Tulip Mental Health and Community Care Ltd Business Contingency Plan 2025

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Introduction

From exceptionally bad weather, a fuel shortage, or a pandemic, to financial or quality problems, there are many circumstances that can disrupt services provided by the independent and voluntary adult social care sector. This guide by Tulip Care Ltd has been written to help providers develop plans to ensure continuity of care if a problem occurs. Its focus is on plans for individual services. This is because no single guide could offer comprehensive organisational advice for such a varied sector! But organisational strategies are also important and Tulip Care Ltd recognises the pitfalls that can contribute to positive care.

First, Tulip Care Ltd needs to assign (and record) roles – who is responsible for writing, checking, and maintaining your plan? Then look at things that could disrupt our service. Which are most likely to occur, and which would have the biggest impact? Then consider what you can do in advance to reduce the risks the Manager has identified, and what you would do if a problem still occurred. Tulip care will implement these actions, practice our plan, review, and revise the plan… and then start the cycle again, (Reflection).

The Practicalities of Evacuating a Service

• The highest number of practical issues will arise if people must move from where they are living.

• There are too many to list here, but a few to consider are: • The need for as much support as possible to help people decide for themselves where to move to.

• A pre-planned accessible location for people to go to in an immediate emergency.

• Except in an immediate emergency, the need for time and help for people to pack before moving.

• If it might not be possible for people's medication to be retrieved in an emergency evacuation, a plan agreed in advance for how replacement medication can be obtained at short notice.

• A plan agreed in advance as to how care and medication records would be kept available, either through the transfer of paper records, or by IT systems that can be accessed from other locations. • Consideration of urgent care needs, for example special diets, security provided by locked doors or supervision.

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Quote

“I know from CQC’s/Ofsted work with people who use services, their families and carers just how important continuity of care is, as well as safety. If services cannot continue for whatever reason people may not receive vital medication, be left in distressing situations, become anxious or must move home suddenly. I commend this excellent guidance to the sector as good contingency planning is vital to make sure these risks are avoided or mitigated”.

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Pandemic/Covid 19

There is flu every winter and, for individuals and care services, it can be devastating. But a pandemic caused by a novel virus that spread easily could occur at any time of year and have a much bigger impact.

• The national planning assumption is that up to 50% of us could become ill over a period of several months, with 4% of those who are ill being hospitalised; and that up to 315,000 people could die. Up to 30% of staff could be absent throughout the pandemic.

• Key actions for providers would include: a focus on infection control; communication and information for staff and people receiving care; planning how to manage prolonged staff shortages, and how to prioritise care; and close working with commissioners and health services.

• Current guidance for health and care services is here. When additional guidance is developed, it will be made available from the Ofsted/.Gov Websites.

If applicable the following will come into play:

Guidance

Tulip Care has its own Risk Assessment/Visitors Policy, PPE is provided on all Tulip Care sites. Visitors and staff must answer a questionnaire before entering the premises, and there may be occasions where visitors (family & externals), must undertake a lateral flow test. Tulip Care is a low-risk environment regarding Covid 19. However, PPE (Masks), hand gel is provided on entering Tulip Care Premises.

In the event of Government//CQC Guidelines changing regarding Covid 19, all staff have been advised to revert to the old Government Guidelines, such as 2-meter distancing, with all visitors that have had to self-isolate, or experienced symptoms of Covid 19 to rebook another visit when they feel well to visit. All staff are double vaccinated at Tulip Care, and the properties windows are opened daily to ensure fresh air enters the property.

All risk assessments, visitor's policy, and PPE Checklist would be available on request.

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IT Failure

Tulip Care Ltd uses more and more IT systems for care management, rostering etc, the challenge of how to manage if they fail increases.

