Your safety is important to us!

**KEEP SAFE – BE ALERT – PUT YOUR SAFETY FIRST**
At no point should you place yourself, colleagues/service users at risk or in danger.

**GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES**

In advance of the meeting or visit:

- Identify possible risks - make sure you are aware of any potential difficulties.
- Speak with relevant personnel prior to any visit i.e. social workers, solicitors etc to gather as much information as possible to assist in identifying possible risks.
- If decided there are potential risks, organise a joint visit or arrange visit in a neutral venue.
- If you have any concerns about your safety, discuss these with your line manager.
- Keep the office informed of your whereabouts at all times by completing your schedule and amending your schedule if planned arrangements change throughout the day.
- If travelling by car, park as close to your meeting point as practically possible. This could provide you with a safe haven if you need to withdraw from a dangerous situation.
- If you are travelling by car and will be returning to your vehicle after dark, where possible, park in an area that will be well lit and populated on your return.

Conduct a Dynamic Risk Assessment:

```
Assess the Situation

Do you have any concerns about your Personal Safety?

Yes

Which of these concern you?

The person you are dealing with?

The environment you are working in?

The task you are doing?

Can you avoid or minimise the risk so that you feel confident?

Yes

No

Do not continue. Ask for help and consult your line manager.

No

Are you sure you have covered all the risks?

Yes

Proceed with care – don’t forget things change.

No

Proceed with care – remain vigilant

No

Yes

Yes

No

No

Yes

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Page 1 of 4
During the meeting or visit:

- Ensure you have your mobile phone with you, it is charged and it is switched ON.
- Identify yourself clearly, make sure you carry your identity card and show it to service users.
- If you have chosen to be issued with a personal alarm, ensure that you have it with you and it is easily accessible.
- Only carry information that is necessary for the visits you are making that day, or in each period away from your office.
- Do not carry any unnecessary valuables.
- When travelling in your car, keep any belongings, especially valuables, hidden.
- Aim to not enter vulnerable areas of the service user’s home (e.g. Bedroom, Bathroom).
- Always leave a clear exit route between you and your client.
- If in doubt leave and rearrange the appointment for another time, when someone can accompany you or rearrange in a neutral venue.

In the event of an incident occurring:

- Try to avoid confrontation, stay calm and try to pacify the service user.
- If violence is threatened or you feel uncomfortable withdraw from the situation as soon as possible.
- If appropriate, use your personal alarm to distract a potential attacker and withdraw to a safe place immediately.
- If appropriate and you are able to, call the police on 999.
- Contact office/designated person as soon as possible with information on your whereabouts and ask for further assistance if necessary.
- On your return to the office, notify your line manager of any incident and complete incident report form.

In the event of an accident, vehicle breakdown or other emergency:

- Call the emergency services if necessary (police, ambulance, etc) 999 (emergency) or PSNI central number 0845 600 8000 (non-emergency).
- Contact the office/line manager as soon as possible with information on your whereabouts and ask for further assistance if necessary.
- Always carry business card and identity card on person for ID purposes in the event of a serious accident where lone worker may be unconscious.

When working alone in the main office or from home:

- Ensure the premises are secure.
- Do not allow entry to an unknown person.
- Should an incident occur, call the police immediately on 999.
- Contact office/line manager as soon as possible with information on your whereabouts and ask for further assistance if necessary.

Role of Designated Person i.e. Line Manager/Case Coordinator:

- If designated person i.e. line manager/case coordinator is contacted by the lone worker, the line manager/case coordinator is to find out if further assistance is required.
- Ring Police/Ambulance if requested by the lone worker.
PERSONAL PROTECTION

- Determine location of the lone worker.
- Contact a family member/next of kin/home person for the lone worker if requested.
- Offer to attend the lone worker or arrange for someone to attend the lone worker if requested.
- Attend the hospital to assist the lone worker if requested.

Whereabouts Procedure for Employed/Self-Employed Panel Members:

- You must endeavour to keep your calendar up to date at all times, but at a bare minimum ensure that planned visits for the next working day are entered before the end of your last working day.
- Calendar entries must include the names of service users to be visited and the destination (the town); travel time must also be entered in the calendar.
- Ensure your work mobile phone is turned ON at all times when you are making visits and working outside of the office, so the office can contact you in an emergency.

Procedure for Lone Working out of Usual Office Hours:

- In the event you are working outside of usual office hours:
  - Inform designated person of whereabouts.
  - Duration of visit and travel.
  - Contact designated person when visit completed.
  - Arrange for designated person to contact you after an agreed period of time to ensure safety.
  - If lone worker unaccounted for after agreed period of time, emergency services to be contacted and provided with details of lone worker.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE STEPS

Below are Emergency Response Steps to be taken by employees/self-employed panel members and line managers/case coordinators in the event of an emergency:

In the event of an emergency:

- In the event an attack on a lone worker, the lone worker should contact the police and/or ambulance on 999 if able to do so.
- Lone worker should contact the office/line manager/case coordinator as soon as possible to provide information of whereabouts and request further assistance if required.

Role of Designated Person i.e. Line Manager/Case Coordinator:

Each employee/self-employed panel member is to have a designated person. This person will be the employee/self-employed panel member’s line manager/case coordinator or alternative manager if line manager/case coordinator is on leave.

- If line manager/case coordinator is contacted by the lone worker, the line manager/case coordinator to find out if further assistance is required.
- Ring Police/Ambulance if requested by the lone worker.
- Determine location of the lone worker.
Contact a family member/next of kin/home person for the lone worker if requested.

Offer to attend the lone worker or arrange for someone to attend the lone worker if requested, plus any other arrangements which may be necessary e.g. if the lone worker has been taken in an ambulance, arrangements for car etc to be collected.

Attend the hospital to assist the lone worker if requested.

Response to missing/unaccounted member of staff:

- Line manager/case coordinator to contact the Police.
- Access employee/self-employed panel member lone working database for relevant details of the lone worker and provide these details to the Police.
- Access the lone worker’s schedule for details of whereabouts, arrangements for the day, people due to meet and provide this information to the Police.
- Line manager/case coordinator to continue attempts to contact the lone worker until the lone worker is located.

Recording the incident:

- On return work, or sooner with the agreement of the lone worker, details of incident to be recorded by line manager/case coordinator.

**PSNI Contact Numbers:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency</td>
<td>999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Text Phone</td>
<td>18000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Emergency</td>
<td>0845 600 800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Headquarters</td>
<td>028 90650222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimestoppers</td>
<td>0800 555 111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text Line</td>
<td>028 9090 1300 (for use by deaf, auditory and speech impaired only)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Cross-reference to Other Related NIGALA Documents:**

This bulletin should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Bulletin 3 Adverse Incidents
- Bulletin 6 Health & Wellbeing at Work
- Adverse Incident Policy
- NIGALA Lone Working Policy & Procedure
- Escalation of Risk within NIGALA and between NIGALA & HSC Trusts
- NIGALA Policy on Zero Tolerance