



## 4. Policy

**4.1** Heroic Care Ltd recognises that the outbreak of a new strain of coronavirus SARS coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2) which results in the disease COVID-19 is a fast-moving situation. The WHO has stated that this is now a pandemic. As care providers, ensuring robust infection control and business continuity plans form part of preparing business at Heroic Care Ltd for any events that can cause disruption to the normal business.

**4.2** Heroic Care Ltd will ensure that staff are aware and understand the importance of pandemic preparedness and will carry out preparations by following the checklist in the Pandemic Policy and Procedure at Heroic Care Ltd. Heroic Care Ltd understands that business continuity planning involves all aspects of the business and to be effective Heroic Care Ltd must work with their partners, suppliers and commissioners to ensure that a safe and effective service can be maintained.

**4.3** Heroic Care Ltd understands that they have a responsibility for ensuring that staff follow good infection control and prevention techniques and that they support Service Users with this too. Heroic Care Ltd will ensure that staff have access to reliable information to reduce anxiety and dispel any myths and inaccurate information that may cause worry or distress to staff, Service Users or the wider public.



## 5. Procedure

### 5.1 Pandemic Policy

Heroic Care Ltd recognises that the WHO has declared COVID-19 can be characterised as a pandemic on 11 March 2020. Heroic Care Ltd however, will ensure that it reviews the Pandemic Policy and Procedure and will complete the checklist to ensure that the business is prepared and that robust business continuity plans are in place.

### 5.2 Reducing the Risk of Contracting or Spreading the Virus

Heroic Care Ltd will ensure that staff follow the WHO and [Public Health England advice](#) to reduce the risk of contracting the virus and the risk of spreading it. The following procedures must be followed;

- **Wash your hands regularly and properly** for at least 20 seconds (2 verses of Happy Birthday) by using soap and running water
- **Use hand sanitiser** when it is not possible to wash hands with soap and water. Hand sanitiser must contain 60% alcohol to be effective
- **Maintain at least 1 metre (3 feet) distance** between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing (social distancing). When someone coughs or sneezes they spray small liquid droplets from their nose or mouth which may contain the virus. If you are too close, you can breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 virus if the person coughing has the disease
- **Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.** Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick
- **Practice respiratory hygiene.** Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you do not have a tissue, use your sleeve. Then dispose of the used tissue immediately and wash your hands, or use hand sanitiser if you do not have immediate access to soap and running water. Droplets spread virus. By following good respiratory hygiene you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and COVID-19
- **If you have a fever (37.8 degrees, a new/persistent cough) you must self isolate for 7 days. The NHS advice must be followed below;**
- If you have symptoms of coronavirus infection (COVID-19), however mild, stay at home and do not leave your house for 7 days from when your symptoms started

### Social Distancing

Social distancing measures are steps you can take to reduce the social interaction between people. This will help reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19). They are:

- Avoid contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19). These symptoms include a high temperature and/or a new and continuous cough
- Avoid non-essential use of public transport, varying your travel times to avoid rush hour, when possible

- Work from home, where possible. Heroic Care Ltd will explore this as far as practical and realistic
- Avoid large gatherings, and gatherings in smaller public spaces such as pubs, cinemas, restaurants, theatres, bars, clubs
- Avoid gatherings with friends and family. Keep in touch using remote technology such as phone, Internet, and social media
- Use telephone or online services to contact your GP or other essential services

### **5.3 Handwashing**

Staff should wash their hands:

- Before leaving home
- On arrival at work
- After using the toilet
- After touching pets
- After breaks and sporting activities
- Before food preparation
- After using public transport
- Before eating any food, including snacks
- Before leaving work
- On arrival at home

### **5.4 Confidentiality**

Heroic Care Ltd will follow confidentiality and GDPR policies and procedures to ensure that the details of staff involved in caring for Service Users with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 is kept confidential. Employees should also respect each other's confidentiality and take care not to inadvertently share information when using social media.

