

COMMITTED TO ENDING ABUSE (CEA)

Specialist and Accredited Domestic Abuse Service

Duty of Candour Annual Report
May 2025

Duty of Candour

Duty of Candour is a legal requirement to ensure that if something goes wrong in health or social care services, the people affected are offered an explanation, an apology and an assurance that staff will learn from the error. The learning is shared with the people affected and throughout Scotland.

About our Organisation

This report describes that as a specialist and accredited Domestic Abuse service; we have implemented Duty of Candour throughout the period of November 2018 up to the 31st of May 2025.

Committed to Ending Abuse (CEA) supports individuals to access support that is tailored to their needs and helps keep the individual and their children and family safe. The support is bespoke, flexible and is risk lead and client focused at all times.

Committed to Ending Abuse (CEA) has a Duty of Candour Policy and Staff Guidance. All staff have undertaken training to help them understand the organisation's policy and the process of the Duty of Candour which could affect them.

The clients we support have a variety of support needs; some have severe and challenging difficulties whilst others maintain their independence but may require additional support.

Incident Reporting

All Health and Social Care Services in Scotland must provide an Annual Duty of Candour report for their service. As a Specialist and Accredited Domestic Abuse Service this information is sent to our regulator the Care Inspectorate.

During the reporting period, there were no incidents that triggered the Duty of Candour

Type of unexpected or unintended incident	Number of times this has happened
Someone has died	0
Someone has permanently less bodily, sensory, motor physiologic or intellectual functions	0
Someone's treatment has increased because of harm	0
The structure of someone's body changes because of harm	0
Someone's life expectancy becomes shorter because of harm	0
Someone's sensory, motor or intellectual functions is impaired for 28 days or more	0
Someone experienced pain or psychological harm for more than 28 days or more	0
A person needed health treatment in order to prevent them from dying	0
A person needing health treatment in order to prevent other injuries	0

Procedure

No incidents triggering the Duty of Candour were reported in this period. No procedure to report.

Staff Absences and Vacancies

This notification is in addition to our Duty of Candour to help the service adjust and support the care of the staff and service users. We have an appointed Manager who submits weekly statistics to the Care Inspectorate with the following.

- The number of staff currently working on a weekly basis.
- Any posts in the service that are currently vacant.
- Any staff illnesses or injury.
- Any staff that have taken unexpected and unplanned leave.
- If we have staff absences and is this impacting our services' ability to provide effective care.

We can safely report that there have been no incidents triggering the Duty of Candour reported to date (31st May 2025).

Our Policy and Process

The first step of the process is the recognition of an incident and when the level of harm dictates that it is appropriate to apply the "Duty of Candour" approach. This can be identified by any of the following mechanisms:

- Via staff at the time of the incident
- By family/carer or supported person raising a concern. Either at the time, or via a complaint or claim in retrospect.
- Via the incident reporting system.
- Via other sources, such as the incident being highlighted by another supported person, visitor or member of the public

Where necessary immediate care should be given to prevent further harm.

Records must be made of all conversations, whether face-to-face, by telephone or letter. Complaint investigations are recorded separately to avoid discrimination.

Initial Discussion

As soon as possible following the identification of an event, a preliminary team discussion should take place to establish.

- 1) Basic incident facts.
- 2) Assessment of the incident to determine the level of immediate response required.
- 3) Individuals are responsible for discussing /liaising with supported person/relative/family member.
- 4) Whether child/family support is required.
- 5) Immediate support for staff involved.
- 6) A clear communication plan
- 7) If the event is an Adult/Child Support and Protection incident, immediate appropriate action including reporting to the relevant authority must take place, (*see the Adult and the Child Support and Protection Policies*).

Initial evidence gathered should not hinder or obstruct any ongoing investigations from other parties' e.g. Police Scotland, Local Authority, etc.

The person responsible for following the procedure and communicating with the affected person will be the Operational Service Manager and they should;

1. Build upon and maintain a positive relationship with the affected person(s).
2. Have a good understanding of the relevant facts.
3. Offer an apology, reassurance and feedback to the affected person(s).
4. Be culturally aware and be informed about specific needs of the supported or the affected person(s).

When should the Initial discussion be held?

The initial Duty of Candour discussion with the affected person should occur as soon as possible after recognition of the incident. Delays in the disclosure should be avoided whenever possible.

Communication can occur by any appropriate means, face-to-face is best, but it can be a telephone call or email to those people who prefer this method of communication. Initially, it may be appropriate to note that something has gone wrong but that the cause is not yet known. It must be communicated to the supported or affected person that we will be taking the event extremely seriously, that the event will be investigated and that the findings of the investigation will be shared with them.

Initial communication should be recorded with a Heading “Duty of Candour Meeting”. date, time and people present or taking part in the phone call. Outline the apology, what was discussed, concerns raised by the affected person and arrangements for future communications and support.

An offer to meet should be made to the affected person. This is usually at the end of the investigation so the findings can be shared and discussed but may also occur before the investigation starts or during the process. The approach should be agreed with the affected person, and this may change at any stage during the investigation.

Factors to consider when timing this discussion include.

- 1) Some people may require more than one meeting to ensure that all the information has been communicated to and understood by them.
- 2) Availability of key staff involved in the incident and in the Duty of Candour process.
- 3) Availability of the affected person(s).
- 4) Availability of support staff, for example a translator or independent advocate, if required.
- 5) Arranging the meeting in a sensitive location.

Written information regarding the content of this meeting must be given to the affected person(s).

What have we learned?

In this 7th year of implementing the Duty of Candour

- We have ongoing training in place to support existing staff and new recruits in understanding the process as many find it confusing. The guidance continues to be extremely helpful to them.
- The Duty of Candour is often mentioned and discussed at our Team Meetings.
- We have included the Duty of Candour in our Staff Induction Handbook.
- It has been firmly embedded in our working practices.
- We have a Duty of Candour Flowchart on our Office noticeboard for staff to follow.
- We have a safe and supported environment for staff to be open and transparent when something goes wrong or if they have any concerns.

If you would like more information about this report, please contact us:

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