ENLIGHTENED CARE GENERATION LTD

Accessible Information (England) Policy

The document sets out the values, principles and policies underpinning this care service's approach to providing accessible information for people who use services, their relatives and carers. It should be used in relation to the Meeting Communication Needs Policy.

Policy Statement

This care provider recognises the importance of effective communication with people who use services, their relatives and carers, and the importance of providing information that enables them to receive appropriate person-centred care and support. It also recognises that people must receive safe care and are not put at risk of harm because of lack of or ineffective communication with their service provider.

The care service understands that communication and the provision of information is a fundamental part of treating people with dignity and respect and in providing good, compassionate care. Furthermore, the service recognises that effective communication can be affected by conditions such as dementia, stroke, hearing conditions, sight loss or cases where the person lacks capacity to make decisions.

The care service recognises its legal and ethical duties relating to effective communication and the provision of information which includes the following.

- A duty under s.250 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 which requires all organisations that provide NHS services or publicly funded adult social care to follow the Accessible Information Standard.
- A duty under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination and make reasonable adjustments for disabled people, such as those with hearing or visual impairments, including taking steps to put information into accessible formats if a disabled person is at a substantial disadvantage if this is not done.
- Requirements under the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014, particularly Regulation 9: Person-centred Care, which states that the care and treatment of people using services must be appropriate, meet their needs and reflect their preferences.
- Regulation 10: Dignity and Respect, Regulation 11: Need for Consent, Regulation 12: Safe Care and Treatment, and Regulation 13: Safeguarding Service Users from Abuse and Improper Treatment all require effective communication between service provider and person using the service.

Policy

To comply with the above requirements, the care service has adopted the following policy.

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Accessible Information (England) Policy

1. The service will implement the NHS Accessible Information Standard to achieve excellent levels of support for people who use services with defined communication needs, and to help their relatives and carers to address communication issues.

2. People who use services have the right to be communicated with and receive sufficient information about their care and treatment so that they make a balanced judgment whether or not to give their consent.

3. The information and communication needs of people will be identified as part of their initial needs assessment and kept under review — this should include any sensory problems affecting a person's hearing or sight.

4. It is likely that communication needs of people considering using services will already have been identified by other health and care agencies involved but we will always check that these needs have been accurately assessed and addressed so that we can communicate effectively with the person about their care needs and deliver the appropriate care. (See step 1 of the Accessible Information Standard.)

5. We will clearly record the relevant information in the individual's records in line with step 2 of the Accessible Information Standard so that everyone involved in the person's care and support will know how to communicate effectively with that person.

6. The service will discuss with the person as part of the care planning process (and, if necessary, in consultation with other professionals and agencies) what adjustments and interventions are needed to improve communication with that person.

7. Agreed methods of communication and interventions will be recorded in the person's care plan in a prominent and consistent way so that all care staff know exactly what has been agreed to meet the needs of people, their relatives and carers. (See step 3 of the Accessible Information Standard.)

8. Where a person is transferred to another service, or receives care from another service, we will, with the individual's permission, share information that we are requested to provide about their communication and information needs (along with other information sharing) with the receiving service. (See step 4 of the Accessible Information Standard.)

9. Where it is suspected that a person does not have the mental capacity to communicate, or in any other way has no ability to communicate, then the provisions of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 will be implemented and best interests' decisions made, with the involvement of people close to the individual, such as relatives, carers or advocates.

10. All reasonable adjustments will be made to meet the communication needs of people with sensory difficulties, including people with visual and hearing difficulties.

ENLIGHTENED CARE GENERATION LTD

Accessible Information (England) Policy

11. Where required and appropriate to the role of the care service, we will provide or facilitate the sourcing and provision of resources and assistive technology such as braille books and magazines, large print/easy read copies of literature, British Sign Language interpreters for deaf people, braille or talking telephones and mobile phones, hearing aids, text phones, loop hearing systems, etc.
12. For any person, family member or carer who might require it, advocacy will be provided or sought to help meet their communication and information needs.
13. All staff are responsible for helping to deliver this policy by communicating in a way that is accessible to every person who uses this service. (Points 9–13 all reflect step 5 of the Accessible Information Standard.)

Training

At induction new care staff will receive training in line with the Care Certificate Standards Framework with an emphasis in this policy context on Standard 6: Communication.

All care staff will receive training as relevant to their roles and responsibilities in the care of people with hearing and sight problems and disabilities, which will include learning about communication techniques and providing accessible information.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or more frequently in line with changes to the national guidance and strategies on the provision of accessible information.

Signed:	RUEBEN SIBANDA_____
Date:	15/09/2024_____
Policy review date:	14/09/2025_____