**Out of hours procedures for volunteers who visit service users at home**

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**Out of hours procedures for volunteers who visit client’s at home**

Many volunteers now visit their client outside of Age UK Hertfordshire’s office hours of 9 and 4.30 - Monday to Friday.

Age UK Hertfordshire does not operate a duty manager system during evenings and weekends so the following guidance should be followed in any urgent or emergency situation. Your coordinator should be informed on the first available working day to advise them of any unexpected/emergency situation which involved your client or if not available then contact the Team Manager Trudie Harrington on 07538 954189

1. **Your safety**

* Always ensure that your partner, friend or relative knows your whereabouts when you are volunteering, and what time to expect you home.
* Always trust your gut instincts. Do not place yourself in danger. If at any time you feel uncomfortable in your client’s home, leave immediately.

1. **Your client’s safety**

* Always carry your client’s next of kin’s contact details with you when you visit them in case you need to refer to them in an emergency.
* If your client doesn’t answer their door when you have arranged to visit:

1. Ring the doorbell repeatedly, knock loudly and rattle the letterbox and try to attract attention.
2. Look through the letterbox or a ground floor window and shout their name.
3. Check to see if the curtains are drawn or if there are any lights on.
4. Try the rear entrance of the property if they have one
5. Phone your client from either your mobile or a payphone, and allow the phone to ring for a long time.
6. Check for any unusual smells such as gas
7. Check with the neighbours when they last saw your client.
8. If you are still unable to locate them, then try contacting the next of kin.

NB: There are many reasons why a client might not come to the door, it may be a simple as they have forgotten that you are visiting.

1. **If your client is taken ill**

* Contact NHS Direct on 111 and follow their advice
* If your client is acutely ill/unwell, dial 999 and request an ambulance.

1. **If your client falls**

* Do not attempt to lift them
* If they can’t get up with minimal help, dial 999 and request an ambulance.
* Reassure them and keep them warm until the ambulance arrives.
* You do not have to accompany your client to the hospital if you not wish/are unable to do so, but your client may wish you to contact somebody on their behalf.
* Inform your coordinator at the first available opportunity.

1. **If your client discloses something that makes you suspect they are being abused or are at risk of harm**

* Tell your client that anything they have told you that has caused you concern will have to be reported to your line manager at Age UK Hertfordshire at the first available opportunity and them if you believe they are at immediate risk you will need to call the Adult Social Care team.
* Call the Hertfordshire Emergency Duty Team (Vulnerable Adults) 0300 123 4042
* In an emergency dial 999.
* Inform your coordinator at the first available opportunity.

**For more information please refer to our Lone Workers Policy and Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy. These can be found on our website under Volunteers Resources, or ask your Coordinator.**