



palliative,
neurological
and bereavement
support

Policy

DRUG AND ALCOHOL

PEOPLE DIRECTORATE

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1. Equality Statement

SUE RYDER aims to design and implement policy documents that meet the diverse needs of our service, population and workforce, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage compared with others. It takes into account the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and promotes equal opportunities for all. This policy has been screened for impact on equalities in April 2022 to ensure that no one receives less favourable treatment on the protected characteristics of their age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity. We take into account the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 whilst going above and beyond to protect people that aren't protected in the act, for example, non-binary people.

2. Introduction

We have a duty of care to provide the users of our services, our workforce, associated professionals, volunteers, contractors and all other members of the public with a safe and healthy environment in which to work, live or visit.

The aim of this policy is to demonstrate our commitment to preventing such misuse by:

- Providing clear guidelines for all workers regarding expected standards of behaviour and how issues of alcohol, drug or substance abuse will be managed.
- Ensuring that the workplace is a safe and professional environment for everyone.
- Supporting individuals in cases where there are underlying reasons for misuse or dependency.

The Charity is permitted to undertake routine and random Drug and Alcohol Screening where and when we believe it is appropriate to do so.

The Charity will ensure that any information that is obtained through drug and alcohol testing is:

- of sufficient technical quality to support any decisions or opinions
- that are derived from it and,
- subject to rigorous integrity and quality control procedures and,
- conducted under the direction of, and positive test results
- interpreted by, a person who is suitably qualified and competent in the field of drug testing.

The Charity will ensure that

- the criteria used for selecting workers for testing is justified, properly documented, adhered to and communicated to those workers who have been selected.

3. General Principles

Any individual who is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol, drugs or any illegal substance whilst on duty or whose performance or behaviour whilst on duty is impaired will be removed from the working environment and may be sent home. As a precautionary measure an individual may be suspended on normal pay pending an investigation. Such we

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action is to protect the worker concerned.

Reporting for work or working in any capacity under the influence of alcohol or drugs is prohibited. This includes external events and locations. The Charity has an obligation to ensure health and safety and therefore would have to report such an incident to the police.

If you are convicted for an offence relating to the consumption of alcohol or the misuse of, or dealing in drugs you must notify your manager as soon as possible and in any case no later than five (5) business days after the conviction. This includes prosecution for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Failure to do so may result in termination of employment or voluntary arrangement.

The Charity may take action under the **Capability Procedure**, **Attendance Management Procedure** or the **Disciplinary Procedure** depending on the circumstances of the misuse and the impact on your ability to work effectively.

The course of action taken will depend on the severity of the problem, the type of work you do and the nature of any alleged misconduct. Such action may include referral to occupational health, specialist counselling or attendance at and successful completion of an approved drug or alcohol rehabilitation programme.

Action will also be taken in circumstances where behaviour puts the general public at risk, adversely affects the health and safety of others or is detrimental to the Charity's reputation in the wider community.

4. Legislation relating to this document

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/3242)
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018
- General Data Protection Regulation (2016/679 EU)
- The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971
- The Road Traffic Act

5. Eligibility

This policy applies to everyone working at Sue Ryder including agency staff, contractors and all our volunteers.

The scope of this procedure does not extend to misuse of alcohol or drugs by service users and visitors to the Charity's premises. Information on this can be found here [Alcohol Policy - Service Users - POL HC A4 - July 2019.pdf](#) and here [Substance Misuse Procedure - Service Users](#)

The scope of this policy does not cover Smoking. Please refer here [No Smoking March 2020.docx](#)

6. Responsibility

Individuals

All individuals have a responsibility to comply with the requirements of this policy and to report any perceived or actual breaches of this policy to their manager or the people helpline (peoplehelpline@sueryder.org) without delay.

You may wish to report a concern about a perceived alcohol or drug related incident/problem relating to a colleague with your line manager. This may be reported in confidence. If the concern relates to your line manager or the person supervising them then the **Whistleblowing Policy** may be used. This can be found on Rydernet.

Managers

Managers are responsible for ensuring that a risk assessment is carried out for any safety critical work. This includes the use of machinery, using electrical equipment or ladders, driving or operating heavy lifting equipment.

It is the responsibility of all managers to act immediately to minimise the risk of any incident occurring that may affect the standard of care and/or other services provided and the reputation of the Charity with associated professionals, partner organisations and in the wider community. It is the responsibility of all managers to log such incidents into the Charity's incident management system and seek advice where appropriate.

Managers must refer to the Risk Assessment Procedure here [CR_HSE_P_001_Risk Assessment procedure 14-11-2019.pdf](#)

Managers should ensure they create a supportive working environment that encourages their teams to talk about any issues or problems they are having in or outside the workplace that may affect them.

If a manager has any concerns and is unsure about what to do, they should speak to their People Advisor.

Professionals

The People Team will provide advice and signpost managers to resources on how to manage individual cases.

Our Occupational Health advisers have the role of assessing individuals who may be referred to them under this policy and to provide the Charity with specific advice and actions.

Our Health and Safety Team will provide advice on risk assessment and safety interventions.

7. Illegal Drugs (controlled substances)

A controlled substance is a drug, the possession, distribution, manufacture, purchase or sale of which is illegal within the United Kingdom without due authorisation. One exception is for approved prescription drugs prescribed by a licensed physician as medication to that person (see section below). It is however, unlawful to supply prescribed drugs to anyone other than the person to whom they have been prescribed.