• Tulip Care Ltd periodically reviews our IT security, backup, and recovery arrangements – but recognising that what is needed will vary depending on the size and spread of our organisation. Tulip Care Ltd recognises the Care Provider Alliance's Introduction to Cyber Security may be of assistance. • However, no system is completely reliable - the NHS and even international airlines have all suffered major disruptive outages in recent years. • Tulip Care Ltd has considered how we would cope if we lost all access to internet-based systems and email for perhaps two or three days. And what essential information would we need to maintain service delivery, and how could we access it when systems were down?

Tulip Care Ltd does have its own IT System, and its own IT Department, all systems are regularly monitored weekly with the focus relating to the backup system. In each home there is a desktop computer that is used by staff and is secure, this has been set up by the IT Department, who are on call 24/7, 365. All systems are regularly tested remotely, and any issues reported to the registered manager.

If Wi – Fi access does go down, then all Tulip Care Ltd management do have a backup system on their mobile phones, so positive communication in relation to care can remain the same, this is managed by their own data on mobile phones. This ensures that all emails, secure documents (that are sent via Egress), can be easily always accessed concentrating on positive care for the resident. This ensures that the team can still liaise with external professionals and families.

All policies/procedures are printed off in hard copy if the system does go down so they can be accessed/read at any stage.

Tulip Care Management have secure email systems for referrals, and to communicate individually, as not to upset care with the young people.

All of Tulip Care Ltd It Systems can be accessed from other locations, as not to upset resident continuity of care. This will ensure smooth communication with staff/young people, families and external professionals.

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Severe Adverse/Weather

• Disruptive flooding has become more common in recent years, and, despite recent milder winters, services should ideally plan for a winter such as 1962/63 when there was over two months of severe weather. • Tulip Care Ltd has thought about how staffing could be maintained, and Tulip Care services need to plan how we would access 4 x 4 vehicles. • Tulip care does provide accommodation should check that gritting arrangements are adequate. If they are at risk of flooding, sandbags or other precautions may need to be planned. • Remember that the situation may be exacerbated by food or fuel shortages, or by utility failure.

Tulip Care Ltd is not at risk of flooding, as the home is on a residential housing estate, in which has never been exposed to severe flooding. The home is run by a private landlord (in which an agreement has been struck), that any damages to the property will be dealt with ASAP. Tulip Care also has full employee liability insurance, to ensure any difficulties are dealt with ASAP.

All staff live within range of the home, and Tulip Care Ltd recognises how detrimental lack of staffing can have to a resident's care. The registered manager does have a 4x4 vehicle and all risk assessments will be conducted before young people leave the home in adverse weather conditions.

If staffing is low, it is the registered manager's responsibility to source staffing ASAP as not to disrupt care for the young people. Tulip Care is registered with an accredited agency that can provide staffing within a 10-minute period to travel to the home, the agency makes alternative arrangements to get staff to the home in adverse weather conditions.

All young people will be advised of adverse weather conditions, and risk assessed before leaving the home, supported, and reassured if visits do need to be cancelled and re-arranged.

Registered Manager in severe flooding in the area to keep in touch with the National Flood Helpline.

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Major local incident due to terrorism, civil disturbance, industrial accident etc

• A major fire or chemical leak near a Tulip Care service could lead to our evacuation. The risk for Tulip Care Ltd will depend on our location. • A terrorist incident could disrupt or put at risk staff travelling in the community; it could also cause travel chaos and lead to phone networks being switched off. • This type of incident is rare and unpredictable, but some advance consideration of possible scenarios, and how to ensure staff safety and maintain service provision, is recommended. • If staff travel as part of their job, Tulip Care Ltd would need to have a system so they know where each person should be at any time, and who they will be visiting.

Tulip Care Ltd location is situated on a residential housing estate, and not near any industrial areas, nor is the location in Manchester City Centre.

Staff have been advised that if the above does happen, to contact the manager ASAP.

young people will not be allowed to leave the home, risk assessment completed (environmental), and the home placed in 'lockdown', as not to place staff/visitors at risk.

Local Councils/Police will be contacted by the manager, to see when the area under threat is safe to travel in, and a radius of location (as the incident may be 20 miles away from the home), put in place.

