Providing Excellent Care and Support: Core Standards

Policy

Summary: This is the first of the ‘Providing Excellent Care and Support’ policies, which describe how we provide care and support to our customers. The others in the group are as follows:

- Referral and Access to Services
- Needs Assessment and Support Planning
- Positive Risk and Supported Decision Making

These policies (and procedures where applicable) belong together as a group.

This policy applies to all services providing care and support within Genesis.

| Version: | 1.1 |
| Effective from: | 27 September 2017 |
| Planned review date: | 31 March 2018 |
| Who to contact: | Policy & Practice Officer or Service Improvement Manager (Care & Support) |

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1. Purpose

The aim of this policy is to set out our overarching approach to providing care and support to Genesis customers.

In broad terms, the ‘Providing Excellent Care and Support’ policies share the same aim. This is to provide our customers with personalised care and support which enables them to achieve greater wellbeing and independence, and empowers them to move towards fulfilling their own goals and aspirations.

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Set out the core standards that are common to all ‘Providing Excellent Care and Support’ policies and form our overarching approach to providing care and support;
- Create an environment where the care and support our customers receive is as person centred as possible;
- Empower staff to develop excellent person centred practice;
- Ensure that staff understand the wider context around care and support, and that a common approach links the care and support provided in different parts of Genesis.

2. Definitions

**Customer:** anyone who receives formal care and/or support services from Genesis. Although different descriptions are used in some of the services we provide (for example service user or resident), for consistency we will only use the terms ‘customer’ or ‘person’ in our policies and procedures.

3. Personalisation and person centred care and support

The ‘personalisation agenda’ was formally adopted in the UK in the Department of Health’s cross governmental agreement Putting People First (2007). Since then it has filtered out more widely and become the fundamental approach to service provision across Statutory (Health and Social Care), Voluntary and Housing Sectors. It underpins the frameworks described in the previous section. Its principles have been well documented, including the following, which explains that regardless of any specific approach, we are all:

‘…embracing the principles of independence, choice, inclusion, equality and empowerment as the foundations of service provision’.

We are committed to embedding these principles into our service provision while at the same time being clear with customers about what support they can expect from us, as set out in individual service objectives.

Together with our staff and customers we will continuously develop our services, so that we can explore our potential to be as person centred as possible.

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1 As described the Joseph Rowntree Foundation’s *Person-centred planning in social care, a scoping review* (2008)
4. Links with other approaches to providing care and support

We will ensure that the Genesis approach to providing care and support fits with current models of good practice in service provision, such as those outlined below. Where needed, we will ensure that ‘Providing Excellent Care and Support’ policies (and their associated procedures) reflect these approaches. In this way, we will continue to develop a culture of learning between different parts of the organisation which provide care and support.

Some examples of specific approaches to service provision are as follows:

- The reablement of older people after discharge from hospital;
- The harm minimisation approach to problematic drug or alcohol use;
- The recovery model for people receiving mental health services;
- Person Centred Active Support for people with a learning disability;
- Person Centred Planning approaches such as Personal Futures Planning.

5. Providing care and support and mental capacity

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 supports the values and principles of personalisation by empowering people to make their own decisions. In line with the Act, our approach to providing care and support is based on the premise that, as far as possible, all adults can take decisions about their own lives. We are committed to embedding the principles of the Act within our practice. This includes being balanced in our judgement about capacity and decisions that other people make; just because we consider someone’s decision to be unwise, doesn’t mean they lack capacity.

We will support staff to deal with situations in which they are unsure about the ability of customers to make decisions for themselves by providing clear guidance.

6. Embedding a person centred approach to risk

A person centred approach to risk involves taking a holistic approach to managing risk and uncertainty. It aims to consider the potential positive, as well as negative, outcomes from a decision or course of action, and to weigh these up in the customer’s best interests. By considering the potential positive and negative consequences of both taking and not taking a risk it ensures that risk management decisions are fully informed. This approach recognises the customer’s aspirations, potential, strengths and assets, and not just their deficits. Ultimately it promotes the customer’s independence, choice and control, whilst recognising the organisation’s duty of care to customers and the wider community.

