[This policy explains that Amplius Care and Support services are committed to being open and honest with service users. If something happens that may have put a service user at risk or caused them harm, we will make sure they are told clearly, honestly, and as soon as possible.]

# Openness and Transparency Policy

**Document management**

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|---|---|
| **Directorate** | People and Governance |
| **Policy sponsor** | Chief People and Governance Officer |
| **Policy owner** | Director of Governance, Compliance and Regulation |
| **Policy author** | Director of Governance, Compliance and Regulation |

**Review process**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Approval route** | Lead Executive – Audit and Risk Committee - Board |
| **Approved by** | Board |
| **Approval date** | 15 October 2026 |
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Part 2

# Policy introduction

**Scope**

This policy supports Amplius' values and is a commitment to improving lives and supporting colleagues by:

- Making sure that all of its customers and Service Users are treated with openness and transparency.

Amplius is committed to ensuring that the organisation, its employees and its governing body are open, transparent and candid about any and all incidents involving the health, safety, care and support of all Service Users.

We will promote a culture of openness and honesty at all levels. We will make sure that our colleagues are confident to raise concerns appropriately and provide all relevant information immediately.

We will make sure that the Terms of Reference of our Board includes a clear commitment to openness, transparency and candour. We will make sure that this commitment runs throughout the organisation and its governance structures. We will make sure it is clearly translated into the Amplius' culture and service delivery.

This policy ensures we provide a consistent approach across Amplius.

Amplius will make sure that all incidents which may affect the health and wellbeing of any of our Service Users are reported as soon as possible. We will apply the principles of openness, transparency and candour as good practice.

- Openness – enabling concerns and complaints to be raised freely without fear and questions asked to be answered.
- Transparency –allowing information about the truth about performance and outcomes to be shared with staff, customer/Service Users, the public and regulators.
- Candour – any customer/service user harmed by the provision of our service is informed of the fact and an appropriate remedy offered, regardless of whether a complaint has been made or a question asked about it.

The term Amplius incorporates all member companies and subsidiaries, which includes The Teetotal Homes.

The policy applies to:

- All services delivered by Amplius, including Care and Support.
- Colleagues or volunteers, Board and Committee Members, Service Users, their Carers, Key Stakeholders and members of the public.

This policy applies to actual or suspected incidents that occur during service provision and have caused, or may have caused, harm or distress to a Service User. It also applies to near misses where there is learning that may improve safety, quality or trust.

For this policy, a significant support incident means any unintended or unexpected incident during the provision of our support services that has resulted in, or could reasonably have resulted in, serious harm, avoidable distress, a safeguarding concern, loss of trust or a significant impact on a Service User's wellbeing.

Examples may include:

- An incident that causes physical harm, psychological harm or avoidable distress.
- A failure in support arrangements that places a Service User at risk.
- A safeguarding concern, including suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- A medication, financial, information-sharing or record-keeping error that has, or could have, a significant impact on the Service User.
- Any incident where the Service User, their representative, local authority or partner agency would reasonably expect a clear explanation, apology or follow-up action.

The policy does not form part of any colleague's contract of employment and the policy may be amended at any time.

Part 3

# Policy details

**Our Approach**

Amplius will:

- Give colleagues at all levels the right training and support to help build a culture of openness and honesty, so that everyone understands their role in reporting concerns, sharing information appropriately and responding when something has gone wrong.
- Make sure that all incidents are reported quickly and handled in a clear and consistent way.
- Keep complete written records of all incidents, including what happened, the outcome, and what was shared with the person using the service.
- Make sure Service Managers clearly explain to the Service User:
    - What the incident was
    - What the investigation found
    - What the apology means and why it is being given

If the person is unlikely to understand what happened, or does not have the capacity to do so, the Service Manager will contact or write to their next of kin, family member, statutory keyworker and/or advocate. The aim is to explain the situation as clearly and openly as possible.

After an incident or near miss, the Service Manager will:

- Look at any risks or issues that were identified.
- Learn from what went wrong.
- Make improvements to the service based on a full review of the incident.
- They will also provide written feedback to the person using the service, including an apology if needed. This will be done in a way that suits the person's individual communication needs.

