

Your Handbook

Revised MAY 2025



SCA - Service Users ' Handbook

Introduction

Welcome to Social Care Alba

Produced in partnership with service users and carer's groups, your handbook provides essential information about your service. Our aim is to create a one-stop information point where you can access answers to all your questions.

The handbook is written in plain English and is available in other languages and formats upon request. For further information please do not hesitate to contact us on **0131 285 1606**.

Our office hours are Monday to Friday 09:00 - 17:00. For urgent contact outside of these times your call will be directed to our on-call staff.

Our Address:

Social Care Alba
26 George Square
Edinburgh
EH8 9LD

Registered Manager:

Mr. Stephen Wilson

*"...Social Care Alba,
striving to improve
the quality of care in
Scotland..."*



WELCOME!

Getting Involved

I hope you find this a useful guide, however if you are unable to find the answer to your question here, please feel free to contact us and we will do our absolute best to help.

If you would like to become more involved in your own support, recruitment of staff, quality assurance or another aspect of our service then we would love to hear from you. You can write, email, or call us at any time with your comments and suggestions.

Alternatively, our website www.Social-Care.org has a dedicated section called "Get Involved" where you can learn more about some of the options available to you. You can also find useful updates and publications.



Stephen Wilson, Director

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Before Using Our Service (Standards 1-4)



Informing and deciding

Before using our service, it is important you make a positive and informed decision about the care service you are to receive. To help with your decision we endeavour to keep information up to date, accurate and in a format and language you can easily understand. If you wish information in an alternative format, then please do not hesitate to ask.



Your written agreement and personal plans

It is important that with your permission we know all the relevant aspects of your Health and Social Care needs. We will consider your needs before offering you a service.

We will work together to produce your **written agreement** which will clearly define the terms and conditions for receiving the service and the arrangements for changing or ending the arrangement. Your **personal plan** will detail your assessed needs and what services are required to meet them.



Visit Times

Visit times are an indication of when we will visit. You should expect staff to visit 30 minutes prior to or after the time. This is to allow for changes in the needs of other service users and travel conditions between visits

e.g. An agreed visit time of 09:30, means staff may visit between 9:00 and 10:00.



Healthy Working Environment

Our staff have the right to work in a healthy environment. This means that they should be able to support you in an environment which is free of:

- Smoke & Risks to health
- Racism & Abuse
- Violence & Aggression
- Bad language & Sexism

If you require 2 or more staff to support you, and refuse the support of one of them, then we cannot continue to provide our service to you.



Management and staffing

It is important you feel confident that staff are trained and knowledgeable about your needs and that they work within best practice guidelines. Staff are skilled, qualified, and work to our core values of:

Dignity and Respect

Compassion

Be included

Responsive Care and Support

Wellbeing

We employ a range of staff with experience in areas such as nursing, social work, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and pharmacology. Our management team have extensive experience in the commissioning, delivery and regulation of care in both Scotland and England.

Whilst you may inform us of your preferences, we cannot guarantee either the gender or individual staff who form part of your support team.



Our aims and objectives

Social Care Alba aims to provide a combined Care at Home and Housing Support Service to people in their own homes. Our service is for adults with physical, mental health and age-related needs.

We aim to provide support based upon individual need, with the focus on person centred care, support and enablement.

This includes personal assistance with shopping and meal preparation, through to rehabilitation and palliative care.

We will always strive to provide the best care and support and encourage you to participate where possible in the development of our service.

Our aim is to:

- Prevent hospital admissions
- Speed up discharge from hospitals
- Reduce the need for care home admissions and
- Help promote independence and daily living skills

The services we provide

Our services are designed to meet your needs and include but are not limited to:

i. PERSONAL SUPPORT

- Care relating to personal hygiene
- Assistance with eating and drinking
- Management of urinary and bowel functions
- Promotion of continence and assistance with incontinence
- Assistance with mobility and transfers, including help with getting up and going to bed
- Promotion of independence and social functioning, anxiety and behaviour management
- Social care needs assessment and ensuring personal safety
- Encouragement and assistance with cognitive functions
- Administration and monitoring of medication

ii. SOCIAL and DOMESTIC SUPPORT

Listening and talking to people is an important part of delivering support. We can assist you to keep in touch with friends and relatives, and help with letter writing, also:

- Assistance with planning and shopping
- Assistance with cleaning and housework
- Assistance with laundry and ironing
- Assistance with management of fuel and heating

iii. PROVISION OF MEALS AND DIETARY CARE

- Food preparation at your home
- Assistance with eating

We aim to provide a FLEXIBLE care service, responsive to everyone's needs. If you cannot find the service you require above then please contact us to discuss additional services we can offer.