We are committed to embedding this approach into our practice, and to helping our customers understand and have insight into risks they take. We will support staff to do this by providing clear guidance.

7. Balancing confidentiality, privacy and transparency

In providing care and support, we need to balance organisational and legal demands around confidentiality and privacy with the person’s choice about how and with whom information is shared (transparency). We respect our customers’ right not to want us to have contact with particular parties within their life. However, if this prevents us from providing them with support or care services we will talk to them about why this may be problematic.
We will treat personal data in accordance with our Data Protection Policy. We will seek the informed consent of customers with capacity (or advocates for customers lacking capacity) before asking for, accepting or sharing their personal data. To support this, we will ensure that local arrangements about sharing data are in place, such as information sharing protocols.

8. Staff skills, knowledge, training and development

We will support staff to ensure that their practice fits with the approach set out in ‘Providing Excellent Care and Support’ policies. We are committed to providing staff with the right skills, knowledge, training and development to achieve this. This may happen in various ways, including formal training, team meetings, shadowing, and personal development through appraisal. We will work in partnership with learning and development colleagues to achieve this.

In addition the core Genesis values, staff have identified that they need to display the following qualities:

- Active listening, empathy, compassion and patience;
- Flexibility and responsiveness rather than a ‘one size fits all’ approach;
- Creativity; trying different approaches and being innovative;
- Positivity; supportive and encouraging, giving praise and celebrating achievement;
- Respectfulness; of our customers’ opinions and beliefs;
- Openness and honesty; so that we develop trust in all our relationships;
- Being open minded rather than judgemental;
- Self-awareness, so that as workers we are able to separate ourselves and what we bring from our job, and ensure our relationships with customers are in accordance with the Professional Boundaries Policy.

We will reflect this approach and these qualities in our job profiles so as to ensure that we recruit staff who are also committed to providing care and support in this way.

9. Monitoring, review and quality assurance

We will monitor, review and quality assure our care and support activities at service and business level. This will evidence the following:

- That we are meeting our own internal monitoring standards (currently being developed, which will include the standards set out in ‘Providing Excellent Care and Support policies);
- How we are consulting with customers and staff, and how this is shaping our services.

Where appropriate, this will also evidence:

- Our progress against Key Performance Indicators;
- That we are meeting the requirements of our Commissioners as set out in our contract or Service Level Agreement;
- That the support and care we give customers is in line with the QAF or CQC or other frameworks.

10. Diversity and inclusion

A Diversity and Inclusion Assessment has been completed as part of this policy review and a copy is available on request. To request a copy please contact us at policy@genesisha.org.uk
11. Related internal documents

The following link closely with ‘Providing Excellent Care and Support’ policies (this list is not exhaustive):

- Code of Conduct and Probity for Staff;
- Data Protection Policy;
- Lone Working Policy and Procedure;
- Professional Boundaries Policy;
- Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy;
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy;

12. Legislation, regulation and guidance

The current legislative and regulatory context is described below.

- Key overarching legislation:
  - Care Act 2014;
  - Health and Social Care Act 2012;
  - Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards;

Regulatory frameworks:
- The refreshed Communities and Local Government Quality Assessment Framework (QAF);
- The Department of Health’s Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework 2013–14 (November 2012, updated April 2013);
- The Care Quality Commission’s (CQC) Essential Standards of Quality and Safety (March 2010).

