

Policy

TITLE		Out-of-hours Policy	
Policy ref:	LG048P	Approval date	July 2024
Owner	Director of Customer Operations (Housing and Care)	Planned review date	July 2027
Department(s):			
Approved by	Executive Committee		

1. Background	The Abbeyfield Living Society (ALS) operates an out-of-hours system 365 days a year for use by Abbeyfield staff and residents across all ALS care homes and housing services. Out-of-hours refers to the time periods outside of 'normal working hours,' which is classed as after 5pm until 9am on weekdays and all-day during weekends or bank holidays. It is recognised that ALS on call staff undertake this duty in addition to their normal working hours and, as such, should be able to go about their daily routines as much as possible during the on-call period, whilst providing advice and support to services as required.
2. Objectives	The aims of this policy are to: • Ensure appropriate support for residents out of hours which will be provided by an external company. • Enable effective management of services 24/7. • Ensure that service delivery is not compromised, and the needs of residents are met. • Ensure there is a sufficient internal on call support for staff who work out of hours.
3. Scope	This policy covers all employees within the Abbeyfield Living Society (ALS), including bank staff, agency workers and volunteers.

4. Policy	It is Abbeyfield's policy that staff and residents across ALS services are able to access required support at all times, this support is provided by both an external provider and an in-house ROM (Regional Operations Manager) on call system. 4.1 Our out-of-hours systems During normal working hours (regarded as 0900 to 1700 hours, Monday to Friday), the standard operational line management structure can be used. During the out-of-hours period, a structured out-of-hours system is in place. Abbeyfield's out-of-hours system involves: • an external care line provider • an external call handling provider for emergency property issues • an internal ROM (Regional Operations Manager) on-call system staffed by senior ALS staff members External Care Line Provider: The external care line provider will be responsible for providing out of hours support to our housing residents which can include contacting emergency services or NOK as required. Where there is a serious incident or business continuity issue, the external care line provider will seek assistance from the internal (ROM) on call Manager. Emergency Property Issues: The external call handling for property issues will provide support to all residents and services out of hours which will include organising for contractors to attend to repairs. Internal (ROM) On Call: Within services that are 247, where advice is required for an emergency the staff will have access to an on-call number where support will be provided by a Senior Manager from ALS. 4.2 Intended users of ROM on call system Our internal ROM on-call system is staffed by an allocated Regional Operations Manager (or equivalent) and Executive Director. As such, there will always be at least two members of senior management on the on-call rota at any one time. The on-call system is a remote telephone advice, support, and notification system, with no expectation of providing a physical presence at a service. The ROM On Call system is primarily a function aimed at providing support to staff who work out of hours. Whilst this is usually our care services, the on-call Manager may at times pick up emergency calls from housing residents, such as, staff not arriving for work and no meal being provided. In these instances the ROM on call may need to provide support to the residents to resolve the issues raised. In other instances, such as property repairs, the advice should be to contact the correct phone line.
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	While Abbeyfield seeks to enable all staff to be confident to deal with most situations without recourse to the out-of-hours system, there are occasions when it will be necessary for care home staff to contact the on-call Regional Operations Manager to notify them about certain situations, or to obtain further advice and support if a situation cannot be dealt with at the service-level. 4.3 System testing Monthly tests will be undertaken at each housing service to ensure the call points to the external care line service are functioning correctly. 4.4 Responsibilities It is the responsibility of the external care line provider to adhere to the Service Level Agreement with Abbeyfield. 4.4.1 Service Managers It is the responsibility of Service Managers to: • Ensure all housing residents have or are offered access to the emergency care line via a telephone, call points and a wrist alarm or neck pendant. • Provide up to date information and emergency contact details for all housing residents to the external care line provider. • Undertake monthly checks of all emergency call points and equipment to ensure they are working correctly and take appropriate remedial action if equipment is found to be faulty. • Take appropriate action to follow-up on out-of-hours calls and issues. • Where the service is staffed 24/7, ensure staff know who to contact in the event of an emergency. • Ensure the out-of-hours property repairs telephone number is on display for use by residents and staff, as appropriate, in the event of a property-related emergency. 4.4.2 On-call Regional Operations Manager It is the responsibility of the on-call Regional Operations Manager to: • Provide on-call managerial cover on the designated dates of the on-call rota or to arrange alternative cover, if unavailable. • Ensure that they have switched on the Teams on call function to ensure calls are diverted to their work phone during their on-call period. • Ensure that they check the phone is correctly diverted when handing over the on call to the next person. • Check their email for any messages if the phone has been on silent for any period of time, to ensure there are no missed calls. Missed calls are not logged in teams.
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	• Provide advice, management, guidance, and support when contacted for assistance. • Avoid locations with little or no network coverage, as far as possible. • Ensure that, they have access to the on-call folder as far as possible. • Be fit to always fulfil the role, not unduly under the influence of alcohol or drugs, as per the Alcohol and Drugs Policy (S002P). • Respond to all calls within a 30-minute period. • Document all calls, actions, and decisions. • Follow all ALS policies and procedures. • Ensure all ALS policies and procedures are followed by others, including accident and incident reporting. • Escalate serious incidents to the on-call Executive Director, if required. 4.4.3 The IT Team The IT team are responsible for: • Providing technology and technological assistance, if required, to support the out-of-hours on-call system. 4.4.4 On-call Director The role of the on-call Director is primarily one of making decisions and facilitating in difficult circumstances, as and when required. It is the responsibility of the on-call Executive Director role to: • Provide on-call cover on the designated dates set out on the on-call rota. • Provide senior support to assist in managing a situation at a service, when required. • Make the final decision on any incident during the out-of-hours period. • Escalate incidents brought to their attention to the Executive Team, if required. • Ensure that their work phone is always charged and switched on during the on-call period. • Respond to all calls within a 30-minute period. 4.4.5 Operational Administration team It is the responsibility of the Operational Administration team to: • Set the on-call rota for the calendar year. • Circulate the on-call rota. • Manage requested changes to the on-call rota. • Highlight issues with the on-call rota to the Executive Team, as needed. • Ensure the on-call folder is up-to-date and reviewed by the relevant teams at least every six months.

Policy

5. Finance, Value for Money & Social Value	N/A
6. Linked policies	• Accidents and Incidents (C014P) • Business Continuity Management (LG046P) • Statutory Notifications (C027P)
7. Relevant Legislation/ Regulation	None
8. Guidance	None
9. Review	Every 3 years, subject to any regulatory or legislative updates.
10. Procedure(s)	None
11. Process Map(s)	None

Version	Purpose/change	Resident Panel Involvement	Author	Date
1.0	New policy – reviewed and supported by CDG 27/6/24		Jacqui McCann & Theresa Wilson	July 2024