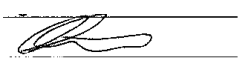

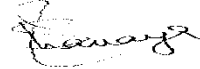


STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)
SOP Number: NCP/R&D_012
SOP Title: Research and Development Lone Working Safe Practices

Role	Name	Signature	Date
SOP Author	Elizabeth Graves – Research Facilitator		18 August 2017
SOP Reviewer	Dr Peter Phiri – R&D Manager		25 August 2017
SOP Authoriser	Dr Shanaya Rathod – R&D Director		25 August 2017
SOP Review Date			Effective date stamp

Review History

Version	Effective Date	Review Undertaken/Significant Changes	Date Approved
1	01- September 2017	Initial Version	
2			

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1. PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

This policy should be read and used in conjunction with the Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust lone working procedure [SH NCP 24](#) and the Research and Development Safe Working Practices [NCP-R&D_013](#).

Some research trials may require Researchers to visit participants at home in order to facilitate those who cannot or strongly prefer not to be seen in a clinical setting to still take part. Home visits will minimise the travelling demands for those participants who may already be significantly anxious or unable to travel easily. These appointments are likely to be ad hoc, depending on the trial and the participants recruited and therefore robust procedures for knowing when and where staff members are completing home visits needs to be followed.

In such circumstances, however, the risk of staff being exposed to situations involving violence, verbal abuse and/or threatening behaviour may be increased. In such situations effective action is required to ensure the safety, security and well being of staff members.

This policy, therefore, outlines a policy for safe working during home visits and lone working within the Research and Development Department, thereby ensuring that any risks are adequately assessed and are managed. This document should be read alongside the relevant policies from Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust and trial specific standard operating procedures and protocols.

2. PROCEDURE and RESPONSIBILITIES

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment will be completed with the service user's Care Co-ordinator or RiO electronic patient record before any initial home visits. Risk assessments will be valid for a period of two weeks, after which time information will have to be updated. Consideration should be given to past and current risks. Risk plans should include information regarding

risk indicators/triggers where known and an agreed action plan should the indicators be identified.

If risk is thought to have increased since the last visit, discussion with other staff should occur.

Joint visits should be arranged if an individual staff member has any concerns about safety, however even joint home visits still need to follow the procedure below and check in and out with a nominated Buddy.

In line with the Trust policies all staff completing home visits should have completed the Trust training on Conflict Resolution and breakaway techniques as well as local training on in situation risk assessment and management.

When risk assessments are not available

There are times, for example in some physical health studies where up to date risk information is not available. Where up to date risk assessments are not available lone home visits may only be completed if confirmed via the local PI for the relevant study that home visits, without risk assessments are suitable. This must be done in writing and be in the study site file.

Buddy System

When a member of the team intends to visit a participant at home, they should let an appropriate Buddy (from the lists in Appendix A) know in advance. They should complete the safety check form (Appendix B) and ensure that they give it to their nominated Buddy. This may be done by adding their appointment to the appropriate Buddy's calendar via NHS.net. All people from the appropriate list below should be 'invited' to the appointment, with the allocated safety checker as 'required' and others as required as 'optional'. 'Back up' safety checkers may be used in case that original nominated Buddy becomes unavailable or in case the nominated safety checker needs the support of someone else who has access to the information about the appointment (for example, if the safety checker is unable to access NHS.net for any reason). The R&D generic NHS.net account shft.southernhealthresearch@nhs.net should also be invited to the appointment so all staff will be able to access the appointment details and know who the nominated Buddy is for the visit. The safety check form should be attached to the appointment.

Before an appointment the team member should 'check in' with their nominated Buddy to inform them that they have arrived at their appointment and are about to go in. The nominated Buddy should reply that they have received the message and are still available. This lets the team member know that their nominated Buddy is contactable and aware that they are entering an appointment. When the visit is over and the team member has left the participant's home, they should inform their nominated Buddy that they have completed the visit. The nominated Buddy should reply to confirm they have received this information.

If the nominated Buddy is unavailable, a different staff member on the list below should be contacted and asked to inform them at the next possible opportunity. To avoid this, however, the team member should take into account the nominated safety checker's availability when selecting them as their point of contact before the home visit.

What to do in the event of an emergency

In the event of wanting to report an emergency without raising the alarm of the service user, the team member will ring their Buddy and say **"tell Peter I'm going to be late for our appointment"**. The Buddy would then ask the staff member "do you need help"; "do you need the police?" "Is it an emergency?" giving closed questions to which the staff member can respond using yes or no.

What to do in the event of being unable to contact the staff member completing the visit

If the team member has not rung the safety checker within half an hour of the appointment end time:

- (1) The Buddy will text the team member for an update
- (2) If there is no response after 15 minutes following the planned end of visit time, the Buddy should ring the team member on their mobile phone.
- (3) If they do not answer, the Buddy should then ring the service user on their home phone or mobile.
- (4) If there is still no answer then the safety checker should ring Dr Peter Phiri or another senior member of staff. Options below may also be taken. In the event that no contact is available the police must be called on 999 and request immediate assistance at the service user's address.
- (5) The Buddy should then contact the service user's CPN or Care Co-ordinator and inform them what is happening.

Should further action be required, a number of avenues could be taken including, but not necessarily:

- Checking with all other staff members that no messages have been left
- Contacting the team member's emergency contacts to establish whether they have had contact with them.
- Calling the police where there remains no evidence of contact and/or significant concern

	Responsibility	Undertaken by	Activity
1	R&D Office		
2	Line Managers		
3	All Staff		

3. SUPPORTING MATERIAL and ATTACHMENTS

App **Make of Vehicle Registration**

Colour:

Appendix A

Safety Check Contact Details (To be kept by central office administration)

Researcher	Office Telephone	Work Mobile	Personal Mobile	Home Telephone	Home Address	Emergency Contact Details	Training Completed: CRT and Breakaway	Safe Working Procedure Policy read	Local risk training completed with Line Manager	Line Manager signature

Appendix B

Safety Check Form

Date			
Appointment Time (from – to)			
Check-in deadline			
Service user's Name			
Address			
Home Telephone Number		Participant Mobile Number	
Care Co-ordinator name		Contact Number	
CC Address			
	Name	Work's Mobile	Personal Mobile
Researcher 1			
	Make of Vehicle Registration Colour		
Researcher 2			
	Make of Vehicle Registration Colour		
Volunteers			
Any risk issues?	None known		
In case of Emergency call Dr Peter Phiri on 07414 560 606			

4. TRAINING

- All staff must have completed conflict resolution training and breakaway training before completing lone home visits with patients
- All staff must complete local risk and lone working training with their line manager before completing lone home visits with patients
- All staff must have been signed off by their line manager on the safety check contact details log before completing lone home visits with patients