Death of a Person We Support Policy

Supportive Bridge Ltd - Policy and Procedure

IF YOU FIND SOMEONE UNRESPONSIVE, RIGHT NOW

1. Check for danger, then check the person. If they are not breathing normally, or you cannot find a pulse, call 999 immediately and start CPR if you are trained to, following the call handler's instructions.
2. Never assume someone has died. Only a paramedic, doctor or other qualified professional can confirm death. If in any doubt at all, call 999.
3. Call the office straight away as soon as it is safe to do so, whichever comes first.
4. Do not move the body or disturb anything in the room beyond what is needed to attempt resuscitation, especially if the death is sudden or unexpected - the police or coroner may need to see the scene as it was found.
5. Stay calm, stay with the person (once it is safe to do so) until the emergency services or another professional arrives, unless the office tells you otherwise.

Registered Manager	Iffrah Ishtiaq
Nominated Individual	Iffrah Ishtiaq
Office phone	07448266215
Out-of-hours / on-call number	
Date issued	01-10-2026
Next review date	

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1. Purpose

1.1 This policy sets out what everyone working for Supportive Bridge Ltd ("Supportive Bridge", "we", "us") does if a person we support dies, whether during a visit, shortly after one, or is found to have died since our last contact with them. It exists so that, in a distressing and disorientating moment, our support workers know exactly what to do, who to call, and what not to do.

1.2 Because our support workers often visit people alone in their own home, they may be the first, or only, person to find someone who has died. This policy protects the person's dignity, protects our worker, and makes sure the right professionals are involved at the right time.

2. Scope

2.1 Supportive Bridge Ltd operates in two parts: as a staffing agency, supplying care and support workers to care homes, hospitals and other regulated providers under that provider's own policies and supervision; and as a community support service, where our own support workers visit adults and older people in their own homes, including council housing, on morning and evening shifts to help with daily living.

2.2 Supportive Bridge Ltd is not currently registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and does not provide personal care in any circumstances at present. This means no washing, bathing, dressing, toileting, continence care, or assistance with eating, drinking, oral, skin, hair or nail care. Personal care will only be offered once, and if, CQC registration is granted, and this policy will be updated at that point.

2.3 This policy covers any death of a person receiving support from our community support service, whether expected (for example, someone known to be receiving end-of-life care from a district nursing or palliative care team) or unexpected. It applies to every support worker and to office staff handling the aftermath.

3. If death was expected and another professional is present

3.1 Where a person is already known to be at the end of their life and a district nurse, palliative care team or GP is involved, and one of those professionals is present and confirms death, our worker's role is to stay calm, be respectful and supportive to anyone else present, and call the office as soon as they reasonably can. The professional present will handle formal confirmation and the immediate next steps.

4. If death is unexpected, or no other professional is present

4.1 Follow the steps at the front of this policy: call 999 if there is any doubt the person is not breathing or has no pulse, and do not assume death without a professional confirming it. An unexpected or unexplained death is treated as a potential safeguarding matter and may involve the police and the coroner, so nothing in the room should be moved, tidied, or disposed of, including medication, food or drink, beyond what was necessary to attempt resuscitation.

5. Contacting the office

5.1 Whatever the circumstances, the worker calls the office (or the on-call number outside office hours) as soon as it is safe to do so. The office will then:

- confirm who else needs to be told, and by whom - next of kin are normally informed by the police, the GP or a family member, not by our support worker, unless a different arrangement has been specifically agreed;
- notify the funding local authority or commissioner where relevant;
- consider whether the death needs to be treated as a safeguarding concern and, if so, contact Durham Social Care Direct on 03000 267 979;
- once we are CQC-registered, notify the CQC without delay, in line with Regulation 16 of the Care Quality Commission (Registration) Regulations 2009;
- arrange support for the worker involved, and for any other person we support who may be affected, such as a friend or neighbour also receiving our support;

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- review whether any other visits that day need to be covered or reorganised.

6. Supporting the worker

6.1 Finding someone who has died, or being present when someone dies, is distressing, whatever a worker's experience. The worker is never expected to carry on with their remaining shifts that day without being asked first, is offered a debrief with their manager as soon as practical, and is signposted to further support if they need it. This is treated compassionately, not as a routine incident to move past quickly.

7. Records and reporting

7.1 The circumstances are recorded factually and promptly in line with our Support Records Policy and, where applicable, reported and reviewed under our Incident Reporting and Duty of Candour Policy. Records must describe exactly what was found and what was done, without speculation about the cause of death, which is for the coroner or a doctor to determine.

8. After the immediate response

8.1 The person's care and support record is closed in line with our Support Records Policy and Data Protection Policy, and any belongings, keys or documents we hold on the person's behalf are returned to the family or personal representative, recorded in line with our Handling Money and Property Policy.

9. Related policies

- Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Incident Reporting and Duty of Candour Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Support Records Policy
- Handling Money and Property Policy
- Business Continuity Policy

10. Document control

Version	Date	Approved by	Role	Reason
1.0			Nominated Individual	New policy for local authority assurance and CQC registration

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