

# Employee Handbook

Permanent Employees



bluestones medical  
**complex care**

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## Welcome & introduction

Welcome to the Bluestones Medical Complex Care team. We're extremely excited for you to start your career journey with us and can't wait to see all the amazing things you are about to achieve.

At Bluestones Medical Complex Care, we strive to do everything we can to support your well-being, along with your career development and satisfaction. We want you to feel appreciated and valued for the incredible work that you do and so we hope your experience with us reflects this.

Throughout your time with us, we want to offer you opportunities that will help you to upskill, develop and become an even better social care professional.

This handbook has been designed to give you a comprehensive understanding of our policies, procedures, expectations, and industry standards, all of which have been designed and implemented to protect you and the service users you care for. The policies and procedures are non-contractual except where stated otherwise. They do not form part of the terms and conditions of your employment which are provided to you separately. This handbook also refers to policies and procedures contained within the QCS management system and QCS app. The policies and procedures contained within the system and app are also non-contractual unless stated otherwise. In addition, you will be expected to comply with any locally agreed procedures which will be discussed with you during your induction.

From day one, you will become a valued member of our team. As with any role, you may encounter obstacles and challenges, but you should know that you are never alone on your journey, and we will always be here to support you. Here at Bluestones Medical Complex Care, every team member is valued, respected, and celebrated for their unique talents and abilities.

Please read this handbook carefully and address any queries that you might have to [hr@bluestonesmedicalcomplexcare.co.uk](mailto:hr@bluestonesmedicalcomplexcare.co.uk)

We look forward to watching you take strides in fulfilling your career goals and aspirations.

Good luck!

Bluestones Medical



## Principles and Values for Bluestones Medical Complex Care

We are committed to supporting all service users so that they can continue their lives with dignity and independence and be participating members of their own communities.

Bluestones Medical Complex Care is committed to meeting the needs of those people entrusted to our care. We will ensure that service users are able to live the lives they choose, and we will support them to remain independent in their own homes.

Any individual who is cared for by, works with or interacts with Bluestones Medical Complex Care will be treated with dignity and respect. We aim to offer skilled care to enable service users to achieve their optimum state of health and well-being. We uphold the human and citizenship rights of all those we provide care to and those who work for Bluestones Medical Complex Care.

Individual choice and personal decision-making are the right of all service users, and this right will be supported by all people who work for Bluestones Medical Complex Care. The right of independence will be respected and encouraged for all service users and their uniqueness will be recognised and valued, and we will reflect this in our care plans and how we listen and respond to service users.

The individual requirement for privacy will be respected always and all information relating to individuals will be treated in a confidential manner. We recognise the individual need for personal fulfilment and aim to support service users to identify activities that are meaningful to them.

### Aims & objectives for Bluestones Medical Complex Care

We strive to provide high-quality care to the local population and beyond, meeting individual care and support needs in an appropriate environment by good leadership and management, staff with the skills, knowledge, and resource to meet the highest standards.

#### **Our aims are:**

1. To deliver quality care based on the needs of our individuals
2. To treat all individuals equally whilst valuing their differences and respecting their human rights
3. To safeguard individuals from all forms of abuse whilst respecting their decisions
4. To provide access to information through a range of formats and aids including advocates where required
5. To involve individuals seeking feedback including complaints, compliments, and ideas to improve the service
6. To ensure we recruit and retain the right staff and maintain and improve their skills through the right training
7. To act immediately to understand, respond to and learn from incidents through established systems



8. To deliver compassionate care that promotes individual's dignity, respecting their needs, wishes and expectations

9. To promote independence, choice, and opportunity for all individuals in our care

10. To facilitate the opportunity for the individuals in our care to live healthy, prosperous, and successful lives through empowerment, enrichment, and encouragement

### The Bluestones Medical Complex Care values

Our core values underpin the work we do, and we hold them very dear to us. They are the foundation we base everything we do on, from the key commercial decisions we make, to the way in which we interact with each other.

#### Our values are:

- **Accountability** - Bluestones Medical values accountability as it allows us to foster a greater commitment to consistently striving to do better and be better. Moreover, accountability for our actions demonstrates our dedication to being a trustworthy organisation
  - **Humility** - We are always open to feedback and constructive criticism. We show respect and always recognise the roles and contributions of others
  - **Innovation** - Bluestones Medical will always strive to develop and implement new products, processes, or services, with the aim of improving efficiency, effectiveness, and competitive advantage
  - **Passion** - A passion to provide our candidates with a best-in-class service is imperative for anyone working with Bluestones Medical. You'll also need to be passionate about becoming the best version of yourself, supporting the business to achieve its goals and being a great team player
  - **Teamwork** - Whether you work internally or externally for Bluestones Medical – we are a team and together, we are better. With this, we ensure that no matter what your role is, there will always be someone, somewhere to support, listen and lift you – whenever you need it
- **Trust** - Bluestones Medical will always remain transparent and honest when it comes to our relationships and transactions with our employees, candidates, and clients. This trust is extended to anyone that works with or alongside Bluestones Medical through a trusted advisory approach. We do right by all our partnerships, whatever the relationship may be

### You, your contribution, and the promise to you

You are a key member of our organisation. It is through your commitment and expertise that people who use the services at Bluestones Medical Complex Care can continue their life with the maximum





of dignity and independence. Bluestones Medical Complex Care would like you to have the freedom to respond to the wishes of the service user. However, it is important always to recognise that you have a professional relationship with the service user, and you should always speak to your supervisor or manager to ensure you are working safely and within professional boundaries.

In your position within Bluestones Medical Complex Care, you must negotiate a delicate balance between being supportive to the service user and your professional context. You must always be aware that you support the service user in a professional and paid capacity. This will mean that you must engage in activities with a service user in a reflective manner. It will be important for you as an individual worker to be able to understand when you may be crossing the boundary of professional good practice. This is not easy. We recommend that you talk to your supervisor or manager in charge if you have any doubts in this area. You can always speak to Bluestones Medical Complex Care if you have concerns.



## Your benefit entitlement

As a casual worker for Bluestones Medical Complex Care you are entitled to the following:

- Industry-leading pay rates
- Flexible work to suit you and your needs. Have more time for the people and things you love
- Free private healthcare
- Free Blue Light & Costco card
- Rapid Pay - work a shift and get paid quick
  - Unlimited access to our Clinical Team and our mental health first aider for expert support and advice
- Regular mentoring & upskilling opportunities
- Free mandatory training (Basic Life Support & First Aid and Manual Handling)
- Specialist training opportunities (PMVA/Breakaway & Self-harm)
- Opportunity to enrol in NVQs



## Your wellbeing

Bluestones Medical Complex Care is dedicated to actively supporting the health, wellbeing, and safety of all our employees and it's something we monitor closely. We will help you to find a work-life balance that suits you, meaning you can enjoy your role whilst working to your full potential. Furthermore, it's imperative to us that we offer you as many upskilling opportunities as possible throughout your time with us, allowing you can enjoy the career satisfaction you deserve. As part of our commitment to this, we train our managers to conduct productive one-on-one supervisions with their direct reports and ensure that every employee can advance their skills.

Ensuring you have access to mental health support should you ever need it is also extremely important to us. Therefore, we are working to train all our line managers in mental health awareness and pledge to have 100% of our management team trained by the end of 2023, giving them the confidence they need to offer the necessary support.

### **What is self-care and why should you make time for it?**

Self-care is any action we deliberately carry out to take care of our physical, mental, or emotional wellbeing. It's how we re-energise, refuel and 'refill our cup'. It's the key to living a balanced life and staying in positive mental and physical health, but it needs to be something we actively plan rather than something that just happens.

There is no one way to take care of ourselves, and different self-care strategies will work for different people, so although we make some suggestions here, it's crucial to discover what works well for you.

Bluestones Medical Complex Care understands that the industry and the environment you work in may be overwhelming sometimes and if this is the case, you must reach out to our dedicated Mental Health First Aider and Occupational Health Nurse, Annette Leavy (Clinical Manager). She will talk you through some self-care exercises and techniques you can try to help put you at ease.

Annette Leavy

E: [Annette.leavy@bluestonesmedical.co.uk](mailto:Annette.leavy@bluestonesmedical.co.uk)

M: 07551 423 121

It's helpful to point out here that self-care isn't selfish; when we take the time to look after ourselves, we automatically have more energy, reserve, and depth to take care of others at home or at work.

Setting realistic goals here is essential; for example, you may know that it's unlikely that you can spend two hours a day baking or an hour in the bath. It could be as simple as going for a short walk or practising mindfulness for ten minutes. Remember, something is always better than nothing, so if a five-minute walk is all you can manage, it's still worth doing.

### **These are some self-care activities you can try:**

- Taking a walk outside



- Taking a relaxing bath
- Meditating or practising mindfulness
- Practising yoga or any other form of exercising
- Learning something new
- Spending time in nature
- Cooking or baking
- Crafting or creative activities such as painting, knitting, or drawing
- Journaling and creating time for reflection
- Giving gratitude; identifying the things we must be grateful for
- Reading a book

Whatever you may choose to do, the team at Bluestones Medical Complex Care realise and understand that YOU are critical to our service users and us and that means we are here to support YOU fully.