National Service Frameworks, guidance or legislation relating to particular customer groups or topics:
- Valuing People - A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century (March 2001) and Valuing people now: a new three-year strategy for people with learning disabilities (January 2009);
- No Health Without Mental Health: a cross-government mental health outcomes strategy for people of all ages (February 2011);
- National Service Framework for older people (March 2001);
- Living Well With Dementia: a national dementia strategy (February 2009);
- Vision to end rough sleeping: No Second Night Out nationwide (July 2011);
- 2010 drug strategy, ‘Reducing demand, restricting supply, building recovery: supporting people to live a drug-free life’;
- No Secrets: guidance on protecting vulnerable adults in care (March 2000);
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998;

Initiatives such as In Control and Making it real are helping drive the personalisation agenda (see below); their literature has been consulted as part of the development of ‘Providing Excellent Care and Support’ policies.
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<tr>
<th>Author:</th>
<th>Teresa Carpenter, Policy &amp; Practice Officer, Care &amp; Support</th>
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<td>Approval date:</td>
<td>01 August 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approved by:</td>
<td>Policy Review Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy owner:</td>
<td>Head of Operations, London, Care &amp; Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accountable Director:</td>
<td>Director, Care &amp; Support</td>
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Providing Excellent Care and Support: Referral and Access Policy

Summary: This is the first of the ‘Providing Excellent Care and Support’ policies, which describe how we provide care and support to our customers. The others in the group are as follows:

- Referral and Access to Services
- Needs Assessment and Support Planning
- Positive Risk and Supported Decision Making

These policies (and procedures where applicable) belong together as a group.

This policy applies to all services providing care and support within Genesis.

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1. Purpose

This policy sets out Genesis’ approach to customer referral and access to Genesis Care and Support Services. It aims to ensure our referral and access decisions are made fairly and objectively.

To work with our partners to provide customers with appropriate housing, support and care services as defined by our contracts and service level agreements.

2. Definitions

Customer: any person who receives, or is a prospective recipient of care or support services provided by Genesis.

Commissioner: any organisation(s) or individuals commissioning a service.

Nomination or access agreement: agreements between Genesis and the commissioner setting out the referral route for the service.

Partner: a local authority, statutory authority or non-governmental agency that we work with directly to provide housing, support and care services to customers.

Self-referral: prospective customer who applies directly to Genesis for housing, support and/or care services.

Referral: a customer nominated for housing, support or care services by a partner agency.

Local Service Agreement: the local services level agreement or contract between Genesis and a commissioning partner.

Advocate: An advocate can be used in a general sense, as one who speaks on behalf of another, or it can have special meanings derived from the Mental Health Act 2007.

There are formal and informal advocates and these can be:

Individuals acting informally:
  - carers
  - relatives
  - partners
  - neighbours or friends
  - staff.

Those prescribed by legislation, such as Independent Mental Health Advocates and Independent Mental Capacity Advocates.

Those provided by schemes run by local authorities, the NHS and charities.
3. Policy standards

The following standards underpin referral and access to Genesis Care and Support Services:

- Eligibility criteria. Eligibility for our services is locally defined by the terms of our contracts with commissioners and/or the local service model. We ensure the referral process for each service or scheme reflects the local eligibility criteria as defined by the contract/SLA.
- We accept applications from our referral partners or self-referrals in line with any nomination or access agreements set out in the contract or SLA.
- We consider each referral (or self-referral) carefully before deciding whether to accept the referral.
- Where we decline a referral or application we will explain our decision to the referral partner or the customer in writing.
- We provide each prospective customer with written information about the service offered, in a format appropriate to their need.
- We keep a clear written record of all referral and access decisions and actions.
- Where we operate a waiting list we will manage the list in a fair and transparent manner.
- We agree and process transfers in accordance with contract requirements or local service agreements.

3.1 Eligibility criteria

We provide a diverse and evolving range of service offers in response to commissioner and customer demands. They include sheltered and extra care schemes, home care services, supported housing and floating support services to a diverse customer base.

We work with local commissioners and customers to produce local solutions to local need and provide person centred services for the community. This means that eligibility for our services is locally defined by the terms of our contracts with commissioners and the local service model.

We ensure the referral process for each service or scheme reflects the local eligibility criteria as defined by the contract/SLA. In general, a particular service offer may be intended for customers with a defined primary support need but many of our customers will have secondary or multiple care and support needs as well. We assess customers with one or more care and support needs providing they meet the eligibility criteria.