All of the above services are provided by our staff team. They will visit at agreed times to meet your needs. The visit can vary in length from 30 minutes to several hours.

Visits can be made throughout the day, from one to seven days per week. Full 24 hour per day cover can also be arranged.

Limitations to our service

There are some things we are NOT authorised to carry out, this includes:

- Bowel Evacuation
- Changing Sterile Dressings
- Performing Catheterisation
- Giving Injections
- Cutting nails (In some circumstances)
- Administering Suppositories
- Administering Enemas
- Ear Syringing

Who can use our service and our availability?

We provide support services covering the following areas:

- Older people (over 65 years old)
- Adults (over 18 years old)
- Mental Health
- Dementia
- Palliative and Complex Care
- Learning Disabilities
- Hearing and Eyesight difficulties



How to request our services

Anyone can request our services however we encourage all prospective service users to seek the advice of an independent advocate. If you do not know how to do this then we will be happy to assist you finding one in your area.

Once we receive your request a visit will be made to you in your own home or wherever you are staying at the time. During the assessment we will ask a series of questions to find out how you manage at home.

A risk assessment will be carried out to determine whether we can provide a service to you. In most cases the risk assessment will draw upon the initial assessment carried out by your social worker. Following this assessment, our manager will explain to you if we can provide a service to you.

Service Reviews

We will review your service will during the first few weeks and any amendments will be identified. Regular assessments will take place not less than 6 monthly. You can request a review at any time.

We can provide a variety of services including an intensive six-week home from hospital service. This is designed to offer special help and care needed after coming out of hospital or to prevent hospital or care home admission. Support can vary from “Live-In Care” to 6-12 hours at a time or indeed intermittent care and respite

Our charges and services they cover

As all of our services are designed around your needs and wishes, each package is individual. Should you wish to discuss your own needs and the costs involved, then we would be happy to meet with you and provide you with a written estimate and the services this covers. Your local authority can partly or wholly fund and monitor your support. Alternatively, you may wish to access direct payments.

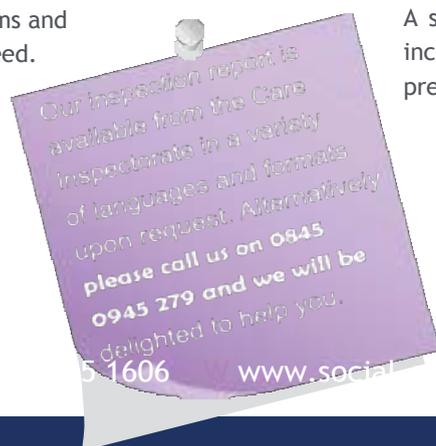
Our most recent Care Inspectorate report

For a copy of our most recent report please visit the Care Inspectorate website at www.scswis.com and go to the “Care Services” tab.

Absences

If you are temporarily absent from your home, then the written agreement shall immediately terminate. Should you wish to retain our services then the full fees remain payable for a period up to 3 weeks. Absences longer than 3 weeks will be individually negotiated.

Whilst we will always do our best, we cannot guarantee to recommence our service to you or provide the same terms and conditions as previously agreed.



If your personal assistant is sick or absent

We are committed to providing continuity of care and will always try to ensure your support is provided from a small team of staff with whom you are familiar. If for some reason your personal assistant is sick or absent, then we will always try to replace them with one from your team. We will always try our best to make sure the people who assist you are known to you. If in an emergency this is not possible, we will try to contact you in advance to let you know.

Systems to support you and your personal assistant

One way of ensuring we provide you with the best service we can, our staff to log in and log out via a QR code within your home. This helps us know if one of your team is late or may be delayed at another visit. If this is the case, then we will try to phone you and let you know.