### **Dealing with stress**

Stress can manifest itself in many ways, both mentally and physically. This happens when an individual is experiencing a variety of key stressors in their life which can be a combination of workplace pressure and stressors from outside the workplace.

### **You may experience symptoms such as:**

- Tension headaches or migraines
- Low energy
- Heart palpitations
- Tightness in the chest
- Muscle tension
- Digestive issues
- Frequent minor illnesses
- Weight loss or weight gain
- Insomnia or sleep issues
- Changes in mood and behaviour
- Struggling to concentrate
- Changes in body temperature

It is important to access the relevant support when you feel burnt-out, exhausted or that your mental health is suffering. Please see our Medicash Employee Wellbeing Scheme to understand the support offered when you feel any of the signs or symptoms mentioned above.

Remember we are also here to help you so just reach out to any manager within Bluestones Medical Complex Care and they will help guide you to the support we have available.

Here are some apps that have been designed to support you with your mental health:

### **Mindshift CBT**

- Helps with: anxiety and stress



- How can it help: Mindshift CBT is a free self-help anxiety relief app that helps you reduce worry, stress and panic by following evidence-based strategies
- Getting started: download the app and log in, it's free for everyone
- [Download it from the Apple Store](#)
- [Download it from Google Play](#)

### **FearTools - Anxiety Aid**

- Helps with: anxiety
- How can it help: FearTools offers evidence based self-help to combat anxiety, including access to a thought diary, exposure exercises and breathing techniques
- Getting started: download the app and log in, it's free for everyone.
- [Download it from the Apple Store](#)
- [Download it from Google Play](#)

### **Worry Tree**

- **Helps with:** worry
- **How can it help:** The Worry Tree app aims to help you take control of worry wherever you are. Use the app to record the things you're worried about and access cognitive behavioural therapy techniques to help you notice and challenge those worries, along with creating an action plan to help you manage worry.
- **Getting started:** download the app and log in, it's free for everyone.
- Download it from the Apple Store
- Download it from Google Play

### **You can also get in touch with the following helplines**

- Samaritans. To talk about anything that is upsetting you, you can contact [Samaritans](#) 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. You can call [116 123](#) (free from any phone), email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) or [visit some branches in person](#). You can also call the Samaritans Welsh Language Line on [0808 164 0123](#) (7pm–11pm every day)
- SANEline. If you're experiencing a mental health problem or supporting someone else, you can call [SANEline](#) on [0300 304 7000](#) (4.30pm–10.30pm every day)
- National Suicide Prevention Helpline UK. Offers a supportive listening service to anyone with thoughts of suicide. You can call the [National Suicide Prevention Helpline UK](#) on [0800 689 5652](#) (6pm–3:30am every day).
- Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM). You can call the [CALM](#) on [0800 58 58 58](#) (5pm–midnight every day) if you are struggling and need to talk. Or if you prefer not to speak on the phone, you could try the [CALM webchat service](#).



## A message from Darren Logue, Managing Director

“As the Managing Director of Bluestones Medical Complex Care, I want you to know that you truly matter to me. When you join this company as one of our Marvels, you join a Marvel-lous family who take care of one another. If you ever need me, don't hesitate to get in touch with me directly at [darren.logue@bluestonesmedical.co.uk](mailto:darren.logue@bluestonesmedical.co.uk)

I'm delighted to have you on our team and wish you luck on your new career journey.

Best wishes,

Darren



## Safeguarding and service user well-being

You should always act in such a way as to promote and safeguard the wellbeing and interests of the service user. You must also avoid any act that might bring the organisation into disrepute or diminish the public's confidence in Bluestones Medical Complex Care. You must act with honesty, integrity and respect for service users and their property. Workers must always safeguard the wellbeing of the service user, themselves, and their colleagues.

When caring for a new service user, when their care needs change, when carrying out new procedures, or using new materials or equipment, a risk assessment must be undertaken and in place. If in doubt as to whether a risk assessment has been carried out, you must discuss the matter with Bluestones Medical Complex Care. In cases whereby, an assessment has already been carried out, the Manager will inform you of the identified risks and the methods of controlling those risks. Where a risk assessment has not been carried out, the Manager will either prohibit the un-assessed activity or carry out a risk assessment and tell you of the identified risks and the methods of controlling those risks.

When working within the team, you must act professionally towards colleagues and other professionals and indeed all concerned with wellbeing of the service user/s. When care workers feel that another worker is acting in such a way as to threaten the wellbeing of a service user, they can discuss the matter with the person in charge.

### Code of conduct

You are required to comply with the code of conduct for healthcare support workers and adult social care workers. A copy of the code has been issued to you on your employment. You are accountable and responsible for ensuring that you understand and follow the code of conduct as a social care worker. If you are employed as a Registered Nurse, you will be expected to comply with the NMC code and ensure you retain your professional registration.

### Our expectations of you

In addition to the code of conduct for healthcare support workers and adult social care workers, we have the following expectations of you:

- You must abide by all policies, procedures, and codes of practice laid down by the company
- You must act with honesty, integrity, and show respect for service user's property
- You are expected to carry out duties that promote and safeguard the service user's health, wellbeing, and interests. This must include informing their immediate supervisor or manager of any perceived or suspected deterioration in a service user's physical, social, or mental condition
- It is always expected that respect and the safeguarding of the privacy of the service user is shown. Confidential information must not be disclosed to any third party without the written consent of the patient/service user or appointed advocate unless it is in the best interest of the service user's health and well-being or is required for compliance with the law. In these latter cases, matters must always be referred directly to Bluestones Medical Complex Care management.



- You must not be involved in any action that may prejudice the service or damage the reputation of Bluestones Medical Complex Care.
- You must respect the dignity and independence of the service user to make informed choices regarding their care and welfare.
- You must not discriminate on the grounds of age, race or ethnic origin, creed, colour, religion, political affiliation, disability or impairments, marital status, parenthood, sexual gender, or sexual orientation. The values, customs, and religious/spiritual beliefs of each patient/service user must be respected.
- You must act professionally with respect to the relationship with the service user. It is recognised that close relationships can develop between workers and service user, but workers should be mindful of the need to preserve the professional nature of the relationship.
- You have a duty to ensure that the service user is aware of the company's complaints procedure.
- Anyone who is not a qualified nurse, whatever their qualifications may be, **MUST NOT UNDERTAKE TASKS OF A NURSING NATURE** or any other task outside of the remit of the job description or the agreed care service plan for a service user.

**Codes of professional conduct: you must NEVER:**

- Be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or substances at any time at the start of a shift or whilst on duty.
  - Smoke on duty. Please note that the smell from smoke on clothing may offend service users.
  - Accept gifts, loans, or gratuities from service users, relatives, or other interested parties.
- Borrow money from a service user or become involved in lending money to a service user.
  - You must not take any responsibility for looking after a service user's valuables, selling, or otherwise disposing of goods belonging to the service user, and must not become involved in betting syndicates (such as the lottery or football pools) with the service user.
- Give advice in relation to wills, investments, or financial matters generally.
- Use the service user's property, e.g. telephone, for their personal use.
  - You should arrive for assignments at the requested time and carry out duties for the full time you have been allocated. If it is found that your attendance was not for the fully allotted time the company has the right to reduce your pay accordingly.
- Be on your phone for personal use whilst on duty.
- Take photos of patients/service users.
- Take photos or videos whilst on duty for use on ANY form of social media.
- Take photos or videos of/on hospital grounds or in a patient/service user's home.
- Undertaking any of the prohibited actions within our code of conduct will be subject to investigation and could result in disciplinary action or dismissal.

## Complaints

If you receive a complaint from the Individual, you must notify the company by emailing: [complaints@bluestonesmedicalcomplexcare.co.uk](mailto:complaints@bluestonesmedicalcomplexcare.co.uk) immediately. The Clinical and Quality Assurance team are responsible for handling complaints at Bluestones Medical Complex Care.





## Escalating concerns

All employees have a responsibility to report to their manager about any changes in the physical, behavioural, or social condition of the service user, to any perceived lack of resources, help or advice, or any action by persons or organisations which may be harmful to the service user. You should also report any refusal of care or any time you are unable to deliver care as planned. You must ensure you read the Safeguarding Policy, the Child Protection Policy, and the Whistleblowing Policy for Bluestones Medical Complex Care on the QCS Online Management System or via the QCS App.



## Commencing Work with Bluestones Medical Complex Care

### Right to work

Before offering you an assignment Bluestones Medical Complex Care will require certain documents from you to satisfy itself that you are legally entitled to work in the UK. You confirm that you are legally entitled to work in the UK without any additional immigration approvals and agree to notify Bluestones Medical Complex Care immediately if you cease to be so entitled at any time.