3.2 Referrals

We accept applications from our referral partners or self-referrals in line with any nomination or access agreements set out in the contract or SLA. Where an application meets the local eligibility criteria, we work with the applicant and the referring partner to conduct an initial needs and risk assessment, to determine whether the service we offer and/or the resources we have available, can meet the customer's needs.

We consider each referral (or self-referral) carefully before deciding whether to accept the referral.

We work with our partners and customers to take all reasonable steps, to obtain all relevant information before reaching a decision to accept or decline a referral or self-referral. The customer’s individual circumstances are paramount and due consideration will be given to it throughout the referral and access process.
There may be circumstances when we cannot accept a referral or self-referral because:

- They might not meet the eligibility criteria
- We do not have enough information to enable us to make a considered and measured decision.
- We cannot meet the customer’s needs and/or manage risk.

Local service agreements specify any nomination rights and who can make referrals to our care and support service. However, we reserve the right to decline a referral where we believe we don’t have suitable resources or capacity to provide the support or manage safety risks related to that referral.

3.3 Appeals and complaints process
Where we decline a referral or application we explain our decision to the referral partner or the customer in writing. We advise the customer, where possible and appropriate, of local services or resources that may be in a position to meet their needs.

The customer or referral partner may Appeal the decision to decline their referral or self-referral where they consider that the information used to make our decision was incorrect, incomplete or misinterpreted by us.

Where the referral partner or customer believes we failed to follow our own policies and procedures in reaching this decision they may make a complaint by following our Comments, Complaints and Compliments policy.

3.4 Service information and induction
We believe it is important for prospective customers to be able to make informed choices about accessing Genesis Care and Support Services. We provide each prospective customer with written information about the services offered, in a format appropriate to their need. Where possible and appropriate we encourage the prospective customer to visit the service at the start of the referral and access process. We will explain and discuss their referral and explore their options.

We provide prospective customer with information about:

- The aims, objectives and purpose of the service;
- The facilities that are available for their care or support;
- How their care or support is reviewed;
- The cost of the services, where charges are applied;
- How to raise a concern or complaint about the service, and how we will deal with it;
- Local advocacy services;
- Understand their obligations and responsibilities.

After a customer’s signed up for a service we will conduct an induction into the care and support service. We discuss with customers their options to help them understand their care and support, including the risks and benefits, and their right to make decisions.
3.5 Record keeping
We keep a clear written record of all referral and access decisions and actions. This will provide a clear audit trail and demonstrate the referral and access procedure has been followed.

3.6 Waiting lists
It may be necessary to have a waiting list of referred or self-referred customers awaiting a suitable vacancy in a service. Where we operate a waiting list we manage the list in a fair and transparent manner.

- We set out the criteria for acceptance on the waiting list and our approach to waiting list management.
- We keep waiting lists to a manageable size based on the number of likely vacancies.
- We review the waiting list periodically to ensure there have been no changes in the customer’s circumstances which may impact on their application or chances of success.

A customer’s hopes, aspirations and expectations must be paramount. If there is no realistic prospect of our being able to offer them a service, we will not accept them onto the waiting list and will advise them of this at the earliest opportunity so they can consider their alternative options.

3.7 Transfers
Customers may request a transfer from a general needs property or supported housing. We will agree and process transfers in accordance with local service agreements, local authority nomination rights and the Genesis’ lettings and allocations policy.

It is important that we respect the continuity of Genesis customer’s legal rights and ensure they are offered the same tenancy status they enjoyed in their previous Genesis accommodation.

4. Confidentiality and data protection
Our approach to confidentiality and data protection is outlined in the Core Standards Policy section on balancing confidentiality, privacy and transparency.

We only ask, with the informed consent of the prospective customer, for information necessary to process a referral or self-referral. All information about a customer or an individual is regarded as confidential. This includes information such as personal finances, family relationships, medical details, rent arrears, domestic violence, child abuse, criminal behaviour, harassment, ethnicity, sexual orientation and personal lifestyle.

