabilities is about to begin a review of their current organisational policies. The first policy that the manager would like to review is the record keeping policy. In order to do so he is using the following National Occupational Standards (NOS) as a guide:

SCDLMC E1 Lead and manage effective communication systems
SCDHSC 0041 Maintain effective communication systems and practice
SCDHSC 0031 Promote effective communication
SCDHSC 0021 Support effective communication

These standards cover all aspects of communication, including a section specifically for record keeping and report writing.

Policies and procedures provide a framework within which an organisation operates. They provide guidance to workers on expected practice, and support organisations to meet their legal and contractual obligations. Using NOS to inform the development of policies and procedures provides assurance that these will reflect best practice and nationally agreed standards.

Please note that all organisations may have a different approach to how they structure a policy but most will follow a general format and should cover the areas listed below:

Policy Statement

Scope

Regulatory Framework/Legislation/Other policies

Responsibilities and Procedures

Monitoring and Review

Policy Statement

A policy statement provides a broad outline and framework for the particular policy area.

The content of the NOS could be reflected in the overall policy statement for record keeping as follows:

The record keeping and report writing policy and procedure sets out how records and reports must be written, maintained, stored and shared in line with confidentiality agreements and legal, work setting and interagency requirements.

Policy Scope

This section will clearly outline to whom and to what the policy applies.

The record keeping and report writing policy and procedure applies to all staff employed by the organisation and includes records and reports in all formats including hard copy and electronic.

Related Policies and procedures/Legislation

This section will look at what other policies and procedures relate to this policy. For example

The record keeping and report writing policy must be read alongside the following:

Safeguarding policy and procedure

Confidentiality policy and procedure

Data Protection policy and procedure

Rights of individuals policy and procedure

Data Protection Act 1998

Freedom of Information Act 2000

National Minimum Standards for Care Homes for Younger Adults 2002

Procedures and Responsibilities

The procedures section of the policy will set out the guidelines and responsibilities that staff should follow in relation to the policy area. It is within this part of the policy that the NOS content will have particular meaning.

For example using the NOS **SCDLMC E1** a procedure for managers in relation to the procedures around accessing records and reports could be:

'Managers must ensure that all workers within the organisation complete records and reports in line with legal, work-setting and interagency policies and procedures'
(SCDLMC E1:P35)

Whereas all staff will be expected to:

'Use, access or complete records for their work in line with work setting practices and policies and where applicable interagency policies' (SCDHSC 0041:P28; SCDHSC 0031:P30; SCDHSC 0021:P27)

OR

'All staff are responsible for maintaining and ensuring the security of records and reports according to legal and work place procedures.' (SCDLME E1:P48; SCDHSC 0041:P41; SCDHSC 0031:P37; SCDHSC 0021:P34)

Examples of the key performance criteria statements in the NOS that relate to record keeping and report writing are:

SCDHSC 0021 Support effective communication

Eg: P28 "complete required records according to the activities you have undertaken, confidentiality agreements and legal and work setting requirements".

SCDHSC 0031 Promote effective communication

Eg: P29 "seek permission from appropriate people to access records and reports".

SCDHSC 0041 Maintain effective communication systems and practice

Eg: P33 "produce records and reports that encompass best practice, positive achievements and outcomes for individuals".

SCDLMC E1 Lead and manage effective communication systems

Eg: “ensure that information in records and reports is accessible to individuals and in a format appropriate to their communication needs and preferences”.

Monitoring and Review

This section of the policy once it has been approved will detail how and when it will be monitored to ensure that staff understand the policy and carry out the procedures to the expected standards.