The unlawful use, possession, distribution, dispensing, manufacture, purchase or sale of a controlled substance by any worker or volunteer is prohibited whilst on the Charity's premises, or while representing or conducting business on behalf of the Charity outside the workplace. Unlawful use of a controlled substance prior to work that might affect your performance at work is also prohibited.

Should you be approached by anyone attempting to sell, dispense, purchase or use illegal drugs whilst on duty you must report this concern immediately to your Line Manager or a senior member of staff.

8. Prescription Drugs

You have a responsibility to check with your doctor or pharmacist whether any side effects may result from taking prescription drugs or using prescription drugs with other drugs or alcohol.

In particular you should check whether the prescription drug could impact your ability to operate any machine or drive any vehicle.

It is your personal responsibility to adhere to the professional advice or instructions given and to inform your manager of any possible impact on your ability to perform your duties.

9. Alcohol

The consumption of alcohol before or during working hours can affect performance or behaviour at work. In addition, the effects of a heavy drinking session can affect a person well into the next day as it takes a healthy liver about one hour to break down and remove one unit of alcohol.

The consumption of alcohol before, during working hours or whilst on on-call is prohibited. Driving whilst under the influence of alcohol is prohibited.

The consumption of alcohol in small amounts may be permitted at certain authorised events e.g. Christmas events/lunches or in conjunction with approved fundraising activities. Such events must be approved by a senior manager. At all other times it is an individual's responsibility to avoid drinking alcohol whilst on duty, representing or conducting business on behalf of the Charity, wherever that may be (for example, off-site lunches, breaks, conferences, seminars, fundraising activities, etc.). All representatives of the Charity are expected to act in a professional and appropriate manner at all times. Drinking any alcohol if you are due to drive should be avoided.

Please refer to guidance on alcohol limits here

<https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/facts/alcohol-and-the-law/drink-driving-and-the-legal-alcohol-limit#thelawanddrinkdrivelimits>.

Please refer to guidance of safe drinking here

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/alcohol-advice/calculating-alcohol-units/#:~:text=To%20keep%20health%20risks%20from,as%2014%20units%20a%20week>

10. Signs of drug or alcohol issues

Consider these warning signs, which could indicate drug or alcohol misuse:

- unexplained or frequent absences
- a change in behaviour
- unexplained dips in productivity
- more accidents or near-misses
- performance or conduct issues

These can also be signs of other things, like stress or illness.

11. Supporting People

Misuse is not the same thing as dependence. Drug and alcohol misuse is the use of illegal drugs and misuse of alcohol, medicines and substances such as solvents. Each case must be considered individually.

Admission of an alcohol, drug or substance abuse problem itself will not necessarily lead to termination of employment or the individual's volunteering arrangements. The overall aim will be to treat individuals fairly and provide as much help and support as possible.

Where it is clear that an individual's dependency is a risk to the health, safety and welfare of themselves, service users, the general public or other workers/volunteers, the Charity will consider all of the options available.

Where possible we will encourage individuals to seek treatment and will provide support, guidance and monitoring to enable them to complete an approved rehabilitation programme. Other support may include referral to Occupational Health, specialist counselling, transfer to a different role or a change in working hours.

We encourage anyone who feels they may have developed an alcohol or drugs dependency, including drugs that have been prescribed medically, to seek treatment and discuss their problems confidentially with either their manager or People Advisor.

Anyone who voluntarily requests assistance in dealing with an alcohol, drug or other substance abuse problem may be granted unpaid special leave in agreement with their manager. Managers should seek advice from their People Advisor and the individual may be asked to provide proof of attendance at any meetings.

We will undertake a risk assessment and make every effort to ensure that suitable measures are taken to assist e.g. the working environment, job content or working hours, provided that the individual is participating in a rehabilitation programme and demonstrating a commitment to change. This will be supported by the People Team.

12. Confidentiality

Any information relating to the resolution of individual problems will be treated in the strictest confidence. However, should the Charity need to make a referral for statutory purposes or to a professional body the individual(s) concerned will be notified.

All information collected in relation to this procedure will be kept strictly confidential and in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act and the Employee Data Protection Policy.

Please refer to the ICO Employment Code Section 4.4 here

https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1064/the_employment_practices_code.pdf

13. Related Policies & Procedures

- Risk Assessment Procedure
- Data Protection Policy
- General Workplaces Practices (Code of Conduct)
- Wellbeing Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- No Smoking Policy

14. Helpful Resources

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/addiction-support/advice-for-the-families-of-drug-users/>

<https://www.wearewithyou.org.uk/>

<https://www.turning-point.co.uk/services/drug-and-alcohol-support.html>

<http://www.talktofrank.com/support-near-you>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/guides-to-support-and-services/addiction-and-dependency/addiction-and-dependency-resources/>

Sue Ryder - Employee Assistance Programme – www.employeeassistance.org.uk – login SREAP

24/7 Freephone – 0800 328 1437

UK mobile: 0800 328 1437 (not free from a mobile)

Sue Ryder - Retail Employee Assistance Programme the Retail Trust -

<https://www.retailtrust.org.uk/>

Wellbeing Helpline - 0808 101 0808