5. Customer satisfaction and monitoring
Our approach to customer satisfaction and monitoring is outlined in the Core Standards Policy section on Monitoring, review and quality assurance.

We seek feedback from customers to gauge their satisfaction of the referral and access procedure.

6. Diversity and inclusion
A Diversity and Inclusion Assessment has been completed as part of this policy review and a copy is available on request. To request a copy please contact us at policy@genesisha.org.uk or for further information on our commitment to equality and diversity at Genesis please visit our website.

7. Related internal documents
This policy will be used alongside the lettings and allocation policy and local service level agreements to produce a written referrals and access procedure.

8. Legislation, regulation and guidance
See Providing Excellent Care and Support: Core Standards.

This list is not exhaustive.

- Care Act 2014
- Health and Social Care Act 2012
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Equalities Act 2010
- Localism Act 2012
- Mental Health Act 2007

Regulatory frameworks:

- The refreshed Communities and Local Government Quality Assessment Framework (QAF)
- The Department of Health’s Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework 2013–14 (November 2012, updated April 2013)
- The Care Quality Commission’s (CQC) Essential Standards of Quality and Safety (March 2010)

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<tr>
<th>Author:</th>
<th>Martin Watson, Policy &amp; Practice Officer, Care &amp; Support</th>
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Providing Excellent Care and Support: Needs Assessment and Support Planning

Policy

Summary: This is the first of the ‘Providing Excellent Care and Support’ policies, which describe how we provide care and support to our customers. The others in the group are as follows:

- Referral and Access to Services
- Needs Assessment and Support Planning
- Positive Risk and Supported Decision Making

These policies (and procedures where applicable) belong together as a group.

This policy applies to all services providing care and support within Genesis.

Version: 1.1

Effective from: 01 July 2014

Planned review date: 31 March 2016

Who to contact: Policy & Practice Officer or Service Improvement Manager (Care & Support)

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1. Purpose

The aim of this policy is to set out our approach to needs assessment and support planning.

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Define and implement a Genesis wide approach to needs assessment and support planning;
- Integrate needs assessment and support planning, and underpin the care and support we provide with a clear understanding of our customers' needs;
- Define the operational standards for needs assessment and support planning;
- Clearly set out what customers can expect from the needs assessment and support planning process.

2. Definitions

**Needs Assessment:** the process of collecting and analysing information about the customer, with the aim of understanding his/her situation and our capacity to support his/her needs. This will be done as part of the referral process (see Referral and Access Policy, to be developed), and as an ongoing part of support planning.

**Support planning:** the process which:

- Enables customers to achieve greater wellbeing and independence, and empowers them to meet their own goals and fulfil their aspirations;
- Explores what’s important to the person, and the possibilities within their life;
- Identifies how support can be planned to achieve these objectives.

**Support Plan:** contains the information gathered from needs assessment together with a record of the support planning process, including goals and outcomes. The support plan is an informal contract between us and our customers; it gives clear information about what they can expect and how it will be delivered.

**Support Planning Tools:** working tools that help the customer to reflect on aspects of their life, which can be fed into the support planning process.

3. Policy standards

The following standards underpin needs assessment and support planning in Genesis:

- Needs assessment and support planning are integrated;
- Needs assessment and support planning is a conversation which involves continuous learning about the person;
- Needs assessment and support planning is person centred, with the principles of personalisation at its heart: independence, choice, inclusion, equality and empowerment;
- Support plans are ‘live’ documents; review will be both continuous and through formal review meetings;
- Support planning is outcomes based; objectives are SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-bound);
- We adopt a positive approach to working with risk within our support planning practice;

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2 The basis of this definition comes from the Department of Health/Putting People First publication *Good practice in support planning and brokerage, 2008*, which Genesis staff shaped at Support Planning Workshops held in April 2014.
• We work in partnership with the key people and agencies in a person’s life;
• Wherever possible, we address service end as an integral part of support planning;
• Wherever possible and appropriate support and care is integrated within support planning.

3.1 Needs assessment and support planning are integrated
For initial needs assessment as part of the referral process see the Referral and Access Policy (to be developed).

