Service User Involvement Policy

PRN-124: Service User Involvement 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 ensuring that service users are actively involved in shaping their companionship experience. Service user involvement strengthens autonomy, dignity, emotional wellbeing, and the quality of companionship services.

This policy outlines how service users participate in decisions, provide feedback, influence service development, and engage in meaningful collaboration with the organisation.

2. Key Principles

- **Empowerment:** Service users are encouraged to express preferences and make decisions.
- **Respect:** Every voice is valued, regardless of ability, background, or identity.
- **Safety:** Involvement is facilitated within safeguarding boundaries.
- **Transparency:** Service users receive clear information about choices and processes.
- **Inclusion:** All service users can participate, including those with communication or cognitive challenges.
- **Collaboration:** Service users help shape service quality and development.
- **Accountability:** Feedback is acted upon and monitored.

3. Policy Statement

CAREHOPES ensures that service users:

- Are involved in decisions about their companionship
- Can express preferences, concerns, and expectations
- Have opportunities to influence service development

- Receive support to participate meaningfully
- Are protected from coercion, manipulation, or pressure
- Have their feedback taken seriously and acted upon

Service user involvement must always remain within safeguarding and professional boundaries.

4. Purpose

- Promote meaningful participation in companionship services
- Strengthen autonomy, dignity, and emotional wellbeing
- Ensure services reflect individual needs and preferences
- Support continuous improvement through user feedback
- Ensure compliance with safeguarding and ethical standards

5. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Employees
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Agency workers
- Zero-contract workers (**PRN-149**)

It covers service user involvement in:

- Daily companionship decisions
- Activity planning
- Feedback processes
- Service development
- Complaints and compliments
- Cultural and spiritual preferences

6. Related Policies

Client & Service User Interaction

PRN-011 Client Engagement Policy PRN-012 Client Interaction & Communication Policy PRN-076 Service User Participation and Feedback Policy PRN-074 Service User

Engagement Participation and Co-Production Policy PRN-137 Service User Rights Policy PRN-109 Companionship Standards Policy PRN-017 Companion Charter

Safeguarding & Protection

PRN-003 Adult Safeguarding Policy PRN-136 Safeguarding Children Policy PRN-144 Child Abuse Policy PRN-116 Domestic Abuse Policy PRN-131 Prevent Duty Awareness Policy PRN-129 Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking 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-004 Anti Harassment & Anti Discrimination Policy PRN-030 Dignity and Respect Policy

Digital & Information Governance

PRN-112 Data Protection and GDPR Policy PRN-023 Confidential Information Management Policy PRN-024 Confidentiality Policy PRN-049 Information Governance and Cyber Security Policy

7. Definitions

Service User Involvement: Active participation of service users in decisions, feedback, and service development.

Co-Production: Collaborative working where service users help shape services.

Participation: Engagement in activities, discussions, and decision-making.

8. Areas of Service User Involvement

8.1 Daily Companionship Choices

Service users may choose:

- Activities
- Conversation topics
- Outings
- Cultural or spiritual practices
- Digital engagement
- Preferred communication style

8.2 Planning and Decision-Making

Service users may:

- Suggest new activities

- Request changes to routines
- Express preferences for companion characteristics
- Participate in risk-assessed community involvement

8.3 Feedback and Evaluation

Service users may:

- Provide verbal feedback
- Complete surveys
- Participate in reviews
- Offer compliments or complaints

8.4 Service Development

Service users may:

- Contribute ideas for improvement
- Participate in co-production discussions
- Highlight unmet needs
- Suggest new service features

8.5 Cultural and Identity-Based Involvement

Service users may:

- Request culturally specific activities
- Practice spiritual or religious traditions
- Express identity-related preferences
- Request culturally matched companions (where possible and safe)

9. Companion Responsibilities

Companions must:

- Encourage service user involvement
- Listen actively and respectfully
- Support autonomy and independence
- Avoid coercion or pressure
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Report safeguarding concerns immediately

- Document involvement accurately

10. Safeguarding Considerations

Service user involvement must never compromise safety.

Concerns may include:

- Coercion by family members
- Manipulation by third parties
- Domestic abuse
- Exploitation
- Radicalisation
- Emotional dependency

Companions must escalate concerns immediately.

11. Supporting Service Users with Communication Needs

Companions must:

- Use accessible communication methods
- Offer visual aids or simplified language
- Allow extra time for decision-making
- Respect non-verbal communication
- Involve advocates when appropriate

12. Documentation & Record Keeping

Records must include:

- Service user preferences
- Feedback
- Participation notes
- Safeguarding concerns
- Actions taken

Records must be stored securely.

13. Training Requirements

Staff must receive training in:

- Service user involvement

- Communication skills
- Cultural competence
- Safeguarding
- Trauma-informed practice
- Professional boundaries

14. Policy Review

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

- Legislative changes
- Safeguarding updates
- Organisational changes
- Service user feedback