Cultural Competence Policy

PRN-37: Cultural Competence 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, the trading name of AI Auto-Tech Ltd, is committed to delivering companionship services that respect and celebrate cultural diversity. Cultural competence ensures that companions understand, appreciate, and respond appropriately to the cultural identities, beliefs, values, and practices of service users.

This policy outlines the standards, expectations, and responsibilities required to ensure culturally sensitive, inclusive, and respectful companionship across all environments.

2. Key Principles

- **Respect:** All cultural identities, beliefs, and practices must be honoured.
- **Inclusion:** Services must be accessible and welcoming to all cultural backgrounds.
- **Awareness:** Staff must understand how culture influences communication, behaviour, and preferences.
- **Sensitivity:** Interactions must be free from bias, judgement, or discrimination.
- **Adaptability:** Companions must adjust their approach to meet cultural needs.
- **Safeguarding:** Cultural competence must align with safeguarding and allocation rules.
- **Non-duplication:** Cultural support must not duplicate services provided by external professionals.

3. Policy Statement

CAREHOPES ensures that:

- Companions deliver culturally sensitive and respectful companionship
- Staff receive cultural competence training
- Cultural needs are incorporated into care and support plans
- Cultural preferences are documented and followed
- Staff avoid cultural bias, stereotyping, or discrimination
- Cultural practices are supported safely and appropriately
- Safeguarding rules override cultural practices when necessary
- Staff avoid proxy working or unauthorised shift swapping

4. Purpose

- Promote culturally respectful companionship
- Strengthen inclusion and diversity
- Support service users' cultural identity and wellbeing
- Provide clear guidance for culturally competent practice
- Ensure compliance with safeguarding and equality legislation

5. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Agency workers
- Zero-contract workers (**PRN-149**)
- Managers and supervisors

It covers cultural competence in:

- Communication
- Activities
- Religious practices

- Dietary preferences
- Social norms
- Community participation
- Safeguarding contexts
- Multi-staff working environments

6. Related Policies

PRN-107 Care and Support Planning Policy PRN-108 Community Participation Policy PRN-109 Companionship Standards Policy PRN-112 Data Protection and GDPR Policy PRN-113 Deprivation of Liberty Awareness Policy PRN-139 Social Isolation Reduction Policy PRN-143 Wellbeing Monitoring Policy PRN-145 Working in Pairs and Multi-Staff Working Policy PRN-146 Working with Other Social Workers and Carers Policy PRN-147 Proxy Working Principle PRN-148 Use of Personal and Service Users Gadget Policy PRN-150 Working with Vulnerable Children Policy

7. Cultural Competence Standards

7.1 Respect for Cultural Identity

Companions must:

- Respect cultural, religious, and ethnic identities
- Avoid assumptions or stereotypes
- Ask respectfully about preferences when appropriate
- Follow cultural instructions documented in care plans

7.2 Communication

Companions must:

- Use culturally appropriate communication styles
- Respect language preferences
- Avoid slang or culturally insensitive language
- Use interpreters only when authorised

7.3 Cultural Activities

Companions may support:

- Cultural festivals
- Religious gatherings

- Heritage events
- Traditional practices (non-clinical, non-care)

Activities must be:

- Safe
- Appropriate
- Respectful
- Risk-assessed

7.4 Religious Practices

Companions must:

- Respect prayer times
- Support attendance at places of worship
- Avoid imposing personal beliefs
- Follow safeguarding rules during religious activities

8. Safeguarding and Cultural Competence

Cultural competence must never compromise safeguarding.

Companions must:

- Follow PRN-143 and PRN-150
- Maintain boundaries even when cultural norms differ
- Follow gender-based allocation rules
- Avoid unsupervised contact with children
- Report concerns immediately
- Document cultural safeguarding risks accurately

If cultural practices conflict with safeguarding:

- Safeguarding takes priority
- Concerns must be escalated to the DSL
- Cultural sensitivity must be maintained while ensuring safety

9. Cultural Competence in Care and Support Plans

Care plans must include:

- Cultural preferences
- Religious practices
- Dietary needs
- Communication styles
- Cultural risk considerations
- Allocation restrictions
- Community participation preferences

Plans must be updated when cultural needs change.

10. Prohibited Conduct

Companions must **not**:

- Disrespect cultural beliefs
- Impose personal cultural or religious views
- Participate in unsafe cultural practices
- Provide personal care related to cultural rituals
- Attend private cultural ceremonies unless authorised
- Share personal cultural information inappropriately
- Engage in proxy working
- Swap shifts without TC approval

11. Documentation Requirements

Companions must document:

- Cultural preferences
- Cultural activities completed
- Cultural safeguarding concerns
- External professionals involved
- Multi-staff involvement
- “Service already being provided” entries

Records must be factual, objective, and securely stored.

12. Roles and Responsibilities

12.1 Trustees

- Oversee cultural inclusion governance

12.2 Senior Management

- Ensure cultural competence across the organisation
- Approve cultural policies and training

12.3 DSL

- Review cultural safeguarding concerns
- Provide guidance on cultural risk management

12.4 Managers

- Support staff
- Conduct cultural risk assessments
- Review documentation

12.5 Staff

- Follow cultural competence standards
- Maintain boundaries
- Report concerns
- Document accurately

13. Non-Compliance

Non-compliance may include:

- Cultural insensitivity
- Discrimination
- Boundary breaches
- Safeguarding failures
- Proxy working
- Poor documentation

Consequences may include:

- Retraining
- Formal warnings

- Suspension
- Termination
- Referral to safeguarding authorities

14. Policy Review

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

- Legislative changes
- Safeguarding updates
- Organisational changes
- Audit findings