Integrating needs assessment within support planning helps us to ensure that the service we provide is tailored to the customer’s individual needs, and that it is responsive to those needs changing.

After a customer is accepted into a service, we carry out a holistic needs assessment to enable support planning to begin. Needs assessment is then carried out as an ongoing part of support planning, so that one informs the other. This means that where a customer’s needs change we can address the change through support planning, and where support planning goals are achieved needs may become redundant.

3.2 Needs assessment and support planning is a conversation which involved continuous learning about the person
Needs assessment and support planning is a two way conversation with the person we support, which like any conversation has its own flow. This conversation gives staff the opportunity to learn about the customer and what motivates him/her, from the customer directly. What we learn about the customer feeds back into the conversation (by for example supporting the person to set new targets or suggesting changes to the way we do support planning as we understand more about someone’s preferences).

The support plan is a tool to assist the customer’s journey; it is not an end in itself. We plan to develop a library of tools with staff and customers, to support them to think about support planning as a positive process, not just a plan.

3.3 Needs assessment and support planning is person centred, with the principles of personalisation at its heart: independence, choice, inclusion, equality and empowerment
Person centred approaches sit at the heart of our needs assessment and support planning practice. We look beyond the similarities that customers have as a group (i.e. that they are elderly or homeless, that they offend, use drugs, alcohol or have mental health problems). We treat each person as an individual, and see value in the uniqueness of every customer we support.

The process is person centred; wherever possible the customer will lead it. The customer owns the support plan, which staff will enable them to use as independently as possible, ensuring that the customer understands the process and that it is meaningful for them. This includes drawing up the support plan in the form and style that is most appropriate and comfortable for the individual, using language that is accessible, that suits the person and avoids jargon.
3.4 Support plans are ‘live’ documents; review will be both continuous and through formal review meetings

Our support plans are ‘live’ documents that reflect the ongoing conversation we have with our customers. This means we are flexible about the way we review them; adding and signing off goals as necessary to keep them as relevant as possible. We also hold regular formal meetings to review overall progress. Formal review meetings may also be held to re-assess needs and support where this has changed significantly, after a serious incident, or as requested by customers.

As much as possible, and according to the preference of the customer, Genesis staff work with partner agencies to ensure that formal review meetings are co-ordinated with any other meetings about the customer. This ensures that meetings about the customer are aligned and not more than one meeting is held unnecessarily.

3.5 Support planning is outcomes based; objectives are SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-bound)

Support planning is outcomes based; it focusses on the result of meeting any particular support need, on what the person will achieve. We support customers to describe their goals and aspirations in terms of tangible outcomes, where necessary breaking them down into smaller steps or objectives to make them realistic. Support plan objectives are SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-bound). This includes documenting who, how and when different parties will contribute towards achieving each individual goal.

3.6 We adopt a positive approach to working with risk within our support planning practice

Our approach to positive risk taking is outlined in the Core Standards Policy and Positive Risk and Supported Decision Making Policy.

3.7 We work in partnership with the key people and agencies in a person’s life

We work in partnership with the people and agencies that the person wants to be involved in the support planning process. We will help the person identify who these are if necessary. When working with others we also consider the needs of each stakeholder. One example of this might be balancing a carer or family member’s need for reassurance with the customer’s decision about how and whether to involve them.

Where we are required to work with other partners, for example under Multi-Agency Protection Arrangements, we will talk to our customers about why this is necessary, even when they may not want us to.

We will ensure that mechanisms are in place to facilitate joint working. As the co-ordinator or facilitator of support planning, part of our role is to signpost customers to services which enable them to meet their needs. In order to do this we work in partnership with our local communities, to build networks and understand what services are available.

3.8 Wherever possible, we address service end as an integral part of support planning
To provide a framework around the support and care we provide, we address service end with customers as part of support planning, wherever possible. If appropriate this is done before the customer accepts the offer of a service. Doing so assists us and the customer to manage their expectations, so that as far as possible service end happens in a planned way.

