

Policies & Procedures

Policy No. 103

Assessment & Support Planning – Guidelines

(May 2005) [Review November 2006] (Reviewed June 2008) April 2009 April 2010 April 2011

Policies & Procedures are to be read and signed on attached sheet every six months

See Attached

Business Improvement Manager
Sheltered Housing Services

Dated 1st April 2011

Review Due April 2012

ASSESSMENT & SUPPORT PLANNING

GUIDELINES

When and where:

- The assessment should take place within two weeks of the tenant(s) moving into the accommodation.
- Confirmation in writing of an agreed appointment should be sent at least one week in advance of the meeting, the letter should advise the tenant that they can have a relative or other representative present at the meeting to assist them if they wish.
- The meeting should take place at the tenant's home or another suitable place providing confidentiality and comfort, with the approval of the tenant.
- Ample time should be set aside to explain and complete the assessment process.
- An assessment must be carried out for each tenant in the property and separate appointments may have to be made.

Skills for assessment:

- Making the tenant feel at ease and able to talk freely
- Showing warmth and empathy
- Good communication skills
- Effective listening skills
- Observation skills (does what the person is saying match what you observe)
- Respect for the need for privacy and confidentiality
- Effective questioning
- Good accurate recording of information

The use of good communication skills and the correct body language are very important to help the tenant feel at ease, it is essential to prove you are listening and to show empathy.

Information should not be sought for the sake of it and reluctance to provide information should be respected. It is important to remember that the best person to identify his / her needs is the tenant themselves; they should be able to talk freely without fear of judgement.

It is important to show respect for the person and a genuine desire to provide support. Showing interest, listening and checking your understanding of their needs will be crucial to an effective assessment.

Assessing risks:

- Where tenants are vulnerable due to age or disability there is often an increased risk of potential harm. This may be through falls, inability to manage household appliances, inability to meet their own needs for food or warmth, wandering away from the safety of their own home, being taken advantage of or abused by others.
- Consideration should be taken into account of the risks the individual tenant poses or faces, this should include the person's history and life experiences, specialist assessment, mental state, and physical health as these may all increase risk.
- The nature and likelihood of risk and the severity of its impact combined with the capacity of staff and the service to respond to the individuals needs, including experience, training, support and resources should all be taken into account.

Risk management is a process that involves:

- Identifying risks
- Assessing risks
- Managing risks
- Reviewing risks

The risk element within the Assessment plan might trigger the needs for referral to other services. Some of the risks that may be identified are:

- Falls
- Other accidents in the home
- Poor health
- Health emergencies
- Fires
- Use of appliances
- Extremes of weather
- Self harm
- Self neglect
- Abuse
- Wandering
- Crime
- Harassment
- Use of medication
- Substance abuse (drugs or alcohol)

The Assessment visit:

- It is important to create a relaxed and informal atmosphere in which tenants are encouraged to discuss their needs. Think about the seating arrangements to ensure that you are able to communicate effectively and take into account any particular requirements that the tenant may have e.g. hearing or sight impairment.
- Ensure that your body language and non-verbal communication shows that you are listening. Always confirm your understanding of what the tenant has said through reflection or summarising.
- If the visit is for a new tenant this gives you the opportunity to get to know the person, their past and future aspirations. Generally people are quite happy to talk about their lives, jobs family etc.
- It is advisable to complete the plan as you go and to explain exactly what you are doing and that you will summarise everything at the end and ask them to check the summary and for them to agree the plan by signing it.
- Ask them what they consider to be a typical day and what they normally do in a day or week. This will help identify if they are eating properly and how their social circle is.
- When discussing sensitive areas such as health or finance it is important to acknowledge that it is not always easy to share this information and emphasise the confidentiality aspects of the assessment and plan.

The Assessment plan:

- Begins to build a rapport with tenants, showing that you have time to listen and encouraging them to talk about their concerns.
- It explores their problems and concerns, ensuring understanding of the tenant's experience and perspective.
- It establishes what the tenant would like to happen and how they want to be supported.
- It looks at alternatives and options and agreeing a course of action or plan.

Reviewing the plan:

- Reviews should take place at least every twelve months
- A review can however be requested by the tenant or their representatives at any time.
- If significant changes occur to a tenant's lifestyle, a review should take place as soon as possible to identify the change in support needs.