### Compliance requirements

To be fully compliant to work with Bluestones Medical Complex Care, you must complete the following forms, actions and provide the necessary supporting documents

- Application form
- Business car insurance
- Complete mandatory e-learning
- Covid-19 risk assessment form
- COVID-19 vaccination evidence/completed Covid-19 vaccination refusal form
- DBS - must be enhanced and registered on the update service check
- Driving licence - front and back (if applicable)
- Face to face interview with a member of our Clinical Team
- Fitness to practice
- ID badge
- ID photo
- K.I.D & acknowledgement
- MOT certificate
- Non-clinical health questionnaire
- Overseas police check (if applicable)
- Proof of address
- Proof of national insurance number
- Provide an up-to-date CV with full employment history. This should cover from 18 years old, and any gaps must be accounted for
- References: this information would ideally be in the form of a reference from a previous employer. References must include satisfactory evidence of previous employment concerned with the provision of services relating to health and social care or children or vulnerable adults. REFERENCES MUST BE VERIFIED
- Right to work - copies of original documents must be seen, confirming who this was seen by the date and if the document holds a picture that this is of a true likeness to the individual
- Signed handbook declaration
- Signed PAYE terms



### Working time regulations (WTR)

The Working Time Regulations 1998 require Bluestones Medical Complex Care to limit your average weekly working time to 48 hours unless you agree with Bluestones Medical Complex Care that the limit shall not apply to you. The opt-out agreement can be found on your registration form.

You may sometimes be required to work additional hours in addition to what's been agreed within your contract to allow for the proper performance of your normal duties without extra remuneration.

### Overtime

You may be offered overtime **OR** shall be required to work overtime in addition to your normal hours of work if instructed to do so by the Care Delivery Manager on reasonable notice or if necessary for the proper performance of your duties. Bluestones Medical Complex Care does not guarantee that overtime will be available to you.

Any overtime worked must receive prior authorisation from the Care Delivery Manager. You shall be notified in writing of any change as soon as possible and in any event within one month of the change. Alternatively, you may at your option take time off in lieu, at such time as is agreed by the Care Delivery Manager.

You shall not be permitted to work overtime if your hours would exceed 48 hours per week averaged over a 17- week reference period unless you have signed an opt-out agreement.

### Fitness to practice

It is important for your own health and of those in your care that you are fit to practice whenever you attend an assignment. You must declare your fitness to practice or otherwise when you accept an assignment. If you are concerned that your assignment involves unnecessary risks to your health or fitness, or that of your unborn child, please do not hesitate to contact us. You are required to supply Bluestones Medical Complex Care with an update of your occupational health questionnaire whenever requested. We will contact you with the new forms when they are required.

### Disclosure & Barring update service (DBS update service)

Upon receipt of your DBS criminal records check, you can apply to join the DBS Update Service. This allows you to save money and means you may never need to complete another DBS application. Please note that registration to the update service must be completed within 30 days of the certificate issue date. If you are already registered with the DBS Update Service, please send us a copy of your certificate (we will need to view the original certificate at your interview). You then won't need to apply for disclosure with Bluestones Medical Complex Care.



### Overseas police checks

If you have been living or working outside of the UK for a period of six months or more in the last five years prior to registering with us, we will require you to provide an overseas police certificate/certificate of good conduct from the relevant country (or countries) before you can work for us. If you are unsure how to obtain an overseas police check, then please contact us for advice. For any UK resident where you continue to work for Bluestones Medical Complex Care and then live or work outside the UK for a period of three months or more and then return to the UK, you will be required to provide a new overseas police check/certificate of good conduct.

### Confirmation of employment

You will have been interviewed and have received a formal offer of employment providing some basic details of your job, pay and hours, etc. You must therefore familiarise yourself with the policies and procedures referred to in the staff handbook which are available in the QCS Management System and on the QCS App. You have been provided with a job description of the position to which you have been appointed, but amendments may be made to your job description from time to time in relation to our changing needs and your own ability.

### Pay

You will only be paid for the hours you work. Your agreed pay rate is subject to deduction of tax and NIC's if applicable.

You will be paid weekly in arrears each Friday by BACS for the hours worked in the previous week. You also are entitled to use our Rapid Pay option.

Bluestones Medical Complex Care will make all necessary deductions from your salary as required by law including pension contributions which may be required to be deducted under the auto-enrolment regime which applied to Bluestones Medical Complex Care. Bluestones Medical Complex Care shall be entitled to deduct from your pay or other payments due to you any money which you may owe to Bluestones Medical Complex Care at any time.

Your pay will be reviewed annually and may be increased from time to time at the discretion of Bluestones Medical Complex Care without affecting the other terms of your employment. There is no obligation to award an increase. There will be no review of the salary after notice has been given by either party to terminate your employment.

### Personal details

Please keep us informed of any changes in your personal circumstances, e.g. new address, telephone number and next of kin. It is important that we keep such information up to date to contact you whenever appropriate.



## Equal opportunities

Bluestones Medical Complex Care recognises that discrimination in the workplace, in any form, is unacceptable and in most cases unlawful. We have therefore adopted an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion policy and to ensure that all job applicants and employees are treated fairly and without favour or prejudice. Bluestones Medical Complex Care is committed to applying this policy throughout all areas of employment, recruitment and selection, training, development, and promotion. In all situations, people will be judged solely on merit or ability.

The Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedure is available in the QCS Management System and QCS App. Any breach of the policy will lead to disciplinary action, which may include dismissal. You will be requested to complete an Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form.

## Non-harassment policy

Bluestones Medical Complex Care recognises that harassment in the workplace, in any form, is unacceptable and in most cases unlawful. We are committed to ensuring that we can provide a working environment that is harmonious and acceptable to all. The harassment policy is available in the QCS Management System and on the QCS App.

## Collective Agreements

There is no collective agreement which directly affects your engagement as a worker.



## During Your Employment with Bluestones Medical Complex Care

The previous section dealt with aspects of your early employment. We now wish to draw your attention to certain aspects that will apply during your employment:

### Induction training – CQC regulations

You will be expected to work through the induction training programme at Bluestones Medical Complex Care at a reasonable speed, and within the standards laid down in the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012). This process will begin on your first day when you will be given more details. If you feel that you can progress faster than the material and experience which is being presented to you, please speak to your manager.

### Induction training – CIW regulations

You will be expected to work through the induction training programme at Bluestones Medical Complex Care at a reasonable speed, and within the standards laid down in

- The Regulated Services (Service Providers and Responsible Individuals) (Wales) Regulations 2017 and
- The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016

This process will begin on your first day when you will be given more details. If you feel that you can progress faster than the material and experience which is being presented to you, please speak to your manager.

### **Annual mandatory training updates is a legal requirement**

To ensure your safety and the safety of the service users you are required to complete the mandatory training below annually:

- Practical basic life support (as a minimum) – must be aligned to the UK resuscitation council guidelines (this must be stated on the certificate).
- Practical manual handling (online training may be accepted).

Online training (modules will be assigned based on your job role). Your compliance officer will discuss any additional training requirements with you, usually on an annual basis. Please ensure that your training record is always kept up to date by bringing it into or sending it to our office. We currently offer free practical training sessions at our Chester and South Wales hubs. Certificates can be purchased at a cost of £50 each for BLS and Manual Handling, £18 for online training, or £100 for all three, to cover administration costs.

You may be required to undertake mandatory training specific to the care needs of the service users.



### Repayment of specialist training costs

From time to time Bluestones Medical Complex Care may pay for you to attend training courses. In consideration of this, you agree that if your employment terminates after Bluestones Medical Complex Care has incurred liability for the cost of you doing so you will be liable to repay some or all the fees, expenses and other costs associated with such training courses in accordance with Clause 9 in your employment contract.

Except in the circumstances set out in clause 8.3 in your employment contract, you shall repay Bluestones Medical Complex Care as follows:

- If you fail to use your best endeavours to successfully complete the course and/or pass the qualifying examinations, 100% of the costs shall be repaid;
  - If you cease employment before you attend or complete the training course but Bluestones Medical Complex Care has already incurred liability for the Costs, 100% of the costs or such proportion of the costs that Bluestones Medical Complex Care cannot recover from the course provider shall be repaid;
- If you cease employment during the training course or within 12 months of completing the training course, 100% of the costs shall be repaid;
- If you cease employment more than 12 months but no more than 18 months after completion of the training course, 50% of the costs shall be repaid;
- If you cease employment more than 18 months but no more than 24 months after completion of the training course, 25% of the costs shall be repaid; and
  - If you cease employment more than 24 months after completion of the training course, no repayment shall be required.

You shall not be required to repay any of the costs under clause 8 of your employment contract if:

- Bluestones Medical Complex Care terminates your employment by reason of redundancy; or
- You terminate your employment in response to a fundamental breach of contract by Bluestones Medical Complex Care.
  - You agree to Bluestones Medical Complex Care deducting the sums under this clause from your pay or any outstanding payments due to you. Where your weekly pay and other payments are insufficient to satisfy the sums owed to Bluestones Medical Complex Care, Bluestones Medical Complex Care reserves its right to recover such sums from you as a debt.
  - You agree that if Bluestones Medical Complex Care waives your obligation to repay the Costs



under this clause, you will be solely responsible for any income or other tax payable as a result of the waiver and you shall indemnify Bluestones Medical Complex Care on a continuing basis in relation to any such tax.

### Working standards

The management of Bluestones Medical Complex Care, and many of its working practices, are set out in the Compliance Management System supplied to us and maintained by Quality Compliance Systems Ltd. This online management system is always made available to you and will be shown to you during your induction.

