Review Sheet

Last Reviewed 25 Jun '20	Last Amended 25 Jun '20	Next Planned Review in 12 months, or sooner as required.

Business impact	**HIGH IMPACT** These changes require action as soon as possible.
Reason for this review	New Policy
Were changes made?	Yes
Summary:	This is a new policy to support the further easing of lockdown measures and to identify ways of supporting staff who may have been shielding to return to work safely wherever possible. The policy is also to support the risk assessment process to identify workers who may be at increased risk from COVID-19. There is a risk assessment template to support the process within the risk assessment section of the QCS management system, that can be adapted to meet individual and organisational need. This policy will also assist when reviewing the business continuity plans, ensuring that there are sufficient numbers of staff.
Relevant legislation:	• Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 • Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 • Equality Act 2010 • Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 • Human Rights Act 1998 • Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 • Access to Health Records Act 1990 • Data Protection Act 2018 • Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) • Coronavirus Act 2020

Underpinning knowledge - What have we used to ensure that the policy is current:	• Author: DHSC, (2020), *COVID-19: adult social care risk reduction framework*. [Online] Available from: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-reducing-risk-in-adult-social-care/covid-19-adult-social-care-risk-reduction-framework [Accessed: 25/6/2020] • Author: DHSC, (2020), *Guidance: Health and wellbeing of the adult social care workforce*. [Online] Available from: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-health-and-wellbeing-of-the-adult-social-care-workforce/health-and-wellbeing-of-the-adult-social-care-workforce [Accessed: 25/6/2020] • Author: Health and Safety Executive, (2020), *Vulnerable workers*. [Online] Available from: https://www.hse.gov.uk/vulnerable-workers/ [Accessed: 25/6/2020] • Author: ACAS, (2020), *Coronavirus (COVID-19): advice for employers and employees: Vulnerable people and those at high risk*. [Online] Available from: https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus [Accessed: 25/6/2020] • Author: Public Health England, (2020), *Disparities in the risk and outcomes from COVID-19*. [Online] Available from: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_d [Accessed: 25/6/2020] • Author: From:Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy and Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, (2020), *Working safely during coronavirus (COVID-19)*. [Online] Available from: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/5-steps-to-working-safely [Accessed: 25/6/2020] • Author: HSE, (2020), *Working safely during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak*. [Online] Available from: https://www.hse.gov.uk/coronavirus/working-safely/covid-secure.htm [Accessed: 25/6/2020]
Suggested action:	• Encourage sharing the policy through the use of the QCS App • Establish process to confirm the understanding of relevant staff • Arrange specific meetings to discuss the policy changes and implications • Ensure that the policy is on the agenda for all team meetings and staff handovers • Widely distribute the 'Key Facts' of the policy • Share content of the policy with all staff

1. Purpose

1.1 To ensure that SMResources Ltd has systems and processes in place to assess and reduce the risk to the workforce regardless of characteristics or vulnerabilities.

1.2 To ensure that SMResources Ltd supports staff who may have factors that make them more vulnerable to COVID-19 or who may have adverse outcomes from COVID-19.

1.3 To support SMResources Ltd in meeting the following Key Lines of Enquiry:

Key Question	Key Lines of Enquiry
SAFE	S1: How do systems, processes and practices keep people safe and safeguarded from abuse?
SAFE	S2: How are risks to people assessed and their safety monitored and managed so they are supported to stay safe and their freedom is respected?
SAFE	S5: How well are people protected by the prevention and control of infection?
WELL-LED	W2: Does the governance framework ensure that responsibilities are clear and that quality performance, risks and regulatory requirements are understood and managed?
WELL-LED	W4: How does the service continuously learn, improve, innovate and ensure sustainability?

1.4 To meet the legal requirements of the regulated activities that SMResources Ltd is registered to provide:

- Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
- Equality Act 2010
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Access to Health Records Act 1990
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
- Coronavirus Act 2020

2. Scope

2.1 The following roles may be affected by this policy:
- All staff
- Registered Manager
- Other management

2.2 The following Service Users may be affected by this policy:
- Service Users

2.3 The following stakeholders may be affected by this policy:
- Commissioners
- External health professionals
- Local Authority
- NHS

3. Objectives

3.1 To support the existing workforce, workplace risk assessments and management processes.

4. Policy

4.1 SMResources Ltd recognises that certain factors have been associated with individuals being more vulnerable to severe disease or dying from COVID-19. We have a responsibility to carry out risk assessments and this includes all workers who are identified as being at greater risk. SMResources Ltd will take steps to identify and manage the risks. Additionally, we will include in our assessment, those staff who are not classified as high risk, in line with NHS definitions, but who may have other health concerns or anxieties.