Where staff are suspected or confirmed to have contracted COVID-19, their personal details should be treated as confidential, as they would be for any other Heroic Care Ltd Service User.

### **5.5 Safe Staffing**

In the event of an outbreak of COVID-19, where staff are moved from other areas to support work on COVID-19, assessments should be made on the ability to continue to deliver safe and effective care in the services affected. Steps should be taken to mitigate any risks resulting from staff moving to other areas. Heroic Care Ltd will as part of pandemic preparedness assess whether any staff need additional training, support or require a DBS check.

### **5.6 Reducing the Risk of Stigmatization**

Stigma occurs when people negatively associate an infectious disease, such as COVID-19, with a specific population. In the case of COVID-19, there are an increasing number of reports of public stigmatization against people from areas affected by the epidemic, this means that people are being labelled, stereotyped, separated, and/or experience loss of status and discrimination because of a potential negative affiliation with the disease. Heroic Care Ltd will ensure that staff understand the importance of preventing and addressing [social stigma](#) by making sure facts are available to staff and Service Users.

### **5.7 Actions if a Service User Meets the Criteria and Displays Symptoms**

If a Service User complains of symptoms staff must make sure;

- The Service User is safe and withdraw from the room
- They immediately wash their hands and avoid touching the face, nose, mouth or eyes
- They contact 111 for advice or 999 if an emergency (if they are seriously ill or injured or their life is at risk)
- They contact Heroic Care Ltd as soon as possible and advise of the situation. This must be a high priority
- They do not attend any other Service Users, visit their GP or travel in the community until advice is sought
- Whilst they wait for advice from NHS 111 or an ambulance to arrive, staff should remain at least 2 metres from other people. They should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects and be advised to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when they cough or sneeze and put the tissue in a bag then throw the tissue in the bin. If they do not have any tissues available, they should cough and sneeze into the crook of their elbow
- If they need to go to the bathroom whilst waiting for medical assistance, they should use a separate bathroom if available. This will apply only to the period of time while waiting for transport to hospital

### **5.8 Action if a Member of Staff Reports Symptoms**

- Heroic Care Ltd will ensure that the member of staff self-isolates for 7 days
- Heroic Care Ltd must contact Leicestershire County Council and the [local health protection team](#) for advice including whether the premises need to close and other staff self-isolate
- Advice will be given to the member of staff if they need to self-isolate and what action will need to take place for any Service Users that they may have had contact with
- Heroic Care Ltd must ensure that confidentiality is maintained and that records are held in line with Data Protection Act requirements
- Heroic Care Ltd should follow their Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure and ensure that it

follows government guidance which states that if an employee or worker has to self-isolate, they should receive any Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) due to them. Heroic Care Ltd will ensure that staff are made aware of the requirements for 'fit notes' if staff are required to self-isolate for 7 days

- Heroic Care Ltd will need to put into action the business continuity plan and liaise with Leicestershire County Council and the CQC if there are concerns about staffing

### **5.9 Cleaning the Office and Workplace Where There are Confirmed Cases of COVID-19**

The local Health Protection Team will provide advice on cleaning. Coronavirus symptoms are similar to a flu-like illness and include cough, fever, or shortness of breath. Once symptomatic, all surfaces that the person has come into contact with must be cleaned including:

- All surfaces and objects which are visibly contaminated with body fluids
- All potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as toilets, door handles, telephones
- Clothing and linen used by the person should be set aside pending assessment of the person by a healthcare professional

Public areas where a symptomatic individual has passed through and spent minimal time in (such as corridors) but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids do not need to be specially cleaned and disinfected.

### **5.10 Rubbish Disposal Including Tissues**

- All waste that has been in contact with the individual with symptoms, including used tissues, continence pads and other items soiled with bodily fluids, must be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied. These bags should be placed into another bag, tied securely and kept separate from other waste within the room. This must be put aside for at least 72 hours before being disposed of as normal

### **5.11 Raising Concerns**

Heroic Care Ltd has effective procedures in place to allow staff to raise any concerns in relation to equipment, policies and processes for managing COVID-19 at the earliest opportunity. All staff must be aware of the Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure at Heroic Care Ltd and be able to raise concerns without any fear and receive timely feedback on their concerns.

