

## CLIENT/CUSTOMER CARE POLICY

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Customer care is integral to the services that Richmond Users Independent Living Scheme (RUILS) provides. To reinforce and support this ethos RUILS has developed a statement on Customer Care and have developed with our clients the RUILS Client Charter (see Appendix A for copy of Charter).

### **Customer Care Statement**

#### **RUILS aims to :**

- Treat our clients with respect, courtesy and dignity,
- Provide a range of services to elderly and disabled people, people with learning disabilities and those that use mental health services, to assist them to live the life of their choosing.
- Provide a range of service to assist carers to be able to maintain their caring role.
- Provide support to other professionals to ensure that they are able to offer support to their clients.
- Provide accessible, affordable, person-centred and professional services.
- Be responsive to the changing needs of our clients
- Respond promptly and positively to all requests for help and information
- Provide opportunities and encouragement to complain and to services.
- Keep up to date with changes and developments to local and national social care policy.

RUILS clients are treated as individuals with dignity and respect at all times through our person centred approach. Our staff and volunteers enable our clients to lead independent lives and exercise control over daily living maximising opportunities for well being.

### **Policy Statement**

RUILS aims to set clear standards of service and to regularly review and improve its performance. RUILS resources will be used effectively and efficiently in order to provide the highest standard of services to our clients.

RUILS will provide clear, transparent and easily accessible information about its services. All enquiries and complaints will be dealt with in a prompt, timely and appropriate manner so that the client will be left feeling understood, respected, well informed and treated. Present and potential clients of RUILS will be consulted with, and their views will be used to continually improve the service provided.

In all client interactions and service provision RUILS will comply with its other key policies including, Equal Opportunities, Confidentiality, Data Protection, Health & Safety and Safeguarding and will benchmark service performance against national standards of excellence. We also adhere and endorse The Ten Point Dignity Challenge (see Appendix B).

## **Standards for Customer Care**

### **Responding to correspondence**

With regard to correspondence — including all letters and emails — RUILS will reply promptly, in a format appropriate to the client and using clear easily understood language.

**Target 1:** To answer all letters within 5 working days

**Target 2:** To answer all email correspondence:

- By acknowledging all emails by the end of the next working day
- By replying in full within 5 working days of receiving the email.
- By using, when necessary, an email out-of-office auto response that includes contact details for urgent enquiries.

## **Appointments**

Members of staff will see clients, at a time, venue or setting that is suitable to both parties. This may include the client's place of residence, the RUILS' office or at an external venue that is safe, comfortable, convenient and maintains confidentiality. If no prior appointment has been made, members of staff will see office visitors as promptly as is reasonably possible.

### **Targets:**

- To see clients within 10 minutes of the agreed time
- If staff have been unavoidably delayed, to inform clients before the agreed start time and to give clients an estimate of their arrival time.
- After a meeting and if a follow up meeting is required, staff will agree with the client (before they leave), the date and time of the next meeting or if this is not possible, when they will next be contacted.
- The maximum length of time a person without an appointment should have to wait before they see a representative of RUILS is 15 minutes.
- At external meetings members of staff should arrive 10 minutes early, dressed appropriately.
- All employees should carry organisational identification at all times.

## **Answering telephone calls**

Staff will answer telephone calls in a timely and professional manner.

### **Targets:**

- To answer calls within 5 rings.
- To always give their first name
- To record a daily voicemail message informing callers of their itinerary for the day

- To call clients back immediately should they request it (to save on their phone bills)
- To respond to distressed or confused callers in with empathy and in a professional manner.

**Returning telephone calls**

Staff will return phone calls promptly.

**Targets:**

- To return messages left on our answering machines by the end of the next working day.
- To return a message left with a colleague by the end of the next working day.
- To leave a message on their voicemail if they are not contactable for the e day.

**Text messages**

Staff will return text messages promptly.

**Target:** To return all text messages by the end of the next working day.

**Communicating with clients**

Staff will ensure that clients' communication needs are met. RUILS will, provide information in the following formats: large print, Braille, computer disc or memory stick, text & email. We will also use the services of British Sign Language interpreters and translators/interpreters for those for whom English is a second language.

**Complaints Procedures**

RUILS will publicise our service complaints procedure and deal with all complaints in a timely, fair and professional manner.

**Target:** All clients are aware of and understand the procedures for making a complaint and can easily access the process without fear of unfair or prejudicial treatment.

**Quality Monitoring**

RUILS strives to continually improve the overall performance of the organisation through an annual process of planning, reviewing and implementing improvements. Client feedback, information from reviews, the results of the RUILS annual survey and the ideas and suggestions from YourSay and staff members are communicated to staff, volunteers and the Board and are used to make changes and develop new services.

We are committed to ensuring that:

- Client needs and expectations are fulfilled and that clients experience a high degree of client satisfaction.

- The importance of meeting clients' needs and all the relevant statutory and regulatory requirements is communicated throughout the organisation to all staff and volunteers.
- Staff and volunteers have appropriate supervision, support and training in order for them to be able to perform their roles to a high standard.

**Targets:**

- To achieve 80% customer satisfaction rating of all services.
- To ensure that clients are encouraged to feed back information to staff and volunteers and to access the complaint policy where necessary.
- Clients are involved in the development, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of services.

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| Date Adopted: | December 2010 |
| Last Review:  |               |
| Next Review:  | December 2011 |

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## Appendix A

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RUILS Client Charter

## Appendix B

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### The 10 point Dignity Challenge

The challenge depicts what high quality services that respect people's dignity should include.

1. Have a zero tolerance of all forms of abuse
2. Support people with the same respect you would want for yourself or a member of your family
3. Treat each person as an individual by offering a personalised service
4. Enable people to maintain the maximum possible level of independence, choice and control
5. Listen & support people to express their needs & wants
6. Respect People's Right to Privacy
7. Ensure People feel able to complain without fear of retribution
8. Engage with family members and carers as care partners
9. Assist people to maintain confidence and a positive self-esteem
10. Act to alleviate people's loneliness and isolation

Source: <http://www.dignityincare.org.uk/DignityCareCampaign/>