Given the different types of care and support service provision within Genesis, service end could mean move-on into independent accommodation, into specialist services such as a drug rehabilitation unit or mental health services, or it could mean end of life planning or a move into nursing care. Regardless of what this service end looks like, we are committed to making sure that customers experience this as a fair, transparent and positive process.

All services are clear about what support will be available to customers after service end, and which agency will provide this.

3.9 Wherever possible and appropriate support and care is integrated within support planning
In order to work holistically, where we provide both care and support services to a customer we integrate both within the overall process of support planning. Where we provide care or support and another agency is also providing services to customers, we will work with the customer and those other agencies as appropriate to ensure that the care and support a customer receives is complementary and seamless.

4. Diversity and inclusion
A Diversity and Inclusion Assessment has been completed as part of this policy review and a copy is available on request. To request a copy please contact us at policy@genesisha.org.uk or for further information on our commitment to equality and diversity at Genesis please visit our website.

5. Related internal documents
See Providing Excellent Care and Support: Core Standards Policy.

6. Legislation, regulation and guidance
See Providing Excellent Care and Support: Core Standards Policy.

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- Referral and Access to Services
- Needs Assessment and Support Planning
- Positive Risk and Supported Decision Making

These policies (and procedures where applicable) belong together as a group.

This policy applies to all services providing care and support within Genesis.

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<th>Version:</th>
<th>1.1</th>
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<tr>
<td>Effective from:</td>
<td>01 August 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned review date:</td>
<td>31 March 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who to contact:</td>
<td>Policy &amp; Practice Officer or Service Improvement Manager (Care &amp; Support)</td>
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1. Purpose
The aim of this policy is to set out Genesis’ approach to working with risk, where this takes place as part of providing customers with care and support.

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Define and implement a Genesis wide approach to working with risk, where this takes place as part of providing customers with care and support;
- Embed a positive and person centred approach to risk and supported decision making with customers;
- Integrate this approach with needs assessment and support planning, and underpin the care and support we provide with a clear understanding of our customers’ needs;
- Define the operational standards for working with risk and carrying out supported decision making;
- Clearly set out what customers can expect from the way we work with risk, and the support we will give them with decision making.

2. Definitions
Risk: the uncertainty of outcome, whether positive opportunity or negative threat, of actions and events.

Risk Assessment: the process of collecting and analysing information about the customer, to identify aspects of his/her life which present a risk to the safety and well-being of the customer or others. Risk assessment is carried out as part of the referral and access process and alongside needs assessment & support planning activities including formal reviews. We also risk assess on an ad-hoc basis in response to incidents, events, decisions or significant changes in the customer’s circumstances.

Risk Management: the process of responding to identified risks, with the aim of promoting safety and well-being. This may involve identifying and implementing preventative or supportive measures to promote the potential benefits or reduce the potential negative consequences of taking identified risks.

Risk assessment and risk management are documented together in a Risk Management Plan.

3. Policy standards
The following standards underpin our approach to working with risk in Genesis, where this takes place as part of providing customers with care and support:

- We adopt a positive, person centred approach to risk;
- Positive, person centred work with risk and supported decision making is integrated with the needs assessment and support planning conversation;
- We support customers to weigh up the benefits and risks associated with their decisions, and the consequences of both acting and doing nothing;
- We support customers to plan for any possible problems that may arise from the decisions and risks that they take;

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3 HMSO, 2004
4 See Referral and Access Policy
• We balance customer choice and control with the safety of everyone involved;
• Risk management measures are proportionate to the risk;
• We work in partnership with the key people and agencies in a person’s life.

3.1 We adopt a positive, person centred approach to risk

The Department of Health identified that for people who use care or support services, the ‘governing principle behind good approaches to choice and risk is that people have the right to live their lives to the full as long as that does not stop others from doing the same.’

In order to support our customers to live their lives to the full we adopt a positive, person centred approach to risk, its assessment and management. First and foremost this means accepting our customers’ right to take risks. It also means focussing on customers’ strengths in order to support them to learn and grow, rather than on trying to eliminate risk and therefore ruling things out.

