

Adopted: 25th April 2017
Reviewed: July 2018
Reformatted: January 2020

RECORD KEEPING AND CLIENT FILES POLICY

PURPOSE

This policy has been formulated to ensure that Age UK Cambridgeshire & Peterborough (AUKCAP) maintains appropriate and necessary records in a consistent manner and in a way which communicates a clear account of services provided. This policy relates only to notes of interaction with service users; personnel records and financial records are covered within other policy statements.

SCOPE

This policy is to outline the responsibilities of all members of staff when handling all forms of record keeping.

POLICY

CONFIDENTIALITY AND ACCESS

Records will be held securely and information will be shared in line with AUKCAP's Confidentiality Policy. A Service User has the right to see any records or information held relating to him/her, upon giving notice of at least five working days

APPROPRIATE AND NECESSARY

In order to provide a professional service to older people we need to keep some information on that person and their circumstances. Appropriate and necessary information will allow us to provide a professional service, collate statistical information, support audit requirements, and enable an accurate response to complaints, but will not intrude on the privacy of the older person nor compromise their independence or dignity.

In other words AUKCAP needs to record sufficient information, but we will not ask for nor record information surplus to those requirements. **Staff will be expected to use their professional judgement to decide what is relevant and what should be recorded.**

All personal data which the organisation holds will be stored in line with General Data Protection Regulations which form part of the data protection regime in the UK, together with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018).

COMMUNICATES A CLEAR ACCOUNT

What constitutes a clear account will depend on the service provided. Calls to the Information Service will gather sufficient data to enable statistics to be compiled and a review of enquiries to be carried out to ensure that appropriate responses were made. A case file will thus not be established for each and every caller, nor in most cases will we need to record contact details.

Where an older person receives an on-going service a more detailed history will be appropriate. For example in Home Help or Home Visiting a case file will be established for each service user and will contain a referral or assessment form, copies of written correspondence, any review form and a contact sheet. The contact sheet will give details of significant matters discussed.

Records within some services will record every conversation and transaction and staff in each service area will receive instruction accordingly.

Where an incident of alleged abuse is being discussed records will be kept in line with the requirements of the Policy for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults. AUKCAP's procedure for protecting vulnerable adults requires that a discussion is held between the member of staff reporting the alleged incident and a member of the senior management team. The records relating to these incidents will therefore be kept securely by the senior management team. A note will be placed in any client file held locally which refers to the centrally held records. The information held centrally will then be shared, where appropriate, by a senior manager.

All home visits made to older people will be recorded. Significant matters raised by third parties, but relating to a service user, will be recorded in the service user's file.

CONSISTENT MANNER

When compiling records staff and volunteers will have regard to the following:

- Care will be taken to ensure that handwritten notes are legible.
- Records will be clear and factual.
- Unprofessional or meaningless phrases, jargon, irrelevant speculation and offensive subjective statements will not be acceptable.
- Only abbreviations in common usage will be acceptable.
- Contact sheets will record issue or problem discussed and actions suggested or taken.
- Each entry will be initialled and dated.
- Entries will not be corrected by use of Tippex or similar. Errors will be crossed through by means of a single line.
- Contact sheets will be numbered.
- Notes will be made as soon as possible after the conversation is concluded.
- Records will be written clearly and in a 'user friendly' manner and be based on the assumption that entries will be scrutinised at some point and this scrutiny may be by the older person.

HANDLING OF RECORDS OUTSIDE AUKCAP'S PREMISES

It will sometimes be necessary to take information off AUKCAP's premises. In most cases the information taken will be merely a note of contact details. Such notes will be destroyed after use.

Very occasionally it will be necessary to remove case files or other documents from AUKCAP's premises. This may be to allow records to be referred to during a meeting or conversation or to make such records available for scrutiny by a service user. Great care will be taken to ensure the security of such papers. Files removed from the office will be placed in an envelope marked 'Private & Confidential' with AUKCAP's contact details on the outside and if it is necessary to leave files in a car they will be placed in the boot and not left on display. A note giving details of the file removed will be left at the office. Papers will be returned promptly.

RETENTION

Records will be held securely, in accordance with the Confidentiality Policy, for a minimum of seven years, or other period as required by law.

FILE REVIEWS

Line Managers will carry out an annual review of files held within each service.
Appendix 1.

OTHER RELATED POLICIES

Confidentiality
Data Handling
Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

This policy will be reviewed every 24 months or earlier if concerns are raised by older people, staff or volunteers.

Record Keeping policy approved: 01/09/2020 (Date)



Signed by Chair of Trustees

Appendix 1 Retaining Records

Type	How Long	Where	Responsible for Disposal (ie shredding)	Notes
DBS Disclosure	6 Months	County Office/The Lindens, locked cabinet	Administration Team Leader	See policy if need to keep individual record for more than 6 months
Client Files	7 years	Archive	Senior Management Team	Must be brought to CO/The Lindens in clearly labeled archive boxes. Split into financial years
Financial Records	7 years	Archive	Senior Management Team	Must be clearly labeled Archive boxes. Split into financial years.
Volunteer Records	3 years	Local Office	Organiser	
General Personnel Files (excluding appt person or trading staff – see below)	3 years	Locked Personnel Filing Cabinet County Office/The Lindens	Senior Management Team (including Management Support Administrator)	
Staff Diaries	7 years	Held by staff	Senior Management	Returned to CO/The Lindens annually with end of year financial paying in books – to be filed in archived year boxes
Payroll information	7 years	Archive	Senior Manager	
Unsuccessful Job Applicants	3 months	With relevant Line Manager	Relevant Line Manager	
Trading Company				
Personnel (appointed person)	7 years	Archive	Chief Executive	
Personnel (arrangers)	7 years	County Office/The Lindens	Appointed Person	
Cash Records	7 years	County Office/The Lindens	Appointed Person	