



ANDERIDA ADOLESCENT CARE

Effective Communication Policy

At Anderida, we understand that effective communication whilst caring for our young people is essential. As communication can take many forms, we would like our mentors to be effective within this area and to communicate any needs, concerns, or queries through the appropriate channels.

During your time at Anderida, you will be invited to join various social media groups depending on your position within the company. The main group is the **Anderida Strictly Working Group**. Others can include individual homes groups (Willows, Kindeace, Merdeka, Tomorrow House, Eucalyptus, Green Fields or Greenside), the Managers group, Office group or Assessment group. No one is expecting you to join all these groups, however there are a few that once joined, can enhance your knowledge of the company and/or the day to day running of individual homes.

On Call

Whilst having the above groups, Anderida has developed an on-call service for Mentors. This consists of a member of the Management Team who is on shift and contactable via telephone, (where practicable and depending on the circumstance) will be available to discuss any issues that have arisen within the home. Whether it be a safeguarding concern, an incident involving the young people where the Mentor feels they need some extra guidance from a Senior member of the team or a procedure clarification.

Whilst the Management Team are committed to answering your concerns as quickly as they arise, there are some basic questions that you **will** be asked when contacting on call.

- Have you read the support plan for the young person?
- Have you asked any other member of the team who is working with you?
- Is there anything in the Communications Book relating to this concern/query?
- Is this a new concern/incident or ongoing?

Mentors will be required to ask themselves these questions before any calls are made to the on-call Senior staff member. With this information, the on-call will then have a fuller picture about what is happening and will be able to offer guidance and support. Mentors are required to utilise this service when needed.

The Comms Book

The communications book (Comms Book) is the quickest way for Mentors to be updated when working within that home. It is in the home's office. It is to be used to record:

- Essential information regarding the home
- Any vehicles the home may have
- What changes have been made to any support plans and or risk assessments
- Any changes of medication
- Any changes to cabinet keys and or safe combinations
- Card pin numbers
- Essential phone numbers
- Anything to do with the homes that have changes and or is about to change will be placed in the Comms Book.

Some entries will require Mentors to read any updates including and is not exhaustive to Support Plans, Key Hours, Sig Events and or Incident Reports. **All Mentors working within each home are required to read and sign the Comms Book** whilst on shift. This may reduce any concerns and or queries you have before ringing the on-call duty member of the senior team.

Mentors must also be aware that many "non-core" Mentors may work within different homes (covering training, sickness or taking an extra shift) and may not have access to the individual homes WhatsApp groups, therefore may not know of any recent changes, the Comms Book is vital in this instance and all changes must be recorded within the Comms Book rather than being placed within the social media groups.

Social Media Groups

Some Mentors may decide not to ring the on-call management team and prefer to communicate their concerns via any of the homes WhatsApp groups they have joined. Mentors may feel that the home's group may be quicker (sometimes this may be the case), however, Mentors should be aware that not everyone on the home's groups will be on shift and may not be able to answer, due to them enjoying their time off and achieving a healthy work/life balance.

Using the homes WhatsApp group may not always be the most effective way to communicate and may cause delays in any answers sought. This may also result in an escalation of behaviours and or concerns.

The same applies to The Strictly Works Group. Some responses may be given by newer members of the team that, having known a change whilst on shift, may not be aware of any up-to-date recent changes that have happened to the home and or young person. Mentors may be given the wrong advice which may cause concerns further down the line when it comes to consistency with our young people.

The overuse of the Strictly Works Group can also be problematic to effective communication. On some occasions many answers can be given to one question, this leads to other vital performance, safety and or operational information being missed.

Effective Communication on these groups should be concise. Anything that needs to be communicated on a one-to-one basis, Mentors should be **speaking with their on-shift colleagues** involved. Our work within Anderida is complex with many issues arising and evolving each day and will therefore require further questioning and clarity. Social media groups are **not** to be used within this context.

Messages can sometimes be seen as defensive and not within the tone that it was meant, leading to further frustrations and or anxieties. When dealing with our young people, WhatsApp messages are not always deemed to be effective ways of communication.

Anderida Management Team are committed to not misuse any forms of communication. Anderida believes that a healthy balance of work and home life is key to a home running successfully and to have the various WhatsApp groups and calls continually active on mentors' days off may cause anxieties and or complications at their own homes. This may be for various reasons but may include activities and or duties for the time a particular Mentor is coming onto shift the following morning. This is not helpful and can lead to Mentors becoming "involved" in conversations that has no relevance to that Mentor's current situation. This is not effective communication; Mentors, Seniors, and Managers, all have the right to enjoy their time off with their own families and should not encourage this form of communication within their own groups.

Reducing Unnecessary WhatsApp Traffic:

- Can I place this in Comms? (don't forget WhatsApp messages are sometimes lost if there is a high volume, if you must ask this question, the answer is normally YES).
- Has a plan been made for the day?
- Have I read ALL paperwork?
- Have I asked on shift colleagues?
- Have I spoken to On Call?

Good quality handovers should last at least half an hour, questions are encouraged if you are unsure.