Family Engagement Policy

PRN 61: **Family Engagement Policy**
Company Name: AI Auto Tech Ltd
Trading/Business Name: CAREHOPES
Company Registration Number: 15556946
SIC Code: 88100 – Social Work Activities Without Accommodation for the Elderly and Disabled
Email: admin@carehopes.com
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1. Policy Introduction

CAREHOPES recognises that families play a vital role in the wellbeing, stability, and emotional resilience of service users. Whether supporting adults, children, or individuals with complex needs, effective family engagement strengthens outcomes, enhances communication, and promotes a collaborative care environment.

This policy outlines how companions and staff engage with families respectfully, professionally, and safely, ensuring that boundaries, safeguarding principles, and cultural considerations are upheld at all times.

2. Key Principles

- **Respect:** Families are treated with dignity, empathy, and professionalism.
- **Collaboration:** Families are valued partners in supporting service users.
- **Boundaries:** Engagement must remain professional and within role scope.
- **Safeguarding:** Family involvement must never compromise safety.
- **Cultural competence:** Family structures, customs, and beliefs are respected.
- **Transparency:** Communication is clear, honest, and appropriate.
- **Confidentiality:** Information is shared only on a need-to-know basis.
- **Inclusivity:** All family types are recognised and supported.

3. Policy Statement

CAREHOPES is committed to fostering positive, safe, and constructive relationships with families. Companions must engage families in ways that:

- Support service user wellbeing

- Maintain professional boundaries
- Uphold safeguarding responsibilities
- Respect cultural and personal preferences
- Promote trust and collaboration

Family engagement must never lead to dependency, inappropriate familiarity, or boundary violations.

4. Purpose

- Provide clear guidance for engaging families safely and professionally
- Strengthen communication between companions, families, and service users
- Support collaborative care planning
- Protect companions from inappropriate expectations or pressure
- Ensure safeguarding principles guide all interactions
- Promote cultural sensitivity and respect

5. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Agency workers

It covers family engagement in:

- Service user homes
- Community settings
- Digital communication
- Multi-agency environments
- Cultural or spiritual contexts

6. Related Policies (Selected ONLY from relevant categories)

Client & Service User Interaction

- **PRN-011** Client Engagement Policy

- **PRN-012** Client Interaction & Communication Policy
- **PRN-072** Service User Confidentiality and Consent Procedure
- **PRN-073** Service User Consent and Capacity Procedure
- **PRN-137** Service User Assessment Policy
- **PRN-076** Service User Participation and Feedback Policy
- **PRN-074** Service User Engagement Participation and Co-Production Policy
- **PRN-138** Service User Involvement Policy
- **PRN-109** Companionship Standards Policy

Safeguarding & Protection

- **PRN-003** Adult Safeguarding Policy
- **PRN-136** Safeguarding Children Policy
- **PRN-144** Child Abuse Policy
- **PRN-131** Prevent Duty Awareness Policy
- **PRN-056** Mental Capacity Act Policy
- **PRN-070** Safeguarding Reporting and Escalation Procedure

Conduct, Ethics & Behaviour

- **PRN-014** Code of Conduct Policy
- **PRN-015** Code of Ethics
- **PRN-099** Professional Boundaries Policy
- **PRN-030** Dignity and Respect Policy

Lone Working & Multi-Agency Work

- **PRN-054** Lone Working Policy
- **PRN-053** Lone Working and Community Visits Procedure
- **PRN-145** Working in Pairs Policy
- **PRN-146** Working with Other Social Workers and Carers Policy
- **PRN-147** Proxy Working Principle
- **PRN-058** Partnership Working and External Agencies Policy

Digital & Information Governance

- **PRN-112** Data Protection and GDPR Policy
- **PRN-023** Confidential Information Management Policy
- **PRN-024** Confidentiality Policy
- **PRN-050** Information Sharing and Confidentiality Procedure

7. Definitions

Family: Any individual identified by the service user as part of their support network, including biological relatives, chosen family, guardians, carers, or close associates.

Engagement: Any interaction, communication, or collaboration between companions and family members.

Boundary: A professional limit that protects both the companion and the service user.

8. Companion Responsibilities

8.1 Communication

- Communicate respectfully and professionally
- Maintain clarity and avoid ambiguous language
- Avoid personal disclosures or familiarity
- Ensure communication aligns with service user consent

8.2 Collaboration

- Work with families to support service user wellbeing
- Respect family insights and cultural practices
- Encourage shared decision-making where appropriate

8.3 Safeguarding

- Remain alert to signs of abuse, coercion, or neglect
- Report concerns immediately
- Avoid involvement in family conflict
- Maintain neutrality

8.4 Boundaries

Companions must **not**:

- Form personal relationships with family members
- Accept gifts beyond approved thresholds

- Provide personal contact details
- Engage in family disputes
- Share confidential information without consent
- Allow family members to influence professional decisions improperly

8.5 Cultural Sensitivity

- Respect cultural norms and family structures
- Support rituals or practices where appropriate
- Avoid imposing personal beliefs

9. Family Involvement in Care Planning

Families may participate in:

- Assessment discussions
- Care planning
- Feedback sessions
- Cultural or spiritual support
- Emotional support for the service user

Participation must always align with:

- Service user consent
- Safeguarding requirements
- Professional boundaries

10. Managing Challenging Family Dynamics

Companions may encounter:

- Conflict
- Over-involvement
- Under-involvement
- Coercive behaviour
- Cultural misunderstandings

Companions must:

- Remain calm and neutral

- Avoid taking sides
- Report safeguarding concerns
- Seek guidance from supervisors
- Request paired working if risk increases

11. Confidentiality

Information may be shared with families only when:

- The service user consents
- It is necessary for safety
- It aligns with legal requirements

All information must be handled in accordance with PRN-112 Data Protection and GDPR Policy.

12. Training Requirements

Staff must receive training in:

- Family engagement
- Cultural competence
- Safeguarding adults and children
- Professional boundaries
- Conflict management
- Trauma-informed practice
- Communication skills

13. Documentation & Record Keeping

Companions must document:

- Significant family interactions
- Safeguarding concerns
- Consent decisions
- Changes in family involvement
- Conflicts or risks

Records must be stored securely.

14. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required due to:

- Legislative changes
- Safeguarding updates
- Organisational changes
- Feedback from staff or regulators