



First Aid at Work Policy

Policy Statement

This policy is designed to promote the health, safety and welfare of people who use our services, staff and visitors, through the provision of suitable first-aid equipment and trained first-aid personnel in compliance with the requirements of the Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981.

CareTech also complies with updated Health and Safety Executive L74 document, *First Aid at Work: Guidance on Regulations* (2024) to take account of employees' mental health in their first-aid needs assessment.

CareTech utilises mental health first aid to promote wellbeing as an early intervention, and understands mental health first aid to encompass the ability to recognise those who require mental health support and the confidence to offer appropriate assistance when needed.

Aims of the Policy

The aim of this policy is therefore to ensure that:

- a suitable and sufficient first-aid risk assessment is carried out, including mental health and made subject to regular review
- a suitable number of staff are nominated and appropriately trained as qualified first aiders in accordance with the findings of the risk assessment
- qualified first aiders are supported by a number of appointed persons if required
- suitably stocked and marked first-aid kits are made available at appropriate locations throughout workplace
- all staff are fully informed with regard to first-aid arrangements
- written records are maintained of any accidents, reportable injuries, mental health support or interventions, diseases or dangerous occurrences that require a first-aid response.

Risk Assessment

CareTech will conduct a risk assessment of all workplace activities, facilities and hazards in order to determine first-aid risks and needs. The assessment will be regularly updated and reviewed, particularly where there is any change in working arrangements or where new risks may be identified.

The assessment will pay particular attention to:

- any use of machinery, tools or equipment
- any use of medical “sharps”
- the storage or use of potentially hazardous substances
- the potential for workplace violence or aggression
- lone working risks
- existing levels of first-aid support
- the time taken to summon emergency medical assistance should it be needed

The risk assessment will be based on guidance contained in L74 *First Aid at Work*, the code of practice published by the Health & Safety Executive.

From the risk assessment a judgment will be made as to how many trained and qualified first aiders will be required to provide an effective and safe response to the potential risk of accidents and injuries during working hours.

A judgment will also be made as to how many fixed and portable first-aid kits should be available and where they are to be located/who they should be allocated to.

In determining the level of provision required CareTech will take into consideration:

- provision required during holidays
- adequacy of the provision to account for predicted staff absences
- provision of first-aid for off-site activities and lone workers
- provision for shift workers and night staff

Specific consideration will be given to staff or people who have special health needs or disabilities.

Qualified First Aiders

All qualified first aiders will be expected to hold a current certificate of competence that demonstrates they have successfully attended and completed appropriate training. Such certificates are usually valid for three years and then need to be refreshed. Recognised best practice is for first aiders to attend annual updates in between their three-yearly refreshers.

CareTech will:

- support new first aider candidates to identify, arrange and attend appropriate initial certification courses

- support qualified first aiders to find and attend suitable three-yearly refresher training courses and appropriate annual updates.

Refresher training and retesting of competence should be arranged at least three months before certificates expire.

Appointed Persons

An appropriate number of appointed persons will be identified to support the qualified first aiders.

Responsibilities will include:

- looking after the first-aid equipment, restocking first-aid containers when required and replacing out-of-date materials
- calling for an ambulance or other professional medical help when needed

Appointed persons will be given suitable training as required. They will not be called upon to perform any hands-on first aid duties except in unforeseen circumstances, such as where a first aider is absent due to illness, etc.

Management

Managers will be responsible for overseeing first-aid arrangements.

The manager will be expected to:

- undertake the regular risk assessments and review them as appropriate
- keep an up-to-date list of all qualified first aiders, including the dates of their training and the dates of required refresher training
- identify additional first aider volunteers where numbers are predicted to fall below the level whereby all shifts and working patterns can be covered
- help with organising suitable training
- monitor the appropriate recording of accidents and near misses that require first aid and review the effectiveness of the first-aid response to incidents
- order first-aid equipment and supplies as required
- ensure that full-time, part-time and temporary staff are familiar with first-aid arrangements.

First-aid Materials, Equipment and Facilities

An appropriate number of first-aid kits will be made available at various points around the service. These will be of the appropriate size and type and will be kept stocked with appropriate first-aid materials and equipment as informed by the risk assessment and by British Standard BS8599.

First-aid containers will be:

- marked with a white cross on a green background
- located in suitable and accessible places.

Portable first-aid kits will be available for escort duties and for organised trips outside of the service. All service vehicles will have a first-aid travel kit on board.

The service will equip and maintain a dedicated medical/first-aid room, where appropriate. Only specified first-aid supplies will be kept. Creams, lotions or drugs should not be kept in first-aid kits.

Information and Notices

First-aid notices giving the location of first-aid containers and the names of members of staff who are certificated first aiders will be prominently displayed around the service.

This includes:

- main entrance
- staff room
- communal areas
- main corridors.

The service will make every effort to ensure that first-aid notices are clear and easily understood by all.

Information on the first-aid provision will be included in staff handbooks, and induction packs

Recording Accidents, Mental Health Interventions and Injuries

All accidents and injuries will be recorded in a written or electronic form and recorded in line with the accident reporting policies and procedures.

The record of any first-aid treatment given by first aiders and other appointed persons will include:

- the date, time and place of the incident
- the name of the injured or ill person
- details of the injury or illness, and what first aid was given
- the name and signature of the first aider or person dealing with the incident.

Accident reports, including those where first-aid assistance was given, will be regularly reviewed and lessons learnt about the adequacy and effectiveness of CareTech's first-aid arrangements.

Appendix 1 First Aid Assessment of Need

Review

No brand-new statutory Acts for workplace first aid changed the law in the 12 months leading to August 2026. However, the British Standard **BS 8599-1:2019+A1:2026** came into force on **April 30, 2026**, introducing stricter risk-based benchmarks for equipment, and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) updated its advisory stance on defibrillators and mental health integration.

Key Guidance and Standard Shifts (2025–2026)

- **The "Two-Minute" AED Expectation:** The April 2026 amendment to BS 8599-1 outlines that any site with five or more people should ideally have an Automated External Defibrillator retrievable within two minutes. While not strictly a legal mandate, it shifts the definition of "adequate" provision in high-vulnerability settings like care homes.
- **Written First Aid Needs Assessments:** Increased emphasis is placed on formally documenting and justifying your first-aid and equipment choices based on specific resident and staff demographics, rather than relying on a generic headcount.
- **Mental Health Integration:** HSE guidance continues to stress the inclusion of psychosocial risks and mental health support capabilities within workplace first-aid needs assessments.
- **Resuscitation Guidelines:** Updated Resuscitation Council UK (RCUK) standards implemented early in 2026 emphasise early, unhesitating intervention and practical scenario training for first aiders

This first-aid policy will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Signed:



Next review August 27

review date: August 26

Review date August 25