



1. Purpose

1.1 To ensure that when evacuations are necessary, measures are in place to protect those who are unable to remain safe because they lack mobility, have mental ill-health, sensory impairment or other cognitive or physical conditions. Control measures can be put in place via personal risk assessments, which can take the form of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs), to ensure that these people remain safe and free from harm as far as is reasonably practicable.

1.2 To support Serendipity Healthcare Ltd in meeting the following Key Lines of Enquiry:

Key Question	Key Lines of Enquiry
RESPONSIVE	R2: How are people's concerns and complaints listened and responded to and used to improve the quality of care?
SAFE	S2: How are risks to people assessed and their safety monitored and managed, so they are supported to stay safe, and their freedom is respected?
WELL-LED	W2: Does the governance framework ensure that responsibilities are clear, and that quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements are understood and managed?
WELL-LED	W4: How does the service continuously learn, improve, innovate and ensure sustainability?

1.3 To meet the legal requirements of the regulated activities that Serendipity Healthcare Ltd is registered to provide:

- The Care Act 2014
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981
- The Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) 2002
- The Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) 2002
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- The Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)

2. Scope

2.1 The following roles may be affected by this policy:

- All staff

2.2 The following Service Users may be affected by this policy:

- Service Users

2.3 The following stakeholders may be affected by this policy:

- Family
- Advocates



- Representatives
- Commissioners
- External health professionals
- Local Authority
- NHS

3. Objectives

3.1 To comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

4. Policy

- 4.1 Serendipity Healthcare Ltd recognises that older people, people with disabilities, people with visual and hearing impairments, and people who are vulnerable for other reasons, all need careful consideration when it comes to fire safety. These are the main reasons why:
- They may not be able respond to a fire as quickly
 - They may not be able to escape a fire
 - They may be more at risk due to lifestyle factors
 - They may use healthcare equipment such as oxygen or emollient creams that are flammable

5. Procedure

- 5.1 Serendipity Healthcare Ltd needs to consider the type of home a Service User is living in. The types of property may be a flat in a converted older building, a bungalow or a house, a purpose-built flat or maisonette. Service Users may also live in a multi-occupancy premises where there is a warden.
- 5.2 Service Users will be supported to contact the local Fire Brigade to undertake a free Home Fire Safety Check. The firefighters and community fire safety staff will visit domestic properties to provide home fire safety advice and will supply and install a smoke alarm free of charge. These checks are the cornerstone of the proactive role that the Fire Service is now adopting in its drive to reduce the deaths and injuries that are caused by accidental fires.
- 5.3 Escape plans for Service Users living in a purpose-built flat, bedsit or maisonette, are not the same as for a house. The local Fire Brigade Home Safety Team will be able to provide free advice regarding the safest approach.
- 5.4 Where the Service User lives in a type of sheltered accommodation, consideration must be given to how the alarm system links to the individual's smoke detector. The landlord of the accommodation must share the evacuation plan for the housing organisation and for the Service User with Serendipity Healthcare Ltd.
- 5.5 Service Users with Hearing Impairments**
- If a Service User has a hearing impairment, they will be provided with support to get a smoke alarm which uses a strobe light and vibrating pads.
- In the event of a fire, if it is difficult for them to call 999 themselves, then an arrangement will be put in place for a neighbour to do it for them.
- If the Service User has specialist equipment, such as a text phone or minicom, they can contact the Emergency Services on 18000.



5.6 Mobility Difficulties

If it is difficult for a Service User to test their alarm, Serendipity Healthcare Ltd must signpost them to someone who can assist.

If they have trouble moving around, Serendipity Healthcare Ltd will signpost to support the Service User to consider fitting a community alarm or telecare device, which will allow them to alert someone else in the event of an emergency.

5.7 Visual Impairments

A person with a visual impairment cannot see smoke, so a working smoke detector and escape plans are particularly important, as is the need for clear escape routes.

Service Users will be supported to put a coloured sticker on their smoke alarm if they have trouble seeing it to test it, or they can ask their local Fire Service if they can provide one for them.

5.8 Service Users living with Dementia

Some of the specific risks and vulnerabilities to fire that living with dementia creates are:

- Leaving cooking unattended or putting things on cookers or in microwaves that must not be there
- Not understanding the sound of the smoke detector in the event of a fire and taking appropriate action
- Not recognising the property that they live in can inhibit their ability to exit in a safe and timely manner in the event of a fire

Serendipity Healthcare Ltd will seek evacuation advice from the local Fire Brigade who can conduct a Fire Home Safety check.

5.9 Activity/Behavioural Risk Assessments

Behaviours and activities, such as the use of alcohol and drugs or smoking, may require a more detailed plan. This is particularly important where individuals with limited mobility smoke.

5.10 Mental Capacity

Where a Service User is identified as being vulnerable and at risk from fire, Serendipity Healthcare Ltd will need to obtain the Service User's consent to refer them to the local Fire Brigade Home Safety Team. There will be instances where the Service User either lacks capacity or has capacity but makes unwise decisions.

When a person lacks capacity to make decisions about their fire safety, Serendipity Healthcare Ltd will request a multi-agency meeting, with the Fire Brigade invited to discuss and agree best interest decisions. When a person has capacity to make decisions about their fire safety, but refuses to consent to a fire safety visit, Serendipity Healthcare Ltd will record this in the Service User's records.

5.1 Fire Evacuation Plans and Hoarders

Serendipity Healthcare Ltd needs to ensure that a risk assessment is undertaken for Service Users who hoard. The risk assessment must consider that hoarded materials can easily catch alight if they come into contact with heat sources such as overloaded extension leads, the kitchen hob or naked flames like candles or cigarettes. Because of the number of possessions, fires will also spread much faster, exit routes can become blocked, making safe evacuation more difficult. Fires can also spread much faster where there are flammable items such as newspapers or cardboard. Hoarding also affects the fire fighters' ability to tackle the fire because it makes the fire more intense and makes it more difficult to affect a rescue.

Serendipity Healthcare Ltd can support a Service User who hoards to live more safely by:

- Encouraging them to not light candles or tea lights of any kind



- Ensuring that they have appropriate heating so that they are not using portable heaters, candles or gas hobs to heat the home
- Suggesting, where possible, if they can make sure that they smoke outside if they are a smoker
- Contacting Derbyshire County Council, Sheffield City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council to discuss options for support to clear some of the clutter
- Working with them to develop an escape plan
- Booking a home fire safety visit free of charge with the local Fire Brigade

6. Definitions

6.1 Evacuation Plan

- The plan is formulated with the person who would require assistance in the event of a fire

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HR Manager 2022

POL82 – Service User Fire Evacuation Policy and Procedure
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