

London Borough Of Havering

No Replies Protocol

Adult Social Care 2019

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11/20/2019

Document Control

Sign off and ownership details

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| Document Name | No Replies Protocol |
| Version number | V1 |
| Approved by | Annette Kinsella |
| Date Approved | 26 Nov 2019 |
| Date for Review | 20 Nov 2022 |
| Author | David Clements |
| Owner | Jackie Lawson |
| Document Location | Practice Portal/Intranet |

Revision history

| Version | Change | Date | Dissemination |
|----------------|---------------|-------------|----------------------|
| V0.1 | | | |
| V0.2 | | | |

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Introduction

No Replies to planned or agreed visits can have serious, potentially fatal, consequences for the individuals Adult Social Care works with. This policy explains how we respond including expectations around timeliness and the responsibilities of those working in different roles.

It covers planned or agreed visits from care managers and essential service providers to which there is No Reply. Any member of staff can have responsibility, with the support of a manager, for taking action, dependent on their role and/or service.

The aim of the policy is to ensure that in the case of No Replies our response is such that we are able to quickly establish that the individuals concerned have not come to harm, or to minimise any harm that may have occurred; and in that way contribute to the corporate strategic outcome of identifying and meeting the needs of our most vulnerable residents.

Definitions

Where there is no access or contact with the individual at a planned or agreed visit, this is recorded as a **'No Reply'**.

If the purpose of the visit is not achieved because access is denied or an explanation is given as to the person's whereabouts or as to why they don't want a visit, this is recorded as a **'Failed Visit'**. If the person is not seen this should be recorded on Liquid Logic.

Where the individual has cancelled a critical or priority visit, this is recorded as a **'Cancelled Visit'**. If they do not have the capacity to make that decision, and are not at another conflicting appointment then the visit should still take place. If a client with capacity has two or more consecutive cancelled visits this must be escalated to a senior or manager for supervision.

Disrupted visits

It is important to remember that individuals will not necessarily inform services when they are out or away, or if they have another appointment or are admitted to hospital. If possible they should be reminded of a planned or agreed visit closer to the time to avoid a No Reply.

Recording

Up-to-date records are vital. They are likely to detail important names, addresses and phone numbers (e.g. next of kin), services they use/attend (e.g. GP, hospital, day centre), and if the individual concerned uses a community alarm or has a keyholder nearby. A good needs assessment will indicate whether the individual is vulnerable, isolated, or for instance suffers from conditions (such as confusion or memory loss) that might put them at risk.

Protocol

Initial Checks

If there is No Reply the worker must:

- Allow the person enough time to answer the door
- Knock the door or ring the bell again
- Check if the curtains are drawn or for any build up or mail/post or deliveries
- Listen for any sounds that might suggest they are in e.g. television or radio
- Are there any suspicious smells?
- Approach their neighbours who may be able to help or say when they last saw them?
- Is there a home care agency involved that can advise of last visit

- Is there a housekeeper, caretaker or warden who knows their whereabouts or can help to gain access?
- Is there a keysafe?

If the person lives in a block of flats and it is not possible to gain access into the block to carry out the above initial checks, this automatically should be reported as a No Reply.

If the person can be seen, but are unresponsive or on the floor of their home, then call Emergency Services.

Responsibilities

If a worker attends an address with a no reply then the following responsibilities are mandatory:

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| ASC Worker | To notify the senior or manager within 30 minutes of a No Reply, having carried out the initial checks as fully as possible. |
| Front Door | Staff and/or managers in Havering Access Team on being made aware of a No Reply must immediately complete all checks and inform the team with case responsibility |
| Manager of senior | The responsible manager must, within two hours of No Reply report, confirm that all initial checks have been carried out that action is recorded on LAS and then arrange for the further checks listed below to be carried out |

Further Checks

- Check assessments for information regarding the person's level of vulnerability or exposure to risks for reference
- Telephone the person's contact numbers again (mobile and landline if available) to see if they have returned home
- Consult case records to determine last care worker or agency in contact with them, check for details of previous No Replies, and/or any new information regarding the person's whereabouts
- Try named contacts e.g. family including next of kin and friends, or key-holders, listed on their records. When were they last in contact with the person, do they know of their whereabouts, can they visit/help, do they have keys or know who else might assist?
- Telephone day centres, other providers attended by the person, or any other places they are known to go
- Determine whether keys are available, whether from the agency, care taker or community alarm provider
- Check local hospitals, their GP (and any concerns they may have regarding the person's health)

If the individual is located, any actions taken and outcomes must be recorded on LAS, and designated No Reply as appropriate. Where relevant, immediately inform homecare agency of resolution of No Replies (by telephone if possible).

If the individual is not located, escalate to a senior manager, who will make a decision on the next best course of action.

If it is necessary to enter the property, contact the police and locksmith. Before contacting the police, managers must evidence that the risk is sufficient to justify such a visit, that all other options have been exhausted and refer to case records as these may be relevant with

regards health (e.g. heart problems) and risk considerations. If agreed to, ensure decision is also made with regards who will act on joint responsibility to secure property before it is left unattended.

Applicability

This policy applies to all Adult Social Care staff concerned where an individual subject to a visit does not answer their door.

The Policy Lead, responsible for its timely review, update and dissemination, is Jackie Lawson, Service Manager Integrated Services

Related documents

Recording and Record-Keeping Policy

Havering Safeguarding Adults Protocol

https://www.havering.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1100/havering_safeguarding_adults_protocolpdf

Non-Residential Care Charging Policy https://www.havering.gov.uk/downloads/file/1831/non-residential_care_charging_policy

Dissemination and communication

This guidance has been disseminated to the Adult Social Care Operational Management Group for comment and the final version will be published on the Practice Portal or intranet.

Implementation

The No Replies Policy does not have a mandatory training requirement or any other training needs.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored on a quarterly basis by Policy Lead. It will be reviewed every three years. The next scheduled review of this policy is for November 2022 and will be conducted by Policy Lead.