Community Engagement and Outreach Policy

PRN-021: Community Engagement and Outreach 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. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish the organisation's commitment to engaging with local communities, promoting awareness of services, fostering inclusion, and building meaningful relationships with community stakeholders.

As a Non-Accommodation Companionship and Wellbeing Support Service, the organisation recognises the importance of strong community connections in reducing loneliness, improving wellbeing, encouraging volunteering, and supporting positive outcomes for older people and adults with disabilities.

This policy aims to:

Promote community participation.

Increase awareness of available services.

Support social inclusion.

Develop local partnerships.

Encourage volunteering.

Reach individuals who may benefit from support.

Strengthen community wellbeing and resilience.

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2. Scope

This policy applies to:

Trustees

Directors

Managers

Employees

Volunteers

Community representatives acting on behalf of the organisation

It applies to all community engagement, outreach, awareness, and participation activities undertaken by the organisation.

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3. Policy Statement

The organisation is committed to building positive relationships within local communities and ensuring that individuals who may benefit from companionship and wellbeing services are aware of the support available.

Community engagement activities will:

Be inclusive and accessible.

Promote equality and diversity.

Respect local communities.

Encourage participation and involvement.

Support collaboration and partnership working.

Contribute positively to community wellbeing.

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4. Principles

Community engagement activities will be guided by the following principles:

Inclusion

Everyone should have opportunities to participate.

Accessibility

Activities should be accessible wherever reasonably practicable.

Respect

All individuals and communities will be treated with dignity and respect.

Collaboration

Partnership working is encouraged to maximise impact.

Empowerment

Communities should be supported to contribute and influence activities.

Participation

Engagement should involve meaningful opportunities for involvement.

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5. Objectives

The organisation aims to:

Raise awareness of services.

Identify individuals who may benefit from support.

Encourage community participation.

Promote volunteering opportunities.

Reduce loneliness and isolation.

Develop partnerships with local organisations.

Increase service accessibility.

Support community wellbeing initiatives.

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6. What is Community Engagement?

Community engagement refers to activities that involve:

Building relationships.

Sharing information.

Seeking feedback.

Encouraging participation.

Supporting local initiatives.

Developing partnerships.

Effective engagement promotes trust, understanding, and collaboration.

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7. What is Outreach?

Outreach involves proactive efforts to:

Reach individuals who may not access support independently.

Raise awareness of available services.

Connect with underserved or isolated groups.

Promote access to community opportunities.

Outreach activities should focus on inclusion and accessibility.

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8. Community Stakeholders

The organisation may engage with:

Service users.

Family members.

Carers.

Community groups.

Local charities.

Faith groups.

Health services.

Adult Social Care.

Housing providers.

Advocacy services.

Educational organisations.

Volunteer centres.

Local businesses.

Stakeholder engagement supports stronger community networks.

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9. Identifying Community Needs

Community engagement activities may help identify:

Social isolation.

Community wellbeing concerns.

Accessibility barriers.

Service gaps.

Volunteering needs.

Emerging community issues.

Information gathered should inform service development and planning.

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10. Community Awareness Activities

Awareness activities may include:

Public information events.

Community fairs.

Awareness campaigns.

Presentations and talks.

Information stands.

Local media engagement.

Social media campaigns.

Activities should provide accurate and accessible information.

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11. Outreach to Vulnerable Groups

The organisation will seek to engage with individuals who may face barriers to participation, including:

Older people living alone.

Adults with disabilities.

Individuals experiencing loneliness.

Carers.

People with limited community connections.

Individuals experiencing social exclusion.

Approaches should be respectful and person-centred.

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12. Volunteer Recruitment Through Community Engagement

Community engagement can support:

Volunteer recruitment.

Volunteer awareness.

Community participation.

Skills sharing.

Volunteer opportunities should be promoted fairly and inclusively.

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13. Partnership Working

The organisation recognises the value of partnership working in community engagement.

Partnerships may support:

Awareness raising.

Service referrals.

Joint projects.

Community events.

Resource sharing.

Wellbeing initiatives.

Partnerships should align with organisational values and objectives.

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14. Community Events

The organisation may participate in or organise:

Information days.

Wellbeing events.

Volunteer recruitment events.

Community celebrations.

Awareness campaigns.

Social inclusion activities.

Appropriate planning and risk assessment arrangements should be followed.

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15. Service User Involvement

Service users should be encouraged, where appropriate, to:

Participate in community activities.

Share feedback.

Contribute ideas.

Support co-production initiatives.

Participate in awareness events.