It is a fundamental part of your contract of employment that you familiarise yourself with this system as soon as is reasonable, that you abide by the policies and procedures always contained within it, that you do not change, remove, or add to any of the documentation without the authorisation of the Registered Manager, and that you do not use unauthorised documentation, i.e. documentation which does not have the standard format used by the QCS system, which denotes that the document is a part of the authorised system. You must report the existence or use of unauthorised documentation to Line Manager/Bluestones Medical Complex Care immediately.

Bluestones Medical Complex Care may have to comply with locally agreed policies, and it is important that you are familiar with them. Your manager will tell you about this during your induction.

### Availability

You can provide your availability by calling the office, over email, or via the Bluestones Scheduler app on your phone. If your availability changes you need to inform us IMMEDIATELY.

### Timekeeping

You are required to arrive on shift 15 minutes before your start time. This is essential as you will be required to perform and record a full handover when taking over from your peers.

### Cancellations

At Bluestones Medical Complex Care, we strive each day to provide our service users with the highest standard of care to our service users. With this in mind, we hope that you can appreciate that when you accept a shift or work schedule, it is vital that you fulfil their obligation. If you need to cancel a shift for any reason you need to advise a minimum of 4 hours before the start time of your shift.

We do have a 'three-strike policy' in place. Here are some examples of behaviours that we cannot accept and that strikes will be given for:

- Multiple cancellations within a short period of time





- Not attending a shift without letting us know
- Cancelling shifts at extremely short notice, leaving us no time to find a replacement worker

### Three strike policy process

#### **First strike**

You will receive your first strike for a shift cancellation or no-show without appropriate rationale or reasoning.

#### **Second strike**

You will receive your second strike for your second cancellation of this nature.

#### **Third strike**

If a third strike is issued- this will result in termination of employment. We understand there are circumstances that arise which are out of your control, so all strikes will be given at the discretion of Bluestones Medical Complex Care.

### Online timesheets

It is your responsibility to ensure that your online timesheets are completed accurately, in full and on time. Payment may be delayed if this is not the case.

### Tax code queries

Whilst Bluestones Medical Complex Care process your pay and deductions, we are not responsible for your tax affairs so please contact HMRC directly.

### Referral bonus scheme

Bluestones Medical Complex Care offers a very competitive referral scheme. We'll pay up to £300\* for every candidate you refer to us. You can find full T&Cs on our website.

### Training – induction and ongoing – CQC regulations

All employees are entitled to a minimum of three paid days of training per year, which description includes in-house training, staff meetings and supervisions. All employees must undergo induction training. As your employment progresses your skills may be extended to encompass new job activities within the business.

You will receive notices through your payslips and notices will be displayed in your staff room indicating the various training topics. Certain training events are compulsory; the notice identifies these and payment for attendance will be received. Other training programmes will be on a voluntary basis and the notice indicates these. For further details relating to booking training sessions contact Bluestones Medical Complex Care. Failure to attend mandatory training could result in disciplinary action.



You are reminded that for Bluestones Medical Complex Care to satisfy its obligations under the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012) you are employed subject to certain contractual requirements about training and qualifications, which are detailed in your statement of terms and conditions.

### Training – induction & ongoing – CIW regulations

All employees are required to undertake core training appropriate to the work to be performed by them and specialist training as appropriate, which description includes in-house training, external training, distance learning, e-learning, staff meetings and supervisions.

All employees must undergo induction training. This induction training will be in accordance with the All Wales Induction Framework for Health and Social Care. There are 7 sections in the framework and the framework is for:

**Workers new to the sector** - workers who are new to the sector should complete the planned learning for five of the seven sections (1, 3, 5, 6 and 7 for those working with adults; and 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 for those working with children and young people). They will also need to successfully complete/pass the assessments for each of those sections. Everyone needs to complete the core learning, but the practice elements are specific to the worker's role. For example, those who do not support people with foot care will not be expected to show their practice in this area.

**Workers new to an organisation** - health and social care workers who are new to an organisation but have evidence they have previously achieved a relevant qualification and/or completed an induction framework, should not need to complete the whole induction framework. Accredited evidence can act as a 'passport' and give you confidence that the common induction or core learning areas have already been covered. Managers should still take new workers through the policies and procedures for your workplace or their role if they are not covered by their qualification or previous induction. Managers should also observe how the worker applies their learning in practice as part of the induction process.

**New workers with previous experience in a different sector or workers taking on a new role** - in the case of a worker who moves across different parts of the sectors (e.g. from adult social care to children and young people social care, or health care to social care), managers should find out what learning the worker has already completed as part of their qualification or previous induction framework. This should be mapped against the requirements of their new role to identify gaps. For example, an adult social care worker moving to work with children and young people would need to complete sections 2 and 4 to top up their learning. Or an adult social care worker moving to health care who has completed the previous Social Care Induction Framework would need to complete section 3 on health and well-being adults.

As your employment progresses your skills may be extended to encompass new job activities within the business. You will receive notices through your payslips and notices will be displayed in your staff room indicating the various training topics. Certain training events are compulsory; the notice identifies these and payment for attendance will be received. Other training programmes will be on a voluntary basis and the notice indicates these. For further details relating to booking training sessions contact Bluestones Medical Complex Care. Failure to attend mandatory training could result in disciplinary action. You are reminded that for Bluestones Medical Complex Care to satisfy its



obligations under the Regulated Services (Service Providers and Responsible Individuals) (Wales) Regulations 2017 and The Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016, you are employed subject to certain contractual requirements about training and qualifications, which are detailed in your statement of terms and conditions.

### Business expenses

We will reimburse you for authorised and legitimate expenditure, reasonably incurred by you, during the proper performance of your duties, i.e. travel, accommodation and other pre-agreed out-of-pocket expenses. You will be required to complete an online expense claim form and support such a claim by submitting valid receipts. You should have prior approval from Bluestones Medical Complex Care before incurring any expenses.

### Alterations and modifications to the staff handbook

Bluestones Medical Complex Care reserves the right to make reasonable alterations to this handbook and any other terms and conditions of service. Minor changes of detail, such as those relating to procedure, may be made with a general notice being provided to you. Significant alterations will only be implemented following full consultation with all affected employees. Such changes will be implemented at the end of that notice period subject to any written objections having been lodged with Bluestones Medical Complex Care.

### Holiday pay and procedures

#### **Holiday entitlement**

Your holiday entitlement will depend on the number of hours that you work and be pro-rated based on a full-time entitlement of five point six (5.6) weeks during each holiday year (including [all OR the usual eight] public holidays in England and Wales). The holiday year at Bluestones Medical Complex Care runs between 01 Jan to 31 Dec.

If Bluestones Medical Complex Care allows you to take holiday during an assignment, all holiday requests must be approved in writing in advance by your line manager.

If you have taken more holiday than your accrued entitlement at the date that your assignment ends, Bluestones Medical Complex Care shall be entitled to deduct from any payment due to you.

The annual holiday policy and procedure is available in the QCS Management System and on the QCS App.

#### **Public/Bank Holidays, pay & procedures**

Where the above days are worked, payment will be made as indicated in your statement of terms and conditions or principal statement or contract of employment.



## Pensions

You are eligible to be enrolled into the NEST pension scheme. Further details of the pension scheme are available from your line manager.

## Sickness/injury - absence payments and conditions

### **Notification of absence**

If you are absent from work for any reason, you must notify your line manager of the reason for your absence as soon as possible but no later than 4 hours prior to your start time on the first day of absence. If you are absent for more than one day, you must keep Bluestones Medical Complex Care regularly informed of the expected duration of your absence.

The sickness absence policy and procedure are available in the QCS Management System and on the QCS App. A failure to follow the sickness absence policy and procedure may result in absences being treated as unauthorised and could give rise to disciplinary action. If you are sick for more than three days, subject to certain conditions, you may be entitled to statutory sick pay (SSP). If you are sick for more than 4 days but less than 7 days please complete a statement of sickness form, which can be found on the HMRC website. If your illness lasts longer than 7 days, you will need to provide a signed doctors note. These documents will need to be emailed to the candidate payroll team at: [payroll@bluestonesmedicalcomplexcare.co.uk](mailto:payroll@bluestonesmedicalcomplexcare.co.uk)

### **Maternity**

The maternity leave policy and procedure is available in the QCS Management System and on the QCS App.

### **Adoption leave**

The adoption policy and procedure are available in the QCS Management System and on the QCS App.

### **Shared parental leave**

The Shared Parental Leave Policy and Procedure is available in the QCS Management System and on the QCS App. In essence, shared parental leave allows a mother or adoptive parent to share their maternity or adoptive leave entitlement with their partner including any entitled to statutory pay.

### **Paternity leave**

The Paternity Leave Policy and Procedure is available on the QCS Management System and the QCS App.



## General rules and regulations

### Using your own car

If a service user requests that you take them somewhere in your own vehicle, you must show evidence of the business car insurance policy. This must be sent to the Compliance team during the onboarding process. We must point out that you are not insured by Bluestones Medical Complex Care when using your own vehicle during working hours. If you only use your car to travel to your permanent workplace and then use other transport, or walk, between service users, you must inform your insurer to ensure that you have the correct level of insurance. If you use your car to travel to different workplaces, you must confirm with your insurers what level of insurance you will require. Your car must be kept in a roadworthy condition, evidence of valid in date MOT and you must inform Bluestones Medical Complex Care of any changes to your license e.g. endorsements, cautions or convictions.