### **5.12 Working from Home**

Where staff at Heroic Care Ltd are able to work from home, and Heroic Care Ltd has agreed to the arrangement Heroic Care Ltd has the following expectations;

- Staff can work independently and on their own initiative
- Staff are able to motivate themselves
- Complete agreed work within set deadlines
- Staff can manage their workload effectively
- Staff can cope well under any new pressure posed by working at home
- Staff will adopt healthy work from home practices which includes compliance with Health and Safety
- Staff will maintain contact with Heroic Care Ltd and colleagues with whom they would usually interact with
- Confidentiality will be maintained in line with the Data Protection Act
- Any concerns will be raised immediately with Mrs Amelia Boulton
- Meeting with Service Users or external organisations will not take place with the employees at home unless teleconferencing facilities are used

Heroic Care Ltd understands during the coronavirus outbreak, that where the employee's role makes home working feasible, it will consider this type of working on a case by case basis. Heroic Care Ltd can reverse the decision to allow home working if there are concerns about an individual or productivity and the smooth running of the business is adversely affected. The decision to temporarily allow home working is not a

contractual change.

Heroic Care Ltd will investigate mechanisms to communicate effectively with staff who work from home. The free software made available by Microsoft, [Teams](#), to support video conferencing and calls over wi-fi is an option that can be considered.

### **5.13 Working from Home - Health and Safety Considerations**

Heroic Care Ltd has a duty of care for all their employees, and the requirements of the health and safety legislation apply to homeworkers. Heroic Care Ltd is responsible for carrying out a risk assessment to check whether the proposed home workplace's ventilation, temperature, lighting, space, chair, desk and

computer, or any kind of workstation, and floor are suitable for the tasks the homeworker will be carrying out.

Heroic Care Ltd is responsible for the equipment it supplies, but it is the employee's responsibility to rectify any flaws in the home highlighted by the assessment. Once the home workplace has passed the assessment, it is the employee who is responsible for keeping it that way. Heroic Care Ltd will refer to the Home Working Policy and Procedure.

### **5.14 Visitors**

The impact of the coronavirus is far greater for people with underlying health conditions and who are elderly. Heroic Care Ltd will monitor the changing situation. Heroic Care Ltd will display information posters and advise anyone that is unwell to stay away. Heroic Care Ltd will ensure that all visitors document their names and contact phone numbers should contact tracing be required. Where restrictions on visitors are made, Heroic Care Ltd will ensure that risk assessments are in place, best interest decisions are recorded and the least restrictive option are taken and in human rights terms, this factors in the services and support supplied to Service Users by their visitors.

Heroic Care Ltd will review any Service User who have last powers of attorney in place and ensure that any advance decisions are recorded.

### **5.15 At Risk Groups**

The Government advised on 16 March that those who are at increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus (COVID-19) to be particularly stringent in following social distancing measures. This group includes those who are:

- Aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
- Under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (i.e. anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds)
  - Chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as [asthma](#), [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease \(COPD\)](#), emphysema or [bronchitis](#)
  - Chronic heart disease, such as [heart failure](#)
  - [Chronic kidney disease](#)
  - Chronic liver disease, such as [hepatitis](#)
  - Chronic neurological conditions, such as [Parkinson's disease](#), [motor neurone disease](#), [multiple sclerosis \(MS\)](#), a learning disability or cerebral palsy
  - [Diabetes](#)
  - Problems with your spleen – for example, [sickle cell](#) disease or if you have had your spleen removed
  - A weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as [HIV and AIDS](#), or medicines such as [steroid tablets](#) or [chemotherapy](#)
  - Being seriously overweight (a BMI of 40 or above)
- Those who are pregnant