

Letter of Understanding

Home Care

Introduction (Agencies)

Purpose

The purpose of the Letter of Understanding (LOU) is to better support worker safety by ensuring that both the client/caregiver(s), agency staff, and Continuing Care have documented roles and responsibilities as it relates to worker safety.

Introduction

Seniors and Long-term Care (SLTC) is committed to supporting **Workplace Safety Initiatives** aimed at creating safer work environments through practices that prevent workplace injuries.

As part of this work, existing risk assessments and mitigation strategies were reviewed to understand how to create a more standardized process for risk management to better support worker safety within home care agencies.

Through a series of workshops, it was identified that a clearer understanding of **safety related responsibilities between clients receiving home supports, home care agencies, and Continuing Care would be necessary and beneficial in supporting worker safety**. A draft LOU to be used by home care agencies was noted as the ideal mechanism to support this objective.

How to Use this Document

1. The **draft** LOU has been developed with the expectation that it can be used by agencies and their staff when providing home support services to clearly articulate the importance of managing risk and maintaining safety when a client begins receiving support.
2. The goal of the LOU is to provide a mechanism that outlines the responsibilities of all parties involved to maintain safety.
3. It is not intended to be a formal binding agreement or letter. This is a voluntary document for both agencies to use and clients to sign off on.
4. The language below can also be included in other introductory documents provided to the client as needed.

Letter of Understanding

Home Care

Introduction

The purpose of the section below is to introduce and familiarize the client with the agency and the purpose of the LOU. Information about the agency can be included if this is the only document the client will receive.

[Name of Agency]

[Address of Agency]

[City, Province, Postal Code]

Dear [Client/Caregiver Name],

Welcome to [Agency Name]. as discussed with your care coordinator, our agency will be providing home support services to you or your family member.

It is important to ensure you, your family member and the staff providing care are kept safe during home visits. Safety is important and everyone plays a role in keeping a safe working environment. Your care coordinator has completed a safety assessment and has shared relevant information with us. We will also be completing regular safety assessments when visiting your home.

Please contact us if you have any concerns. We can also reach out to your care coordinator to arrange and facilitate case conferencing to assist you, your caregiver(s), and the care team in meeting any of the responsibilities outlined below to ensure safe and uninterrupted service.

[What to Expect] (Optional)

- *This section can include what services can be offered, what clients can expect, any necessary contact information, and any other relevant information the agency may wish to provide (Note: full contact information is captured at the end of LOU)*

Letter of Understanding

Home Care

Rights and Responsibilities

The purpose of the below is to clearly outline the rights and responsibilities of both the staff/agency and the client/family with the purpose of ensuring everyone is kept safe.

The rights and responsibilities highlighted below are strictly related to worker safety. Additional points can be added if needed.

Note: this drafted template is not an exhaustive list of responsibilities and agencies can add what they feel is necessary or change the language.

1. Clients

Clients are responsible to:

- Treat all care providers and staff with dignity, respect, and consideration
- Keep your home safe for health care workers
- Give correct and relevant information (to the best of your ability) to all members of your health care team
- Be an active, involved, and informed member of your health care team
- Take part in developing and carrying out your plan of care
- Use any care equipment safely and correctly
- Not smoke, or use alcohol or recreational drugs, for 60 minutes (1 hour) before, or during visits
- Keep pets away from the area in which you receive care during visits
- Clear snow and ice from your home's entrance and make sure it is well lit
- Store any firearms/weapons in a locked cabinet or secured area
- Minimize noise or distractions
- Inform the staff or care coordinator if anyone new will be in the home during your visit
- Talk with your health care team about any changes or concerns that may affect your plan of care. Asking questions and expressing concerns will not affect the care you receive
- Any of your recommended care equipment is to be properly maintained and used safely and correctly

Letter of Understanding

Home Care

- Inform the staff if you utilize any medications that may pose a risk to their safety, for example: chemotherapy drugs

Clients have the right to:

- Be treated in a way that respects your diagnosis, culture, ethnicity, family, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and other important parts of who you are
- Freedom from abuse, neglect, or exploitation from all persons involved with the delivery of home care services
- Receive safe and respectful care from all members of your health care team
- Express your concerns without fear that it will affect the care you receive
- Know and understand the risks, benefits, and options of any decisions made about your care
- Consent or refuse any part of your care at any time
- Appeal a decision made about your care
- Have your health information kept confidential
- Ask to see Care Team Identification when a member comes to your home

2. Staff

Agency/Home Care staff are responsible to:

- Complete a safety assessment regularly upon visit to the home
- Ask safety related questions to ensure safety for yourself and staff
- Provide recommendations to you or your caregiver(s) on how to reduce or eliminate safety risks
- Ensure you follow safety plan and supports mitigation of any risks identified
- Contact care coordinator if any changes occur to safety plan or safety concerns that cannot be addressed
- Follow procedures if risks cannot be addressed appropriately
- Not use any client equipment that is not appropriately maintained or in good working order (e.g., appliances, mobility equipment, household equipment, etc.)
- Report any hazards, or safety concerns immediately to their manager/supervisor

Letter of Understanding

Home Care

Agency/Home Care staff have the right to:

- Be treated in a way that respects their culture, ethnicity, family, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and other important parts of who they are
- Not tolerate physical, verbal, sexual, or any other type of abuse
- Terminate a visit if a situation occurs that threatens staff safety

Please keep this letter for further reference. If you require any additional information or have questions, please refer to the contact information section below.

Contact Information

The purpose of the section below is to gather the contact information including signatures from the client, agency, and Continuing Care. This ensures that all parties are in agreement with the roles and responsibilities of all individuals involved in home services.

Client			
Name:			
Address:			
Telephone:		E-Mail:	
Signature			
Date:			

Agency / Home Care Staff			
Name:			
Address:			
Telephone:		E-Mail:	
Signature			
Date:			

Letter of Understanding

Home Care