### Additional time off work

We recognise that there will be occasions when you will request time off for medical/dental appointments or for domestic reasons. Every effort will be made to arrange such appointments outside normal working hours. Where this is unavoidable, then appointments must be arranged to minimise disruption to your working day/rota.

### Personal property

Please avoid bringing valuable personal items to work and do not leave any valuables either unattended or overnight. We cannot accept liability for the loss of, or damage to such personal property brought onto our premises.

### Lost property

All items of lost property must immediately be reported to Bluestones Medical Complex Care. Similarly, any unidentified article must be handed to the manager, whilst attempts are made to discover ownership.

### Bluestones Medical Complex Care property

All documents, manuals, hardware, and software provided for your use by Bluestones Medical Complex Care and any data or documents (including copies) produced, maintained, or stored on computer systems or other electronic equipment at Bluestones Medical Complex Care (including mobile phones), remain the property of Bluestones Medical Complex Care.

Bluestones Medical Complex Care property in your possession and any original or copy documents obtained by you in the course of your work for Bluestones Medical Complex Care shall be returned to Recruitment Team at any time on request and in any event at the end of each assignment.



### Personal telephone calls

Such calls are only allowed in the case of emergency and with the prior permission of Management. Please remember that, where provided, Bluestones Medical Complex Care telephones are provided solely for business use and abuse will not be tolerated. Personal mobile phones must be switched off during working hours. Staff must not, therefore, be answering or making calls while with a Service user or where service users or their friends and relatives may be able to overhear conversations.

### Mail

Private mail must not be sent care of our address. No private mail may be posted at our expense except in those cases whereby a formal recharge arrangement has been made.

### Buying or selling of goods

You are not allowed to buy or sell goods on your own behalf on our premises or during your working hours.

### Friends and relatives contact

We discourage friends and relatives from contacting you at work either by telephone or in person, except in the case of an emergency.

### Uniforms, personal appearance & appropriate dress

We will purchase appropriate uniforms for your use. All uniforms will be returned on leaving, and where uniforms are not returned in reasonable condition, a charge will be made to cover the cost of replacement. Employees must refer to the appearance policy and procedure which is available in QCS Management System and on the QCS App.

### Protective clothing or equipment

All such clothing, except for care worker's shoes, will be provided to employees concerned free of charge by the company and must be worn throughout working periods. Failure to wear protective clothing may be treated as a disciplinary offence. If the risk of injury is great the failure may, depending on the surrounding circumstances and any mitigating factors, be treated as gross misconduct. The Health and Safety Policy and Procedure is available in the QCS Management System and on the QCS App. The person responsible for health and safety at Bluestones Medical Complex Care is Registered Manager.

### Smoking

This is a no smoking establishment. Smoking is not permitted within the premises. Your manager or supervisor will advise you of the designated smoking area at your place of work. The smoking at work policy and procedure is available in the QCS Management System and on the QCS App.



## Alcohol & drugs

The Alcohol and Drugs Policy and Procedure is available in the QCS Management System and on the QCS App.

## Attendance & timekeeping

Good timekeeping and prompt attendance is paramount in the lives of the people to whom we provide support. Please advise the person in charge/Bluestones Medical Complex Care if you are running late in attending work. We would also request that you inform the person in charge/Bluestones Medical Complex Care with as much notice as possible about any intended absence due to sickness. This is critical as it allows us to replace you sensitively and proficiently if you give us the maximum amount of notice. The absenteeism policy and procedure are available in the QCS Management System and on the QCS App. Staff that are absent without notifying the person in charge/Bluestones Medical Complex Care may be subject to disciplinary action.

## Handling service user's money

If during your work, you are required to handle a service user's money, you must follow the procedures as laid out in the service user's care plan and the service user's finances policy and procedure. Employees must remember that service users may be vulnerable and rely on Bluestones Medical Complex Care and its employees to exercise care and judgment on their behalf when it comes to their finances. Employees must not, therefore, accept any gifts of any value or seek to borrow any money from a service user. Employees must not remove property or money from a service user without permission or purpose.

This policy is designed to protect both employees and the Service user and any employee that is found to be in breach of the policy may face disciplinary action which could result in dismissal. Where we believe a person has caused harm or poses a future risk of harm to vulnerable groups, including children, we will refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service in line with our statutory duties.

## Information about service users

Information about all Service users is held in the Care Plan. If you are attending a Service user for the first time, please make yourself familiar with the Service user's needs through reading the Care Plan. If you have any doubts, contact the person in charge/Bluestones Medical Complex Care. All information to which you have access regarding a Service user must be treated with the utmost confidentiality (see confidentiality policy). On each occasion on which you attend to the service user, you must record on the care records brief details of duties carried out and general information regarding the Service user's situation. Please also use this daily visit sheet as a means of communicating information to the next Support Worker on duty with the service user, or as a reminder for yourself.



## Gifts, wills, donations, and bequests

You must not, under any circumstances, act as signatories to the wills, lasting powers of attorneys or similar legal documents of service users, or be beneficiaries of service user's wills, nor should you accept gifts of any kind except with the express authority of the Registered Manager. Please refer to the gifts, donations, wills and bequests from service users' policy and anti-bribery policy for further information.

## Parking

Private vehicles parked on or around our premises are done so at the owner's risk and we accept no liability for any damage caused to such vehicles. Employees' cars must be parked at the furthest distance available from the main entrance to allow visitors to use the nearer spaces.

## Housekeeping

Please always keep your work area clean and tidy. Please report any concerns about housekeeping to Bluestones Medical Complex Care. You can contact 01244 445 072 for assistance.

## Record keeping

Good record keeping is essential to your work. Bluestones Medical Complex Care expects you to:

- Keep clear and accurate records relevant to your role
- This includes but is not limited to service user records. It includes all records that are relevant to your scope of your role

To achieve this, you must:

- Complete all records at the time or as soon as possible after an event, recording if the notes are written sometime after the event.
  - Identify any risks or problems that have arisen, and the steps taken to deal with them, so that colleagues who use the records have all the information they need.
- Complete all records accurately and without any falsification taking immediate and appropriate action if you become aware that someone has not kept to these requirements.
- Attribute any entries you make in any paper or electronic records to yourself, making sure they are clearly written, dated and timed and do not include unnecessary abbreviations, jargon, or speculation.
  - Take all steps to make sure that all records are kept securely, and collect, treat, and store all data and research findings appropriately.

All personal information will be handled in compliance with data protection legislation and the policies on data protection at Bluestones Medical Complex Care will be followed.

Records will be generated and kept of all activities which may affect the quality of care and/or support given, the continuity of that care and/or support, and any business matters which affect the integrity of Bluestones Medical Complex Care and the safety of our service users. Systems will be in





place for ease of access to records. However, where the requested information includes personal information, Bluestones Medical Complex Care will follow the data protection principles that set out the main responsibilities for organisations under UK GDPR and the confidentiality principles.

### Infectious/contagious illness

If you are suffering from such a condition, you must not report for work without your doctor's clearance. If in any doubt, please notify us and consult your doctor. All employees must adhere to infection control policy and procedure at Bluestones Medical Complex Care.

### Loss, damage, and wastage

It is important to maintain efficient and cost-effective routines to ensure that resources are appropriately focussed on service user services. For this reason, please take extra care during your normal duties by avoiding unnecessary or extravagant use of services, time, energy, etc.

The following points are examples of this:

- Handle machines, equipment, and stock with care
- Turn off any unnecessary lighting and heating
- Keep doors closed whenever possible and do not allow taps to drip
- Ask for other work if your job has come to a standstill
- Start with the minimum of delay after arriving for work and after breaks

The following provision is an express written term of your contract of employment:

- Any damage to vehicles, stock, or property (including non-statutory safety equipment) that is the result of your carelessness, negligence or deliberate vandalism will render you liable to pay the full or part of the cost of repair or replacement
  - Any loss to us that is the result of your failure to observe rules, procedures, or instruction, or is because of your negligent behaviour or your unsatisfactory standards of work will render you liable to reimburse to us the full or part of the cost of the loss
- In the event of failure to pay, we have the contractual right to deduct such costs from your pay



## Security and confidentiality

### Confidentiality

You must not disclose any trade secrets or other information of a confidential nature relating to Bluestones Medical Complex Care or any of its associated companies or their business or their clients/service users and employees in respect of which Bluestones Medical Complex Care owes an obligation of confidence to any third party during or after your employment except in the proper course of your employment or as required by law.

You must not remove any documents or tangible items which belong to Bluestones Medical Complex Care, or which contain any confidential information from Bluestones Medical Complex Care premises at any time without proper advance authorisation.

You must return to Bluestones Medical Complex Care upon request, and, in any event, upon the termination of your employment, all documents and tangible items which belong to Bluestones Medical Complex Care, or which contain or refer to any confidential information and which are in your possession or under your control.

You must, if requested by Bluestones Medical Complex Care, delete all confidential information from any reusable material and destroy all other documents and tangible items which contain or refer to any confidential information and which are in your possession or under your control.

### Use of computer equipment

Use of computer equipment, use of email and of the internet are controlled for security reasons. The computer, email and internet usage policy and procedure are available in the QCS Management System and on the QCS App.