Managing risk and recording and reporting accidents and incidents

We understand that there is a delicate and difficult balance between self-determination in risk taking, and the responsibility of personal assistants to protect you from self-harm or from unintentionally harming others. The issue is further complicated when you may not be able to make informed decisions.

As part of providing a service to you we will assess risk which will be documented in your personal plan. This will allow your views, as well as those of your carer, family members and professional advisors to be fully taken into account.

Should an accident or incident occur whilst we support you then we will record this as soon as possible after ensuring you and other people in the area are safe.

A senior member of staff shall assess all accidents and incidents and ensure any remedial actions are taken to prevent or reduce the risk of these happening again.



Making a Complaint and Giving Compliments

We believe that complaints and compliments are a valuable indicator of quality of service, and an opportunity to improve that quality. If you have a complaint or a compliment, then please let us know. Call us now on **0131 285 1606** so that we can help straight away.

It is our policy that all matters which disturb or upset you should be reported, recorded, and corrective action taken. Only in that way can we work towards meeting our aim of continuously improving our service.

Our commitment to you is:

- That all complaints will be taken seriously
- That they will be acted upon with fairness and impartiality
- That you will receive a response within 24 hours of the complaint being received, and a final reply within 28 days.
- If the complaint is upheld, you will receive a written apology and appropriate action will be taken to rectify the complaint
- That you are entitled to involve an impartial third party in the complaint procedure if you so wish

If you feel dissatisfied at our response, then there is a review procedure that you may enter into with us.

However, if you feel that you cannot do this then you may raise your concerns with another body to investigate on your behalf. Contact details for these are included in your contacts list.

If you are funded by Edinburgh HSCP then you may contact them. Alternatively, you may contact an advocacy service or the regulator. All of these contact details have been included for you in the Useful Contacts section.



What happens if the service closes or changes ownership?

If the care service were to decide to close or the ownership to change then we have an obligation to let you know. In the unlikely event this were to happen then we would endeavour to inform you and involve you in advance.

We have taken measures to ensure that as best we can your service continues uninterrupted should there be flood, fire, loss of power or extremes of weather.



Your Written Agreement

You will receive a written agreement which clearly defines how we will meet your needs. It sets out the terms and conditions for receiving the service and arrangements for changing or ending the agreement. You are fully involved in developing your written agreement and any reviews of it.

Your written agreement includes:

- the date that the agreement was made;
- the date the service starts;
- who will provide the service, how and when;
- any charges for our service and how this should be paid.
- information about how to change any details or end the service agreement; and
- how long you expect to receive the service.



Online Portal - openPASS

Making sure your information is safe, secure and up to date is extremely important. That is why we have invested in **openPASS**, details of how to access the portal will be sent separately. You can then log in with your unique access code at any time. Alternatively, you may wish to give access to a friend or relative on your behalf. We will try to keep the information held in your house to an absolute minimum. **openPASS** allows you to:

- Check and update your personal details
- View planned visits
- Review your assessment, reviews and personal plans
- View notes left by your staff team
- Review your medication records
- Monitor and review the progress you have made
- Make a compliment or complaint
- Much, much more



Your Personal Plan

You can be confident that we will meet your care needs and personal preferences. Staff will develop with you a personal plan that details your needs and preferences and sets out how they will be met, in a way that you find acceptable.

1. Your personal plan includes information and decisions about:

- what you prefer to be called;
- personal preferences as to food and drink, and any special dietary needs;
- social, cultural and spiritual preferences;
- leisure interests;
- who should be involved in reviewing your personal plan;
- any communication needs you may have;
- what communication arrangements need to be put in place if your first language is not English;
- when and in what circumstances friends, relatives and carers will be contacted;
- an independent person to contact if you want to make a complaint or raise a concern; and
- the name or names of any home care workers who will work with you.

2. Your plans are available on Open Pass.

3. You can ask for your needs to be reviewed at any time.

4. You can take part in all reviews of your care if you want to, along with anyone else you choose. You can have help to do this if you need it.

5. If there is a change in your personal situation or health, our staff will contact the necessary services with your knowledge and with your agreement (if you are able to give it).