Also key to this approach is ensuring that customers can make informed choices as much as possible. We will support them to use all information available to make fully considered decisions; we will empower and support customers and staff to be flexible and creative in their responses to risk and uncertainty.

3.2 Positive, person centred work with risk and supported decision making is integrated with the needs assessment and support planning conversation

The needs assessment and support planning conversation we have with our customers involves supporting them to think about the decisions they have made and plan to make. Working with risk is part of this conversation; as the conversation changes, and circumstances change, so might the risks. Integrating risk management and supported decision making with needs assessment and support planning and review ensures a holistic, comprehensive approach. It encourages looking at risk, uncertainty and decision making within the context of the whole support plan, and it helps to feed previous learning into current decision making and objective setting.

We will support staff by making clear supported decision making guidance available.

3.3 We support customers to weigh up the benefits and risks associated with their decisions, and the consequences of both acting and doing nothing

By taking this approach we support customers to make informed choices and to develop insight into their decision making. This contributes to customers making progress towards achieving their desired outcomes. It also promotes independence by enabling customers to develop decision making skills which they can use in the future.

This approach also provides a clear, rational framework around working with risk and decision making which can be easily documented in the risk management plan. It ensures that decisions made by Genesis staff are as objective as possible, and that agreed decisions are based on clear reasoning.

Where customers do not have the capacity to make decisions we will support them by engaging the key people in their life to make a decision in their best interests (see Core Standards Policy regarding Mental Capacity). We will support staff to do this by making clear guidance available.

3.4 We support customers to plan for any possible problems that may arise from the decisions and risks that they take
Planning for possible problems that may arise from taking risks (also called contingency planning) is an essential part of supported decision making. Doing so helps the customer to minimise any possible negative consequences, and promote safety.

3.5 We balance customer choice and control with the safety of everyone involved
A positive and person centred approach to risk is about balancing choice, control and independence with safety. This extends to all parties involved, including other customers, staff and the wider community. In these circumstances Genesis staff are responsible for balancing the rights of the customer with the duty of care that we owe both our customers and staff, and our legal duties (see legislative context and background). We respect the rights of our customers to make decisions, including those that we might think unwise. However, we reserve the right to respond appropriately where we have a genuine concern that a customer is putting themselves or others in danger.

When drawing up risk management plans we will address risk in terms of the customer, staff, and others in the service and wider community.

3.6 Risk management measures are proportionate to the risk
The measures we agree are proportionate to the degree and nature of risk, to ensure that we are being the least restrictive possible, in order to encourage personal growth.

3.7 We work in partnership with the key people and agencies in a person’s life
Using the same approach that we take in needs assessment and support planning enables a partnership approach to risk, uncertainty and decision making. This allows for a shared understanding of risk between the key people and agencies in a person's life. It also allows risks to be dealt with in a transparent way, and for a clear understanding of individual or collective responsibility and accountability. Supported decision making allows for key partners to consider and work through different views about risk and choices, and to agree a way forward. It also allows learning to feed into the process from the different perspectives of those involved.

4. Diversity and inclusion
A Diversity and Inclusion Assessment has been completed as part of this policy review and a copy is available on request. To request a copy please contact us at policy@genesisha.org.uk or for further information on our commitment to equality and diversity at Genesis please visit our website.

5. Related internal documents
See providing Excellent Care and Support: Core Standards Policy.
6. **Legislation, regulation and guidance**

See Providing Excellent Care and Support: Core Standards.

Our approach to working with risk also sits within the following frameworks, which promote the customers' rights, and keep customers, staff and members of the wider community safe:

- Our duty of care towards customers;
- Safeguarding;
- Mental capacity;
- Human Rights Act 1998;
- Equality Act 2010;

As stated in the Core Standards Policy we will ensure that the Genesis approach to working with risk fits with current models of good practice in service provision, such as Nothing Ventured Nothing Gained: risk guidance for people with dementia (DH 2010a).