If staff on shift do lose phone contact, then the staff on shift will remain on the premises until the incident has been cleared so care is not disrupted.

All families/externals will be informed via land line (if this is still working), and all visits suspended, until the risk is deemed low.

All staff will let the manager know where they are travelling to and from if they are out of the home with a resident, this is in the sign in/out book.

The young people (if out with staff) must be kept safe and be always with staff. If a young people is out on their own, staff/manager must be informed of location/safety.

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Severe Heatwave

• Tulip Care Ltd recognises it is tempting to think we would all enjoy a nice hot summer – but 15,000 people died in a heatwave in France in 2003 and a similarly severe heatwave would be a serious issue. • Tulip care will need to ensure staff know how to identify illness that could be caused by the heat, and how to look after themselves - but the biggest challenge would be for Tulip Care with accommodation. • A key priority is to be able to maintain at least one accessible room below 26 degrees in extreme heat. This may require adaptations or new equipment so advance planning is essential. • Public Health England provides very helpful guidance for health and care services generally and specifically for care homes.

Tulip Care Ltd accommodation does have accessible windows, with fresh, clean air daily flowing through the premises.

Tulip Care Ltd provides cold water in bottles daily for all staff and young people, ensuring hydration is a key factor.

Tulip Care Ltd does have a thermometer on site to monitor temperatures in severe hot weather.

The top/bottom floor of the home is below 26 degrees, and staff and young people will be advised to utilise these floors in the event of severe heat.

All staff are 1st Aid trained and do recognise the symptoms of dehydration and heat stroke and will seek medical advice ASAP in severe heat.

Young people and staff are advised to utilise sunscreen if leaving the home, to prevent sunburn, and to always stay hydrated, utilising shade where possible.

young people are advised to seek medical support/advice from staff/manager of feeling unwell.

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Utility Failure

• The loss of water, electricity or gas can be hugely disruptive, particularly for Tulip Care Ltd and other services with accommodation. • While most interruptions are short, the loss of electricity or water for a 48-hour period is not unknown and should be planned for. • Tulip Care Ltd does not have access to emergency generators, as this is a landlord managed home, and a small environment. However, it does have water supplies and alternative means of heating. • Tulip Care Ltd has lots of small practical steps that can be taken – keeping extra blankets, stocks of bottled water and of food that doesn't need cooking, etc. • Staff need guidance on what to do if there is a utility failure – for example who to call, the need to turn off gas or electric appliances to minimise risk when supplies resume, etc.

Loss of Water – Tulip Care Ltd has plenty of bottled water, so young people can still tend to personal hygiene, brush teeth, stay hydrated etc.

Hot Water – Tulip Care Ltd does reside in a privately owned property, and the boiler is serviced every year, pink slip for service is located near the boiler.

Heat – Tulip Care does have x 2 electric heaters, that can be used if the radiators are out of action. If the electric fails, and the radiators cannot be switched on, blankets and extra bedding will be provided to residents/staff.

Food – Tulip Care will have dry foods/perishables that will be purchased every week by staff when shopping, so food does not have to be cooked. Depending on how long the specific utility is down for, Tulip Care will also offer alternatives such as take away foods that can be delivered, to ensure nutrition.

Manager to contact all utility providers, to see how long the specific utility is down for, so staff and residents/visitors/externals can be kept in the loop.

Manager to contact the landlord ASAP, if any of the utilities are home related and not down to local utility providers.

Staff/Manager to update the maintenance book accordingly, infection prevention guidelines to be always followed, with staff advising/supporting always.

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Issues with Buildings/Equipment

• Tulip Care Ltd services are at risk of disruption due to fire, maintenance problems, equipment failure etc. • Tulip Care Ltd will need to maintain the usual precautions and maintenance routines in these areas. • Tulip Care Ltd will plan what to do if key equipment fails – for example lifts, laundry or catering equipment all need back up plans. • Tulip Care Ltd services etc will all need detailed plans for emergency evacuation. • Fire is a critical risk. Tulip Care Ltd recognises the risk of fire.