### Rights of search

We have the contractual right to carry out searches of employees and their property (including vehicles) whilst they are on our premises or conducting business on our behalf. These searches are random and do not imply suspicion in relation to any individual.

If you should be required to submit to a search, and if it is practicable, you will be entitled to be accompanied by a third party to be selected only from those who are on the premises at the time that a search is taking place. This right also applies at the time that any further questioning takes place. You may be asked to remove the contents of your pockets, bags, vehicles, staff lockers (where available), etc. Whilst you have the right to refuse to be searched, refusal by you to agree to being searched will constitute a breach of contract, which could result in your dismissal. We reserve the right to call in the police at any stage.



## Communications or statements to the media

Only Bluestones Medical Complex Care is authorised to make any communication or statement to the media in matters relating to the business.

## Data protection

You have read, understood, and shall comply with the data protection and confidentiality policy and procedure at Bluestones Medical Complex Care when handling personal data in the course of employment. This includes personal data relating to any employee, worker, service user, client, supplier, or agent of the company. Copies of these policies are available on the QCS Management System and The QCS App.

Bluestones Medical Complex Care may change policies at any time and will notify you in writing of any changes. Failure to comply with these policies may result in immediate termination of this agreement. Bluestones Medical Complex Care shall generally rely on a lawful ground for processing; should consent be required, Bluestones Medical Complex Care shall adhere to its legal obligations in this regard.

## Standards of conduct/performance

Throughout this section we shall give an indication of the required standards of conduct or performance expected from all our employees. It must be appreciated that any judgement of whether those standards have not been observed will depend very much on the specific circumstances of each case. It is important, however, that we set out certain standards for the guidance of all employees. A failure to work to these standards may result in disciplinary action on grounds of misconduct or poor performance. The following sub-sections are examples only and must under no circumstances be considered as an exhaustive statement of all potential misdemeanours.

### General attendance (absence/timekeeping)

Ensure that you arrive at work sufficiently early to be ready to commence work at your official starting time. You must comply with any time recording procedures relating to your job including, where required, clocking in using any device or system provided. If you wish to leave work during normal working hours, you must receive authorisation from your immediate supervisor. Failure to do so will result in such absence being treated as unauthorised. Lateness and absence will be recorded, and unacceptable records of attendance will render you liable to disciplinary action. Employees should refer to the absenteeism policy and procedure.

### Inappropriate Disclosure

'Gossip' or hearsay must not feature as an aspect of the culture of Bluestones Medical Complex Care and will be discouraged among both staff and Individuals.

- Staff must never share personal details about other staff with the people we support, nor should staff discuss other staff members with the people we support except on issues relating directly to the Individual's care.



- Staff must never discuss the people we support with third parties without the Individual's consent.
  - Staff must not interact with the Individuals, their families, and friends on social networking sites such as Facebook, Snapchat, etc. and must not accept requests to join their network or 'friend' them.
  - Staff must not discuss or post about their work, the people we support, other staff or any other aspect of their work with Bluestones Medical Complex Care on social network sites such as Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, blog sites or other media such as radio, TV, or newspapers/magazines without prior approval from the registered manager.
  - To promote the dignity and respect of the Individual and avoid a breach of confidentiality, staff must NOT use their mobile phones (e.g. answer calls or check texts) when delivering direct personal care to the Individual. However, staff can use their mobile phones for business use at a time more convenient away from the Individual they are caring for. This policy does not prohibit the use of smartphones and devices for professional care or clinical use when prior agreement is given by Bluestones Medical Complex Care.
  - Failure to follow this procedure may result in disciplinary action. It is recognized that increasingly, technology is used. However, this is directed by Bluestones Medical Complex Care and clear boundaries will be put in place.
  - Where any of the above does occur, the incident must be brought to the attention of your line manager as soon as possible.

### Conduct outside working hours

Whilst we have no intention or wish to intrude upon your activities or interests outside work, we would expect that none of our employees would be engaged in any activity outside working hours which could result in adverse publicity to the business, bring the business into disrepute or which would cause us to question their integrity, or which has a detrimental impact upon relations with fellow colleagues or service users. Doing so may result in disciplinary action and could lead to dismissal depending on the seriousness of the conduct outside work and the level of impact it is having or could have on the organisation.

### Social networking

Employees are not permitted to use social media during work hours. We require all our staff to avoid and refrain from engaging in any conduct on social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, etc.) either during or outside working hours which brings the company into disrepute, or

- Is derogatory or critical of the business
- Results in adverse publicity
- Could constitute any form of bullying or harassment of a colleague or individual
- Would be a breach of our equal opportunities policy
- Would cause us to question your suitability to be working with our individuals

The above list is not exhaustive, and employees must be careful to avoid any inappropriate or adverse references to the business or their work colleagues. Employees should remember that they always represent Bluestones Medical Complex Care.



Employee's must not connect/be "friends" with service users on social media unless there was a relationship (family or friend) prior to them becoming a service user of Bluestones Medical Complex Care or you have permission of Bluestones Medical Complex Care. This is to protect the reputation of Bluestones Medical Complex Care and avoid the risk of adversely affecting relations with our service users and prevent any safeguarding issues arising. Employees can refer to the social networking policy which can be found within the QCS Management System and the QCS App.

### Stock/property

Bluestones Medical Complex Care property (and/or that of our service users) must only be used for the purpose for which it is intended and must not be removed from site without prior approval. All employees have a duty to report to management any damage to, or loss of stock or property. If, because of your carelessness, or negligence, we (and/or our service users) suffer loss or damage to property or stock, (including vehicles) this will be construed as a serious breach of the rules. Where this is construed as particularly serious then this may render you liable to pay the full or part of the cost of repair or replacement, or insurance excess if appropriate. If you fail to pay, we reserve the right to deduct the costs from your pay.

### Work performance

Your performance at work will be regularly reviewed and unacceptable standards due to individual negligence or carelessness may be referred to the disciplinary process. Similarly, if there is deemed to be an unacceptable volume of work produced in relation to agreed targets or by general comparison to other employees this will be the subject of further investigation.

Whilst such investigation may lead to referral to the disciplinary process, we shall also consider whether training or other forms of assistance would offer more appropriate remedies. The capability policy and procedure are available in the QCS Management System and on the QCS App.

### Health and safety

The health and safety policy and procedure are available in the QCS Management System and on the QCS App. The person responsible for health and safety is Registered Manager.

### Privacy policy

Bluestones Medical Complex Care has implemented a privacy policy In line with the UK Data Protection act 2018. The policy is available in the QCS Management System and on the QCS App.



## Leaving Bluestones Medical Complex Care

You are reminded that the company is entitled to rely on you to work cooperatively and to full capacity during your notice period, unless you are requested to cease work before your notice expires, or your employer agrees for you to leave before your notice expires. Failure to meet this obligation, which is for the benefit of your service users and colleagues, opens you to the possibility of claims for excess costs of replacement by the company as per below.

The notice period which you are required to give is detailed within your individual terms and conditions of employment.

### Termination and notice period

After successful completion of your probationary period, the prior written notice required from you or Bluestones Medical Complex Care to terminate your employment shall be as follows:

- Four weeks prior to written notice, following probation until you have continuously employed for two complete years and;
  - On additional weeks' notice for each completed year of continuous employment thereafter up to a maximum of 12 weeks' notice

Bluestones Medical Complex Care may, at its discretion, terminate your employment without notice and make a payment of basic salary in lieu of notice (payment in lieu). This payment in lieu will be equal to the basic salary (as at the date of termination) which you would have been entitled to receive under this agreement during the notice period referred to in clause 11 of your employment contract (or if notice has already been given, during the remainder of the notice period) less income tax and national insurance contributions.

For the avoidance of doubt, the payment in lieu shall not include any element in relation to:

- Any payment in respect of any holiday entitlement that would have been accrued during the period for which the payment in lieu is made

Bluestones Medical Complex Care shall be entitled to dismiss you at any time without notice (or payment in lieu) if you commit a serious breach of your obligations as an employee, or if you cease to be entitled to work in the UK.

### Obligation of termination

You shall, on termination of your employment:

- Deliver to Bluestones Medical Complex Care, in good condition, all materials, records and other information (including, without limitation, in written, oral, visual or electronic form or on any magnetic or optical disk or memory and wherever located) made, compiled or acquired by you during your employment and relating to Bluestones Medical Complex Care or its business contacts, any keys, credit cards, and any other property of Bluestones Medical Complex Care (including any car provided by Bluestones Medical Complex Care)



which is in your possession, custody care or control

- Irretrievably delete any information relating to the business of Bluestones Medical Complex Care stored on any magnetic or optical disk or memory and all matter derived from such sources which is in your possession, custody, care or control outside the premises of Bluestones Medical Complex Care;
- Resign immediately without compensation from any office [or trusteeship] that you hold in or on behalf of Bluestones Medical Complex Care]; and
- Confirm in writing your compliance with your obligations under clause 15.1 of your employment contract if requested to do so by Bluestones Medical Complex Care and provide such reasonable evidence of compliance as Bluestones Medical Complex Care may request

### Terminating employment without giving notice

If you terminate your employment without giving or working the required period of notice, as indicated in your individual statement of the main terms of employment, you will have an amount equal to any additional cost of covering your duties during the notice period not worked deducted from any termination pay due to you. This is an express written term of your contract of employment. You will also forfeit any contractually accrued holiday pay due to you over and above your statutory holiday pay if you fail to give or work the required period of notice.

