Working with Other Social Workers and Carers Policy

PRN-158: Working with Other Social Workers and Carers 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, recognises that effective safeguarding and high-quality companionship often require collaboration with external professionals, including:

- Social workers
- Care workers
- Support workers
- Occupational therapists
- Mental health practitioners
- Family support teams
- Local authority professionals

This policy outlines how companions must work safely, professionally, and collaboratively with external professionals while maintaining organisational boundaries, safeguarding rules, and confidentiality standards.

2. Key Principles

- **Collaboration:** External professionals are partners in safeguarding and support.
- **Safety:** All interactions must prioritise the safety of service users and staff.
- **Boundaries:** Companions must maintain professional limits at all times.
- **Respect:** External professionals must be treated with courtesy and professionalism.
- **Clarity:** Roles and responsibilities must be clearly understood.
- **Confidentiality:** Information sharing must follow GDPR and safeguarding rules.

- **Accountability:** Companions must document and report all relevant interactions.

3. Policy Statement

CAREHOPES ensures that companions:

- Work cooperatively with social workers and carers
- Share information appropriately and lawfully
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Follow safeguarding escalation procedures
- Respect external professionals' roles and responsibilities
- Avoid conflicts or duplication of duties
- Document all relevant interactions

Companions must **not**:

- Take instructions from external professionals that conflict with company policy
- Share confidential information without lawful basis
- Engage in proxy working
- Allow external professionals to influence allocation rules
- Perform tasks outside companionship scope

4. Purpose

- Strengthen multi-agency safeguarding
- Ensure safe and professional collaboration
- Support service users through coordinated care
- Prevent boundary breaches and role confusion
- Ensure compliance with UK safeguarding and GDPR legislation

5. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Employees
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Agency workers

- Zero-contract workers (**PRN-149**)

It covers collaboration with external professionals in:

- Private homes
- Community settings
- Public spaces
- Digital environments
- Multi-staff working sessions
- Group companionship
- Safeguarding investigations

6. Related Policies

Safeguarding & Protection

PRN-003 Adult Safeguarding Policy PRN-136 Safeguarding Children Policy PRN-144 Child Abuse Policy PRN-150 Working with Vulnerable Children Policy PRN-143 Working with Vulnerable Adults 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

Operational Delivery

PRN-145 Working in Pairs and Multi-Staff Working Policy PRN-109 Companionship Standards Policy PRN-017 Companion Charter PRN-018 Companion Completion Checklist

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-139 Staff Conduct and Behaviour 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

External Professional: Any individual providing social care, health care, or support services outside CAREHOPES.

Multi-Agency Working: Collaboration between organisations to support service users and safeguard vulnerable individuals.

Information Sharing: Lawful and appropriate exchange of relevant information for safeguarding or care coordination.

8. Working with Social Workers

Companions must:

- Cooperate with social workers professionally
- Provide factual information when requested
- Attend multi-agency meetings if authorised
- Follow safeguarding instructions from the DSL, not external professionals
- Document all interactions
- Report concerns immediately

Companions must **not**:

- Share confidential information without lawful basis
- Accept instructions that conflict with company policy
- Allow social workers to override safeguarding allocation rules
- Engage in tasks outside companionship scope

9. Working with Carers and Support Workers

Companions must:

- Respect carers' roles and responsibilities
- Coordinate activities safely
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Avoid role confusion
- Report concerns about carers' behaviour
- Document relevant interactions

Carers must **not**:

- Supervise companions
- Direct companionship activities
- Request tasks outside companionship scope
- Influence staff allocation decisions

10. Avoiding Duplication of Services (New Principle Integrated)

CAREHOPES enforces a strict rule to prevent duplication, conflict, and boundary breaches when external professionals are already providing a service.

10.1 Service Already Being Provided

If an external professional (carer, support worker, social worker, or other service) is **already providing a service**, companions must:

- **Skip that service immediately**
- **Document clearly:** *"Service already being provided by other service: {name of service}."*
- Continue with companionship duties that do **not** overlap or conflict.

10.2 Purpose of This Rule

This prevents:

- Duplication of care
- Conflicts with external professionals
- Boundary confusion
- Role overlap
- Safeguarding ambiguity

10.3 Clarification with External Services

CAREHOPES (TC) management may:

- Contact external services
- Clarify roles
- Confirm responsibilities

Companions must NOT initiate these discussions.

10.4 Staff Prohibition

Companions are **not allowed** to:

- Initiate discussions about role boundaries
- Engage in debates about who should provide what
- Involve themselves in negotiations with external professionals
- Attempt to resolve conflicts while on shift

All such matters must be escalated to TC management.

11. Multi-Staff and Multi-Agency Collaboration

When multiple staff or external professionals are present:

- The **Lead Companion** coordinates CAREHOPES's role
- All companions maintain boundaries
- External professionals must not interfere with internal procedures
- Safeguarding allocation rules remain in force
- Proxy working is prohibited
- Information sharing must be lawful and documented

12. Safeguarding Considerations

External professionals may identify:

- Abuse
- Neglect
- Exploitation
- Domestic abuse
- Radicalisation
- Child abuse
- Mental health crisis

Companions must:

- Report concerns to the DSL
- Document observations
- Avoid confronting suspected perpetrators
- Follow internal safeguarding procedures

13. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

Information may be shared only:

- With lawful basis
- For safeguarding purposes
- With authorised professionals
- On a strict need-to-know basis

Companions must:

- Follow GDPR

- Avoid sharing personal opinions
- Document all information shared
- Report data breaches immediately

14. Conduct and Professional Boundaries

Companions must:

- Maintain professionalism
- Avoid personal conversations
- Avoid conflicts with external professionals
- Communicate respectfully
- Avoid undermining external professionals
- Avoid being influenced by external professionals inappropriately

15. Documentation & Record Keeping

Records must include:

- Interactions with external professionals
- Information shared
- Safeguarding concerns
- Actions taken
- Multi-agency meeting notes
- “Service already being provided” entries

Records must be stored securely.

16. Training Requirements

Staff must receive training in:

- Multi-agency working
- Safeguarding
- Professional boundaries
- Communication and collaboration
- GDPR and confidentiality
- Trauma-informed practice

17. Policy Review

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

- Legislative changes
- Safeguarding updates
- Organisational changes
- Multi-agency feedback