Your personal plan will be formally reviewed every 6 months by our staff to check whether your needs have changed. However, changes may be made more regularly and recorded. If your support is commissioned by Edinburgh HSCP then we will try to involve them in any review.



Abuse

It is not only children who can suffer neglect, abuse or harm. Adults too can be harmed.

A vulnerable adult is anyone aged 18 or over whom, because of physical or mental disability or frailty, is dependent on others for their care and/or support. These adults will be supported by the adult protection policy. If any part of the policy has been breached, it is their duty to immediately report it to their line manager.

Abuse can be:

- **Physical** - hitting, slapping, punching
- **Sexual** - harassment, enforced sexual contact
- **Psychological** - shouting, ignoring, humiliation
- **Financial** - stealing money, possessions, deprivation of benefits
- **Social** - enforced isolation, possibly from religious or cultural activities

- **Professional** - intimidation, depriving individuals of information to make choices
- **Institutional abuse** - undue restraint, lack of privacy
- **Neglect** - failure to provide food, drink, healthcare etc

The formal description for the term “blowing the whistle” is Public Interest Disclosure. It is a legal right to which the law offers you protection for doing so. Its purpose is to protect the interests of those in our care where error has gone unchecked; therefore, it is not “betrayal”.

Where you have concerns relating to health or safety dangers in your home, where there may be oversight relating to legal obligations, care standards or practices then you should raise this matter with the office immediately.



Access to and from your home

There may be occasions, due to your frailty or the environment that staff will need to access your door keys to gain entry to your home. If so, we ask that an external key safe that allows our staff to access your door key is fitted.

We will ensure all doors to and from your home are closed and locked after use.



No reply procedure

When there is no reply when a staff member visits your home, in most cases it has proved to be false alarm because you or your carers may not have informed us of a planned outing.

However, we need to take unanswered visits very seriously. If you don't usually go out, it could mean that you are unwell and in need of immediate support

Before we take any emergency action, we have a 'No Reply' procedure which the office and staff must undertake. They will try to establish where you are by contacting family, friends, neighbours, GP and hospitals.

If after carrying out these enquiries you can't be located, then we will contact the police or fire brigade to assist us by gaining entry (this could mean breaking down your door/window) and calling an ambulance.

If you return home to find that a forced entry has been made this is a frightening and annoying experience you. To avoid this situation arising we ask you to call the office telling us of your movements.



Protective clothing

Staff are required under health and safety regulations to wear protective clothing when carrying out personal and domestic tasks in your home.

These will be provided by us at no cost to you and are the property of Social Care Alba. Protective clothing may include:

- Disposable gloves
- Masks and face shields
- Aprons for food preparation and personal care.



Equipment

It is your responsibility, or that of the local authority to provide and maintain all other necessary equipment e.g. hoists, commode, bath seat, wheelchair etc.

You are responsible for providing all cleaning materials and equipment to be used to undertake housework.



Gifts

We all appreciate the thought behind a gift, however no employee or any member of their family can accept payments of money, gifts, or anything else. Offering gifts puts staff in a vulnerable position. Please contact the office for advice before offering gifts to staff.

Useful Contacts

Social Care Alba

Tel: 0131 285 1606

26 George Square
Edinburgh
EH8 9LD

Email: Office@social-care.org
Website: www.Social-Care.org

Advocacy and Advice:

Citizens Advice Direct

Tel: 0808 800 9060

Edinburgh Advocacy and Representation Service

Tel: 0845 6070129

Emergency Services:

Police Scotland

Tel: 101

Emergency Services

Tel: 999

Police Scotland Text Relay

Tel: 1 800 1 101

Useful resources:

[Open Pass](#) allows you or your family/friends real time access to your plans and records.

[Alzheimer Scotland](#)

[Carer Support by Vocal](#)

Health and Social Care:

Care Inspectorate

Tel: 0845 600 9527

Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

Edinburgh Council

Tel: 0131 2002323

Edinburgh Royal Infirmary

Tel: 0131 5361000

Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland

Tel: 0800 389 6809

For more useful contacts please visit our website www.Social-Care.org

This handbook can be made available in alternative formats (large Print, Braille or on Tape) and other languages upon request. Contact Social-Care Alba on 0131 285 1606