Involvement should always be voluntary.

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16. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Community engagement activities should promote:

Equal access.

Diversity.

Inclusion.

Accessibility.

Efforts should be made to engage with underrepresented groups and reduce participation barriers.

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17. Accessibility

The organisation will seek to make engagement activities accessible through:

Accessible venues.

Alternative communication formats.

Clear information.

Reasonable adjustments.

Inclusive participation methods.

Accessibility considerations should be incorporated into planning processes.

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18. Community Consultation

Consultation activities may be used to gather views regarding:

Service development.

Community needs.

Accessibility.

New initiatives.

Policy development.

Feedback obtained should be considered appropriately.

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19. Feedback and Learning

Community feedback is valuable in helping the organisation:

Improve services.

Develop new initiatives.

Address community concerns.

Enhance participation.

Feedback should be recorded and reviewed where appropriate.

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20. Use of Social Media and Digital Engagement

Digital engagement may include:

Social media.

Online events.

Community forums.

Digital newsletters.

Website updates.

Digital engagement should comply with organisational communication, confidentiality, and data protection requirements.

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21. Safeguarding Considerations

Community engagement activities must be undertaken safely.

Employees and volunteers should remain alert to:

Safeguarding concerns.

Wellbeing issues.

Vulnerability indicators.

Community risks.

Concerns must be reported in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

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22. Representation of the Organisation

Individuals representing the organisation should:

Act professionally.

Communicate accurately.

Promote organisational values.

Respect confidentiality.

Follow organisational policies.

Representatives should understand the limits of their authority.

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23. Community Outreach Records

Records may be maintained relating to:

Engagement activities.

Outreach initiatives.

Community meetings.

Attendance figures.

Feedback received.

Referrals generated.

Partnerships established.

Records should support evaluation and improvement.

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24. Risk Management

Community engagement activities should consider:

Health and safety risks.

Safeguarding risks.

Reputational risks.

Accessibility issues.

Environmental considerations.

Risk assessments should be carried out where appropriate.

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25. Measuring Success

Success may be measured through:

Increased referrals.

Volunteer recruitment outcomes.

Service user participation.

Community feedback.

Partnership development.

Event attendance.

Awareness levels.

Monitoring should focus on meaningful outcomes rather than activity alone.

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26. Community Development and Social Value

Community engagement should contribute to:

Reduced loneliness.

Increased social connections.

Improved wellbeing.

Volunteer involvement.

Community resilience.

Stronger local networks.

The organisation seeks to create positive social value through its activities.

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27. Training and Support

Employees and volunteers involved in outreach activities may receive training covering:

Community engagement techniques.

Communication skills.

Safeguarding awareness.

Equality and inclusion.

Professional boundaries.

Organisational messaging.

Training supports effective and safe engagement.

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28. Case Study

Scenario: Community Awareness Campaign

The organisation identifies that many older adults in the local area are unaware of available companionship services.

Action Taken

Information sessions are held at community centres.

Partnership working takes place with local GP practices and social prescribing teams.

Promotional materials are distributed.

Volunteers attend community events.

Outcome

Awareness of services increases significantly, resulting in more referrals, increased volunteer enquiries, and stronger community connections.

Learning Point

Proactive community engagement helps ensure support reaches individuals who may otherwise remain socially isolated.

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29. Responsibilities

Board of Trustees

Responsible for:

Supporting community engagement objectives.

Monitoring community impact.

Providing strategic oversight.

Directors

Responsible for:

Leading outreach activities.

Developing community relationships.

Monitoring effectiveness.

Managers

Responsible for:

Coordinating engagement initiatives.

Supporting staff and volunteers.

Recording outcomes.

Employees and Volunteers

Responsible for:

Participating in outreach activities appropriately.

Representing the organisation professionally.

Encouraging community participation.

Reporting community feedback.

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30. Monitoring and Quality Assurance

The organisation will monitor:

Outreach activities undertaken.

Community engagement levels.

Referrals generated.

Volunteer recruitment outcomes.

Partnership activity.

Community feedback.

Inclusion and accessibility outcomes.

Monitoring findings will be used to improve engagement strategies and maximise community impact.

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31. Review Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed:

Annually.

Following significant community initiatives.

Following service reviews.

Following stakeholder feedback.

Following legislative or regulatory changes.

Related Policies

Partnership Working and External Agencies Policy

Service User Engagement, Participation and Co-production Policy

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Volunteer Management Policy

Fundraising, Donations and Sponsorship Policy

Accessibility and Inclusive Communication Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Communications and Social Media Policy