Examples of additional costs include:

- Costs incurred in covering shifts under your notice period by someone who is on a higher hourly rate
  - Costs incurred in covering your shifts under your notice period by an agency worker whose hourly rate is higher
  - Admin costs incurred by reason of using an agency to obtain cover for the shifts under your notice period

All costs incurred in providing urgent cover as a result of your failure to work all or some of your notice period will be calculated and the pay you would have received during that period will be deducted from this cost which will leave a balance which equates to the “additional cost” arising from your breach of contract OR a fixed amount in the sum of [£x] will be deducted from your final pay in the event that you fail to work some or all of your notice and as a result, Bluestones Medical Complex Care has incurred additional costs.

This right does not prejudice any other legal rights or remedies which Bluestones Medical Complex Care may have arising from your failure to work your contractual notice period. Where there is an unjustified failure to work notice, this may be referred to in any reference provided to prospective employers.



## References

Employees who wish to request a reference can refer to the references policy and procedure.

## Redundancy

The redundancy policy and procedure are available in the QCS Management System and on the QCS App.





## Disciplinary procedures

### Discipline and disciplinary appeals - when may action be taken under this process?

Action may be taken where Bluestones Medical Complex Care believes an employee's behaviour, actions or omissions constitute misconduct. The seriousness of the misconduct matter will determine the severity of any sanction imposed. Misconduct can range from minor misconduct through to gross misconduct, the latter justifying dismissal without notice. Bluestones Medical Complex Care reserves the right to disapply all or part of this policy where the circumstances dictate that this is appropriate.

### Minor conduct issues

Minor conduct issues can often be resolved informally between the employee and their line manager. These discussions should be held in private and without undue delay whenever there is cause for concern. Where appropriate, a note of any such informal discussions may be placed on the employees personnel file. Formal steps will be taken under this procedure if the matter is not resolved, or if informal discussion is not appropriate (for example, because of the seriousness of the allegation).

### Confidentiality

The aim of Bluestones Medical Complex Care is to deal with disciplinary matters sensitively and with due respect for the privacy of any individuals involved. All employees must treat as confidential, any information communicated to them in connection with an investigation or disciplinary matter. The employee and anyone accompanying them (including witnesses) must not make electronic recordings of any meetings or hearings conducted under this procedure.

### Investigations

The purpose of an investigation is a fact-finding exercise. It is an opportunity for Bluestones Medical Complex Care to establish a fair and balanced view of the facts relating to any disciplinary allegations against an employee, before deciding whether to proceed with a disciplinary hearing. The amount of investigation required will depend on the nature of the allegations and will vary from case to case. It may involve interviewing and taking statements from the employee and any witnesses, and/or reviewing relevant documents. The employee must co-operate fully and promptly in any investigation. This will include informing Bluestones Medical Complex Care of the names of any relevant witnesses, disclosing any relevant documents to us and attending investigative interviews if required. Before any formal disciplinary action is taken, the relevant person will carry out a full investigation to establish the facts.

The investigation will normally include a meeting with the employee. Investigatory meetings are not disciplinary meetings, and the employee will not necessarily be offered the right to be accompanied. Even in the most serious allegations of gross misconduct (see below), a full investigation will be held. In any alleged case of gross misconduct, the employee may be suspended pending the outcome of the investigation if there is no alternative option available to CQC Bluestones Medical Complex Care



to protect the effectiveness and independence of the investigation. Before any disciplinary meeting, the employee will be:

- Told in writing of the allegations/complaints against them, and the basis of those allegations
- Given a reasonable opportunity to consider their response to that information
- Offered the opportunity to be accompanied by a work colleague or a trade union representative
  - The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting. At the meeting, they will be given a full opportunity to comment on the allegations, to put forward any defence or arguments, and to comment on what disciplinary sanction (if any) is appropriate

### **Informal warning**

After establishing the facts, Bluestones Medical Complex Care may consider that there is no need to resort to the formal procedure, and that it is sufficient to talk the matter over with the employee. A note of the informal warning may be kept on the employee's personnel file. However, the informal warning would not normally be taken into account in the event of subsequent disciplinary procedures. The purpose of an informal warning is to provide an opportunity for improvement or for the matter to be corrected without the necessity for formal disciplinary procedures to be enacted.

### **Suspension**

In some circumstances Bluestones Medical Complex Care may need to suspend the employee from work. The suspension will be for no longer than is necessary to investigate any allegations of misconduct or so long as is otherwise reasonable while any disciplinary procedure is outstanding. Bluestones Medical Complex Care will confirm the arrangements to the employee in writing. While suspended, the employee should not visit our premises or contact any of our clients, customers, suppliers, contractors, or staff, unless they have been authorised to do so by their manager. Suspension of this kind is not a disciplinary penalty and does not imply that any decision has already been made about the allegations. The employee will continue to receive full basic salary and benefits during the period of suspension

### **Data**

Any data collected as part of this policy will be processed in accordance with current Data Protection Legislation, the Privacy Notice issued to staff and the Data Security and Data Retention Policy and Procedure at Bluestones Medical Complex Care. This policy does not form part of an employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time. Bluestones Medical Complex Care may also vary this policy, including any time limits, as appropriate in any case.

### **Formal disciplinary process**

If Bluestones Medical Complex Care considers there are grounds for taking formal action, the employee will be required to attend a disciplinary hearing. The employee will be provided with a notification of the hearing and the following information:

- A summary of the evidence gathered as part of an investigation
- A copy of all relevant documents to be used at the hearing; and



- Copies of any witness statements as part of the disciplinary hearing

Bluestones Medical Complex Care will look to confirm the following with the employee:

- Details of the conduct issues and the evidence which suggests the conduct or behaviour has fallen below the standards required
- Provide the employee with an opportunity to ask questions and to present evidence on their own behalf
- Establish the likely causes of the conduct issues
- Identify whether any further measures can be taken to assist with the conduct issues
- Discuss the standard of conduct expected; and
- Issue the employee with an appropriate warning

#### **Right to be accompanied**

At all stages of the formal disciplinary process, the employee has the right to be accompanied by a single companion who is either:

- A work colleague; or
- A full-time official employed by a trade union

The representative has the right to explain and sum up the employee's case, and to respond to any views expressed at the hearing. They may not answer questions on the employee's behalf. If the representative cannot attend on the date Bluestones Medical Complex Care has set for the hearing, the employee must inform us immediately and we will arrange an alternative time for the hearing to take place. A companion is allowed reasonable time off from duties without loss of pay but no-one is obliged to act as a companion if they do not wish to do so. If the companion is unavailable at the time a meeting is scheduled and will not be available for more than five working days afterwards, Bluestones Medical Complex Care may ask the employee to choose someone else.

The employee must make every effort to attend the hearing, and failure to attend without good reason may be treated as misconduct. If the employee fails to attend without good reason or is persistently unable to do so (for example for health reasons), Bluestones Medical Complex Care may have to take a decision based on the available evidence.

#### **Procedure at the disciplinary hearing**

The hearing will be chaired by the disciplinary officer. A note-taker will also be present, and this person will be confirmed prior to the hearing date. At the disciplinary hearing the disciplinary officer will go through the allegations and the evidence that has been gathered. The employee will be able to respond and present any evidence of their own. The companion may make representations to us and ask questions but should not answer questions on the employee's behalf.

The employee may confer privately with their companion at any time during the hearing. The disciplinary officer may adjourn the disciplinary hearing if we need to carry out any further investigations such as re-interviewing witnesses considering any new points raised at the hearing. The employee will be given a reasonable opportunity to consider any new information obtained



before the hearing is reconvened. The disciplinary officer will inform the employee in writing of our decision and our reasons for it, usually within one week of the disciplinary hearing.

### **Stage 1: Written warning**

If it is decided that the employee's conduct or performance is unsatisfactory, the disciplinary officer may give a written warning. This will state the nature of the complaint, the required standards that must be met and, where appropriate, a time limit for improvement. It will also state that further disciplinary action will follow if the required standards are not met or if there is further misconduct. The employee will be informed of their right of appeal, and how and where this should be made. A record of the warning and related discussions will then be placed on their personnel file. It will normally cease to have effect after 12 months. If the employee's conduct is sufficiently serious, Bluestones Medical Complex Care may omit stage 1, and proceed straight to stage 2.

### **Stage 2: Final written warning**

For more serious matters, or where the employee has failed to meet the required standards after already receiving a formal warning which has not yet expired, they may be given a final written warning. This will state the nature of the complaint, the required standards that must be met and, where appropriate, a time limit for improvement. It will also state that the employee will be dismissed if the standards are not met or if there is further misconduct. Again, the employee has the right to appeal. A record of the warning and a note of all related discussions will be placed on the personnel file. A final written warning will normally cease to have effect after 12 months.

### **Stage 3: Dismissal**

If there is still no improvement in the employee's conduct, where further misconduct occurs whilst the final written warning is active, or the employee's conduct amounts to gross misconduct, they may be dismissed. The employee will be invited to a stage 3 disciplinary hearing following which the disciplinary officer will consider a range of options including dismissal, redeployment or extension of a final written warning.

