

Sandwell Mind Care Homes: Emergencies and Crises

Emergencies and crises are by their nature unexpected so it is impossible to give detailed guidance covering all possible circumstances. However as a general principle the person in charge of the home (either the Shift leader or the Care Manager) has to take responsibility for assessing the situation and for giving clear leadership and guidance to all other staff members. Other staff members are then expected follow this person's guidance as calmly and efficiently as possible.

The person in charge can ring the care manager, the care and support service manager, the chief executive, Jephson Housing association, or the emergency services for advice, guidance or assistance as appropriate. Telephone numbers are listed below.

In any emergency or crisis the person in charge must always try to ensure that they have accounted for the whereabouts and safety of each resident, staff member and visitor. The person in charge is expected to use staff sensibly to manage the impact the situation is having on the residents, and to support residents until the situation is resolved.

Please note there are separate policy guidelines for dealing with a mental health emergency/crisis and for dealing with accidents.

After any serious incident or any emergency the person in charge must ensure they have informed CSCI via a Regulation 37 form within 24 hours of the incident occurring.

In an emergency the person in charge must consider:

- Do I need to do anything to maintain personal safety?
- Does any one need medical attention?
- Does the building need to be evacuated?
- What are the options for alternative shelter/accommodation if required?
- What needs to be provided for residents if they do have to move out – food clothing, bedding, medication etc?
- Do next of kin need to be informed?
- Who else needs to be contacted in order to address the situation and to quickly restore residents' normal routine and good mental and physical health (eg, GP, Pharmacy, Social Work Teams etc)

General guidelines for some specific situations are listed below:

For suspected gas leaks:

Do not smoke or light matches. Do not turn on light switches or electrical switches of any kind. Put out naked flames. Open doors and windows. Move people from the affected area and out of the building if necessary. Turn off gas at the meter. Ring The National Gas Emergency Service. Ring Jephson maintenance.

For problems with water:

In the event of a leak, look for nearby isolating tap or valve for the water supply. If you can't find one, or closing it has no effect, turn off the water supply at the main stopcock. Mop up water as best you can. Check that water has not got into electrical appliances or the hard wiring. If you suspect it has, disconnect appliances and/or turn

of the electric supply to that part of the building at the circuit board. Ring Jephson maintenance.

For problems with electricity:

If there is a power cut the back up emergency lighting will come on. Check the street to see if other properties are affected and ring the electricity company to inform them. For problems that only affect the care home, check the trip switch at the circuit board and visually check for any obvious faults with wiring or appliances. If in doubt turn off the trip switch, disconnect appliances and do not use them until they have been checked by an electrician. Ring Jephson maintenance if the problem is urgent. If someone has received an electric shock, turn off the supply at the circuit board, ring 999 and inform them there has been an electrical accident. Do not touch anyone who has been shocked unless you are certain the supply has been cut off.

For problems with security/break ins:

In the event of a break in occurring, dial 999 and ask for the police. Do not attempt to confront the intruder directly. If the home has been broken into but the offenders have left, telephone the local station and they will send an officer to deal with the situation. The intruders may have left some clues so try not to touch anything before the police arrive. Take a note of stolen items (including serial numbers) and any damage to the home.

In the event of a fire:

See separate fire procedure

Sourcing Alternative Accommodation

Should the emergency mean that the home becomes uninhabitable for any length of time, the person in charge will have to liaise with Jephson, the local social services teams, and senior members of Sandwell Mind's management team in order to ensure that suitable alternative accommodation (be it short or long term) is quickly identified and residents are moved with the minimum of disruption. One possible short term shelter option whilst suitable accommodation is being sourced is to use Sandwell Mind's wellbeing centre, which is relatively close by (215 High Street, Smethwick) and has catering facilities on site. Alternatively some residents may have family members who can accommodate them on a short term basis.