All colleagues providing support will understand the importance of openness and transparency, and what is expected of them when something goes wrong or a concern is raised.

If colleagues have been involved in a significant incident, training and appropriate support will be provided. They will be given the opportunity to discuss what happened in a de-brief of the incident. They will be given any support needed to complete any relevant information when contributing to an investigation.

Amplius, its Board and its employees will follow the principles below:

**Act in an Open and Transparent Way**

Clear, honest and effective communication with Service Users, their families and carers throughout their care, including when things go wrong, in line with the definitions below.

Amplius will use the principles of openness, transparency and candour to guide how we communicate, investigate, apologise, learn and improve after an incident or concern.

**Apology**

An ‘apology’ is an expression of sorrow or regret when something has gone wrong; it is not an admission of guilt.

**Appropriate Written Records**

Records are complete, legible, accurate and up to date. Every effort must be made to ensure records are updated without any delays.

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**Training Requirements**

All Care and Support colleagues and volunteers will be trained so they know how to properly report and record incidents. Colleagues in other parts of Amplius will also be made aware of this policy and their responsibility to speak up if they notice any concerns.

All Care and Support colleagues will be introduced to this policy as part of their induction to Amplius.

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**Service User Awareness of the Openness and Transparency Policy**

All colleagues will make sure that service users know we follow a policy of openness and honesty. They will be told what they can expect from us if something happens that could put them at risk or cause them harm.

This commitment will be clearly shown on our website, in our leaflets and in the information we give to people when they start using our services.

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**Audit**

All incidents are reviewed and reported following our Accident, Incident and Near Miss procedure and Safeguarding Policies and Procedures. The Amplius Board reviews these incidents regularly.

Significant support incidents will be reported to safeguarding partners, insurers or other relevant bodies where this is required by contract, law, safeguarding procedures or good practice.

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**Amplius Colleagues**

All colleagues are responsible for speaking up about any concerns and sharing all relevant information straight away.

Managers must make sure that concerns and significant support incidents are properly reported, investigated, recorded and followed up. They must also make sure that clear feedback is given to the Service User and, where appropriate, their representative or advocate.

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**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

Amplius is committed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and such will make reasonable adjustments to the policy to recognise, accommodate and support individual needs, where needed.

This policy adheres to the Amplius' approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

All those accountable under the policy will take a proactive approach to ensure that no individual or group is discriminated against or treated differently as a direct or indirect result of this policy.

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**Additional Support Needs and Reasonable Adjustments**

Amplius understands that customers and service users may need additional support because of their circumstances. These needs may be temporary, long term, situational, or change over time.

We will consider relevant guidance from the Housing Ombudsman and other regulatory bodies when developing and applying our policies. We will take a proactive approach to identifying and responding to additional support needs. Where appropriate, we will make reasonable adjustments and tailor our services so customers can access them fairly.

Part 4

# Compliance and administration

## Legal and Regulatory Compliance

This policy fully complies with Amplius' legal and regulatory obligations.

- Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014: Regulation 20
- The Care Act 2014
- The Health and Social Care Act (Regulated Activities) (Amendment) Regulations 2015
- Health Professional Council – Legal Framework
- Mental Health Capacity Act 2005
- Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice

This list is not exhaustive, and policy authors will undertake thorough research and/or seek professional advice to ensure that Amplius meets its obligations and complies with the current and relevant legislation and regulations.

## Evaluation, Review and Performance Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed on a Triennial basis to ensure that it remains fit for purpose. A policy review may also be required earlier, in response to internal or external changes for example changes in legislation. Prompt and effective action will be taken where improvements are identified.

Incidents which fall under the policy will be captured and where trends or issues are identified, action will be taken to mitigate against further incidents.

## Related Policies

- Code of Conduct Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Health and Safety Statement
- Safeguarding Adults and Children Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

Part 5

# Appendices

## A. Associated Documents – Internal procedural document, colleague use only

- NA

Part 6

# Changelog

| Amended date | Summary of changes | Version № |
|---|---|---|
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