

## **Intimate Care Policy**

### **Introduction**

The Nesbitt Centre is committed to ensuring that all staff responsible for the intimate care of our learners will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. We recognise that there is a need to treat all learners with respect when intimate care is given. No learner should be attended to in a way that causes distress, embarrassment or pain. The Intimate Care Policy and Guidelines regarding learners have been developed to safeguard learners and staff.

### **Definition of Intimate Care**

Intimate care may be defined as any activity required to meet the personal care needs of each individual learner. Intimate care may involve washing, touching or carrying out an invasive procedure (such as cleaning up after a learner has soiled him/herself).

Intimate care may also involve help with drinking, eating, dressing, menstrual care, supervision of a learner involved in intimate self-care and toileting. Help may also be needed with changing medical equipment, such as colostomy bags. It may also require the administration of an insulin injection, epipen or rectal medication.

### **Aims**

- To provide reassurance to staff and parents/carers
- To safeguard the dignity, rights, and wellbeing of learners
- To assure parents that staff are knowledgeable about intimate care and that their child's individual needs and concerns are taken into account

### **Best Practice**

Staff should communicate with the learner, using the learner's chosen method of communication, to explain what is going to happen, and to allow the learner to respond and express choices and preferences.

Staff should be vigilant and responsive to a learner's reactions to any communication or actions.

Staff should ensure that intimate care is delivered in the least restrictive way, allowing the learner to carry out the task as independently as possible, providing support where necessary.

Staff undertaking intimate care should be the same gender as the learner, if possible.

Two staff should be present when intimate care of a learner is required, if possible.

All staff should adhere to safe hygiene practices by wearing disposable gloves, aprons, and face masks when undertaking intimate care.

Where possible, learners should be given a choice of which staff will carry out intimate care.

### **The Protection of Learners**

The Nesbitt Centre's Safeguarding Policy will be adhered to. If a member of staff has any concerns about changes in a learner's presentation, eg. marks, bruises, soreness, etc., he/she will immediately report concerns to a member of the Safeguarding Team. Further advice will be sought from external agencies, if necessary. If a learner makes an allegation against a member of staff, all necessary procedures will be followed.

Issued on: May 2017

Reviewed on: May 2018