4.2 SMResources Ltd will ensure that we are clear with our staff about why we are having conversations with them and that we will follow the GDPR07 - Privacy Impact Assessment Policy & Procedure, ensuring that processing is generally lawful, fair and transparent and complies with all the other principles and requirements of the GDPR.

5. Procedure

5.1 Risk Factors

SMResources Ltd is aware that research is evolving about COVID-19 and it will keep up to date with the emerging information. When assessing its workforce, it will consider the following:

- **Age**: Increasing age is a known risk factor. Those age 70 or older are at an increased risk. This will be considered alongside underlying health conditions or other risk factors
- **Ethnicity:** The latest evidence shows that those of a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) background who were diagnosed with COVID-19, had an up to 2 times increased risk of death than white ethnic groups, but it is important to recognise that this data did not account for the effect of occupation, co-morbidities or obesity, which may be associated with the risk of acquiring and/or dying from COVID-19
- **Sex:** The latest evidence shows that working-age males diagnosed with COVID-19 are twice as likely to die as females, but it is important to recognise that this data did not account for the effect of occupation and co-morbidities or obesity, which may be associated with risk of acquiring or dying from COVID-19
- **Some underlying health conditions including:**
  - Respiratory diseases, for example asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
  - Hypertension
  - Cardiovascular disease
  - Diabetes mellitus
  - Chronic kidney disease
  - Chronic liver disease
  - Very obese (BMI 40 or above)
- **Pregnancy**: All pregnant women should have a workplace risk assessment. Specific guidance on COVID-19 and pregnancy can be found in guidance set out by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG):
  - Women more than 28 weeks pregnant or who have an underlying condition will be recommended to stay at home
  - Women less than 28 weeks pregnant must only work in direct care roles where risk assessment supports this

5.2 SMResources Ltd will identify staff who are at higher risk. The Registered Manager has the responsibility for undertaking this activity but SMResources Ltd may delegate this to another member of staff with the skills and competencies to carry out this role.

5.3 SMResources Ltd will gather information by:

- Having a conversation with each worker to identify if there are any potential risk factors and if a risk assessment is required and /or
- Requesting all workers to complete a questionnaire individually and then having conversations with those who have been identified as having potential risk factors that require a risk assessment

5.4 SMResources Ltd will not make assumptions about any member of the workforce and will engage with all staff.

5.5 Care will be taken when asking for personal health information and this will only be asked for when it is required to support the worker. The level of detail provided will be no more than is necessary and reasonable. In the context of this risk assessment, it would be deemed reasonable to request information relating to those factors which may make an individual more vulnerable to infection or have an adverse outcome from COVID-19. SMResources Ltd will follow all the GDPR and Data Protection policies and staff involved in the collection of information will ensure that confidentiality is maintained.

5.6 SMResources Ltd will use a risk assessment template and will refer to the vulnerable groups risk assessment template in the QCS Management system where appropriate. SMResources Ltd will ensure that a review date is included and that the risk assessment is reviewed and updated when new information arises or circumstances change.

5.7 Managing Sensitive Conversations

- SMResources Ltd will be sensitive to the potential barriers to workers feeling able to have an open

conversation which may include concerns that disclosing this information may disadvantage them in the future in terms of earnings, work status or terms and conditions of their employment

- Cultural factors will be taken into consideration so that workers have the confidence to openly discuss and resolve their concerns
- The following mechanism will be put in place to encourage and support open and confidential discussions:
  - Ensuring the conversation is in a confidential setting
  - Providing sufficient time for a detailed conversation to take place
  - Setting out the purpose of the conversation, including providing workers with reassurance and advising them of the reasons for disclosing information. This will include what will be done with the information and, if necessary, where it will be stored
  - Allowing opportunity for workers to raise any concerns
  - Where appropriate, involve external networks such as those for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) or disabled workers
  - Documenting the conversation, sharing this with the worker and retaining the information confidentially and securely

5.8 Involving Others in Sensitive Conversations

SMResources Ltd will adapt the conversations depending on the role and location of the worker. Measures to support the process may include:

- Conversations being carried out by, or with the support of, occupational health or human resource managers where available
- Third-party individuals being included if the worker wants additional support. This may include a trade union representative, staff networks, or other appropriate individuals
- Trade union colleagues, local partnerships and staff networks may be able to offer support for these conversations or highlight the concerns of BAME colleagues and others who may have risk factors regarding COVID-19 in the workplace

5.9 Listening to Concerns

SMResources Ltd is aware of the impact that COVID-19 has had on its workforce and strives to support its workers, encouraging them to share their concerns. As part of the risk assessment process it will:

- Offer opportunities to express concerns
- Ensure its teams have information about the latest research/data
- Review mechanisms available for BAME workers or other vulnerable groups to raise concerns
- Signpost resources with a specific equality focus or content
- Ensure that senior leadership staff endorse the risk assessment and have an awareness of potential increased risk. The aim is to encourage workers to feel able to have these conversations
- Review any staff networks (for example, BAME, disability or health condition groups) available in SMResources Ltd and establish what could be done to better support and strengthen what is available
- Engage with unions regarding management of risk assessments and mitigation of risks

5.10 Individual Measures

The options available to reduce the risk to workers at SMResources Ltd will be dependent on the type of work they do and the role they have. SMResources Ltd will consider a range of options which may include:

- Redeployment to a setting or a role where the risks are lower- for example, to support people who are not thought to be infected by COVID-19 or to work remotely where possible, as per the 5 steps to working safely guidance
- Adjustments to work arrangements - for example, reducing or removing the need for workers to use public transport for work or a change in shift patterns where public transport cannot be avoided
- Seeking advice and guidance from an Occupational Health Specialist
- If the workplace is not safe for the employee and the employee cannot work from home or be redeployed, then SMResources Ltd may consider paid or unpaid leave until such time that it is safe for the employee to return to work. If there is a lack of agreement on this, SMResources Ltd will follow the

PP04 - Grievances Policy and Procedure to ensure a resolution that is satisfactory for all parties

- SMResources Ltd will consider individual circumstances on a case by case basis when making decisions and assessing workplace risks. Conversations will be documented, and a copy given to the worker
- SMResources Ltd is responsible for ensuring that a system of safe work is set up, implemented and communicated clearly to all workers. It will follow government advice on COVID-19 risk management
- Where SMResources Ltd has concerns that it cannot resolve within SMResources Ltd, it will seek legal advice

6. Definitions

6.1 Comorbidities

- Comorbidity is the presence of one or more additional conditions in addition to another primary condition

Key Facts - Professionals

Professionals providing this service should be aware of the following:

- Risk of death among those diagnosed with COVID-19 is known to be higher in males than females. Working-age males diagnosed with COVID-19 were twice as likely to die as females
- People who are born outside the UK and Ireland have a higher death rate from COVID-19
- Death rates from COVID-19 are highest among people of Black and Asian ethnic groups. People of Bangladeshi ethnicity have around twice the risk of death than people of White British ethnicity. People of Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian, Caribbean and Other Black ethnicity had between 10% and 50% higher risk of death when compared to White British

Key Facts - People affected by the service

People affected by this service should be aware of the following:

- SMResources Ltd has measures in place to ensure that the risks of exposure to COVID-19 are eliminated or reduced

Further Reading

As well as the information in the 'underpinning knowledge' section of the review sheet we recommend that you add to your understanding in this policy area by considering the following materials:

- QCS COVID-Secure Workplace Toolkit (QCS Resource Centre)
- QCS Vulnerable Groups Risk Assessment Template (via Manage Custom Risk Assessment)
- There is additional content within the resource centre to support discussions with staff, service users and relatives

Outstanding Practice

To be ' outstanding ' in this policy area you could provide evidence that:

- Risk assessments are undertaken and regularly reviewed, with staff involved and consulted
- There is a culture of openness and transparency where staff feel free to discuss their concerns
- Business continuity plans at SMResources Ltd reflect the impact of workforce planning and measures are put in place to mitigate the risk from staff shortages
- SMResources Ltd has a mechanism in place for regularly ensuring the wellbeing of staff and acting on any concerns raised
- There is evidence that SMResources Ltd recognises and adapts to change as a result of COVID-19 effectively and safely
- The wide understanding of the policy is enabled by proactive use of the QCS App

Forms

Currently there is no form attached to this policy.