Where dismissal is appropriate, this will normally be on full notice and/or payment in lieu of some or all of the employee's notice unless your conduct amounts to gross misconduct, in which circumstances, the employee will not be entitled to notice, or payment in lieu of notice. This will be confirmed in writing and will include details of the appeals procedure.

### **Dismissal without notice ('summary dismissal')**

Bluestones Medical Complex Care regards certain issues as serious enough to warrant 'summary dismissal' without prior warning. These issues would constitute gross misconduct, that is a single act of misconduct that is sufficiently serious to break the employment contract between us. Matters that may justify summary dismissal, include, but are not limited to:

- Actions which may harm the well-being of a service user ("abuse")



- Acts of dishonesty where the employee's conduct affects their ability or suitability for continued employment, for example, theft, fraud, the deliberate falsification of records or expenses, a relevant criminal warning or conviction, or inclusion on the DBS register
- Serious insubordination or rudeness to customers or suppliers
- Deliberate damage to property
- A serious breach of Health & Safety policies
- Physical violence or aggressive behaviour
- Indecent or immoral acts
- Being under the influence of, or possessing, alcohol or illegal drugs during employment hours
- Bringing Bluestones Medical Complex Care into serious disrepute
- Any breaches of confidentiality requirements in the employee's contract of employment, other than minor breaches
- Harassment or bullying, other than minor breaches
- Breaches of our Equality and Diversity Policy and Procedure, other than minor breaches
- Wilful misrepresentation at the time of appointment, including:
  - o Previous positions held
  - o Qualifications held
  - o Falsification of date of birth
  - o Declaration of health; and
  - o Failure to disclose a criminal conviction/caution within the provision of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act
- Abuse of the protected disclosure provisions
- Serious failure to abide by the professional code of conduct which applies to the employee's work
- Deliberate disclosure of privileged confidential information to unauthorised people
- Negligent or deliberate failure to comply with the legal requirement for the policy & procedure concerning medicines at Bluestones Medical Complex Care
- Working whilst contravening an enactment or working in such a way that is in breach of rules laid down by statutory bodies, e.g. erasure from the register of the Nursing & Midwifery Council
- Serious breach of data protection and/or failure to adhere to the policy
- Failure to notify Bluestones Medical Complex Care of an actual or suspected data breach; or
- Covertly recording internal meetings with Bluestones Medical Complex Care without consent

### Other disciplinary matters

Matters which may justify invoking the disciplinary procedure but which do not amount to gross misconduct include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Refusal to obey a legitimate instruction
- Refusal to answer a question during the course of a properly constituted investigation
- One occasion of absence without permission, or persistent absence
- Poor timekeeping
- Failure to report damage to the property of Bluestones Medical Complex Care
- Failure to carry out duties adequately



- Breach of our policies, procedures and practices
- Continued poor work performance, or a persistent failure to keep up to date with technical developments
- Improper use of our equipment
- Harassment or bullying (in ways that are not deemed serious enough to constitute gross misconduct)
- Breaches of our equal opportunities policy (in ways that are not deemed serious enough to constitute gross misconduct)
- Actions bringing Bluestones Medical Complex Care into disrepute (in ways that are not deemed serious enough to constitute gross misconduct); and
- Minor breach of data protection or minor failure to adhere to the Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy and Procedure

### Alternatives to dismissal

In some cases, Bluestones Medical Complex Care may, at its discretion, consider alternatives to dismissal. These may be authorised by a manager of sufficient seniority and will usually be accompanied by a final written warning. Examples include:

- Demotion
  - Transfer to another department or job
  - A period of suspension without pay
  - Loss of seniority
  - Reduction in pay
  - Loss of future pay increment or bonus; and/or
  - Loss of overtime

### Right to appeal

If the employee is not satisfied with a disciplinary decision, they may appeal, in writing, within five working days. All appeals must set out the grounds on which the appeal is being made. On receipt of an appeal, arrangements to hear the appeal will normally be made within five working days. If the decision being appealed was a decision to dismiss, the date of dismissal will not be delayed pending the outcome of an appeal. Bluestones Medical Complex Care will invite the employee to an appeal hearing and remind them of their right to be accompanied.

The appeal hearing will, where possible, be held by someone other than the person who held the original hearing. The outcome of the appeal will be confirmed in writing and will take one of three forms:

- The original decision will be upheld, in which case any disciplinary sanction will be confirmed
- The original decision will be overruled, in which case any disciplinary sanction will be rescinded; or
- The original decision will be substantially confirmed but a less severe sanction will be substituted for that originally imposed (usually in cases of appeals based on extenuating circumstances)



Once the appeal process has concluded, there is no further right of appeal. If the appeal is successful and the decision to dismiss is revoked, the employee will suffer no loss of continuity or pay.

#### **If an employee has less than 2 years' continuous service**

If an employee has less than 2 years' continuous service, Bluestones Medical Complex Care retains its discretion to vary or to not follow the disciplinary process as set out above. If Bluestones Medical Complex Care decides to terminate a short serving employee's employment without any prior written warnings, CQC Bluestones Medical Complex Care will write to that employee confirming the reasons for dismissal. The dismissal may be with or without any prior notice

#### **Grievance procedure**

The Grievances Policy and Procedure is available in the QCS Management System and on the QCS App.

#### **Whistleblowing**

The Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure is available in the QCS Management System and on the QCS App. Given the nature of the industry we operate in, we encourage all staff to disclose any concern or issue they may have which they feel is wrong, unsafe, dangerous, illegal or a breach of any other regulations or obligations. Our only request is that such disclosures are made in response to a genuine concern and in good faith.



## Good practice statement

### Mental capacity

It is essential to be familiar with the Mental Capacity Act, guidance and to recognise diminished or fluctuating capacity. Confusion, memory loss, aggression and changes in personality or behaviour, are some symptoms that can be caused by prescribed medications, or other treatable causes, for example, a urinary tract infection or chest infection, dementia, or mental health illness. Medical advice must be sought.

Sometimes changes will be permanent and progressive. All people with mental health illnesses will be treated with the same respect accorded to any other service user. They should be enabled to fully make decisions about their own lives of their abilities. Service users can be supported to complete a preferred priority care document which will enable them to make decisions about their preferred place of care as well as about details of daily routine and managing finances. Patience and sensitivity will be called for from the Support Workers who can help support the service user.

Exercising choice and control involves risk, and independence should not be unnecessarily curtailed because of others' fears. Restriction of rights and freedoms will be strictly limited, subject to agreed safeguards in care planning. Care workers supporting people with mental illnesses will have education and training about mental health, and multi-disciplinary working will be encouraged. Instances of necessary denial of rights to restraints will be recorded and reported, restraint must be limited to exceptional circumstances only and in accordance with the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards. The service user and advocates will be involved in making decisions about any care service which restricts service users in any way and will be notified of emergency actions.

### Progressive and multiple conditions

Older and disabled people's need for care may not be stable and consistent. Some illnesses or disabling conditions, for example, motor neurone disease, progress rapidly; Service Users will be confident that the care worker will respond quickly and appropriately when disability increases, i.e. by reporting change to the Registered Manager. Multiple disability disorders and chronic illness, including stroke and osteoarthritis, are common among older people, and a sufficient care service can prevent long-term residential, nursing or hospital care for service users, if that is the service users wish.

### Terminal illness

Our Support Workers will enable people who are terminally ill to maintain independence and be as comfortable as possible and support their decisions of where they choose to be at the end of life. The service user will be supported to complete the Preferred Priorities of Care document in line with the National End of Life Care Guidance. Not all relatives and friends feel able to care for someone who is dying, and this should be respected. The Support Worker will play an important role in supporting relatives and friends.





### Isolation and loss

Older and disabled people may experience loneliness or grief due to changes of lifestyle or location, loss of mobility, or loss of a close friend or relative. People may need to spend some time alone through personal choice, and this will be respected. Care workers will have the training and experience to enable them to recognise symptoms such as depression, lethargy, or problems with eating or sleeping. Care workers will also be able to listen and talk to the service user and support them. Care workers can also help the service user obtain appropriate advice and counselling by liaising with the Registered Manager or person in charge.

### Discrimination

Bluestones Medical Complex Care adopts a proactive anti-discriminatory policy and takes high regard of racial and cultural factors in full compliance with the Equality Act 2010. Similarly, our care staff will be sensitive to the needs of both male and female service users, particularly where personal care is involved. Again, full compliance of the Equality Act 2010 will apply. Please refer to the separate equality and human rights policy and the Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, and procedure for further information.

### Safeguarding

Abuse may be described as physical abuse, domestic violence, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, financial or material abuse, modern slavery, discriminatory abuse, organisational abuse, neglect and acts of omission, self-neglect as defined in the Care Act 2014. Care workers will be able to identify the possibility of abuse which may not be the result of an acute situation but of concern over a period. All care workers are/will be familiar with the indicators of abuse and will report any suspicions to Bluestones Medical Complex Care or another person in charge. The Safeguarding Policy and Procedure is available in the QCS Management System and on the QCS App.

# Employee Handbook

Permanent Employees



[www.bluestonesmedicalcomplexcare.co.uk](http://www.bluestonesmedicalcomplexcare.co.uk)



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