Tulip Care Ltd is situated and owned by a private landlord, in which Tulip Care has contact with daily//weekly if anything fails in the home or any maintenance is required.

There are no lifts in any of Tulip Care Ltd premises.

Tulip Care Ltd has its own set of policies/procedures in a recognised Health & Safety folder that has been checked by the insurance company.

Staff have been advised to complete any maintenance issues and record them in the maintenance book that is on site so the landlord can be informed.

The landlord may advise Tulip Care to complete the work by an external provider, the invoice then sent to the landlord for payment.

All rooms and signage at Tulip Care are fitted with an evacuation procedure (location meeting point) in the event of a fire.

All Tulip Care rooms are fitted with smoke alarms, with ' ‘in the event of a fire’’, signage in all rooms, and situated around the property.

All staff/young people are to sign in/out of leaving the premises in the event of a fire.

Regarding laundry, all equipment has been PAT tested, with the certificate in the Health & Safety file, this is to be updated annually.

All new electrical equipment is to be PAT tested before this can be utilised.

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Supplier Failure

• Many services rely on the regular supply of food, personal protective equipment, medication, cleaning services etc. • It's a good idea to ask your key suppliers what their own business continuity arrangements are. Confidence about this can be considered when letting contracts. • It's also prudent to have alternative suppliers identified in case of a failure by a regular supplier. Given that one reason for supplier failure may be travel disruption, local suppliers may be a good back up.

Tulip Care Ltd are registered with medical supply companies, that in the event of emergency can still provide medical supplies within a 24-hour period (contract).

Tulip Care has all physical observations, temper dots, self – harm cleaning equipment available at the home, in the event of supplier failure.

Tulip Care staff will provide all shopping weekly, to ensure the needs of young people's nutrition are met.

Tulip Care when admissions take place, will ensure that all medications are provided with 'out of hours admissions', as not to affect care with the young people.

Tulip Care will liaise with GP, to ensure that a regular supply of medications is at hand and can be delivered/picked up by Tulip Care staff.

Tulip Care has months of PPE supply at the home, such as aprons, masks, gloves, and hand gels, in the event of supplier failure.

Stationary is not affected at Tulip Care Ltd.

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Transfer of young people (evacuation).

A key priority for Tulip Care will be the need to ensure good communication and support for young people Tulip Care Ltd support, family members and staff. There are also several statutory agencies who must be informed as soon as a provider becomes aware that Tulip Care Ltd may need to be evacuated, suspended, or closed: • The emergency services, if required. • The local authority adult social care team, using out of hours numbers if needed. • Ofsted • Any other commissioners. • Local health services.

Tulip Care Ltd recognises that there may be occasions where the accommodation may have to be evacuated due to building works, flood etc.

In the event of evacuation Tulip Care will liaise with Local Authority of where the resident is placed under, to seek alternative accommodation.

Young people's families/Social Worker/CAMHs/Adult Social Work Team will also be notified, along with OFSTED.

The Commissioning Team for the service user will be notified ASAP.

Depending on where the location of the young people is moving to, GP will also be notified.

Tulip Care will ensure that this is passed as 'Priority', to ensure that the young people care is not affected.

Once accommodation has been provided, Tulip Care will transport the young person to the new accommodation.

Medication card, young person file, with risk identified (if applicable), will be handed over to the accepting team.

If there is a potential risk, then staff will have to travel with the young person, to always keep young people safe.

Food & medication allergies also handed over to the accepting team, with timescale given to the young person of when Tulip may open again, pending work that requires completion.

Collaborative communication via email//phone to ensure continuity of care. This is to be determined by Tulip/External Teams. OFSTED to be informed when the service re-opens (if applicable).

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Sources of Information

- Care Quality Commission: www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/adult-social-care
- NICE: www.nice.org.uk/about/nice-communities/social-care
- SCIE: www.scie.org.uk/care-providers
- Skills for Care: www.skillsforcare.org.uk

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