



Policy / Procedure Details	Title:	Missing Person Procedure		
	Type:	Services		
	Related Personal Outcome Measure:	I Feel Safe		
	Code:	2A.11		
Original Version Details	Date Released:	Part of the Emergency Procedure 23 / 12 / 2011		
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Current Version Details	Written By:	Pat Foley, Health and Safety Officer		
	Reviewed By:	Leadership Team		
	Approved By:	Executive Director		
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	Monitoring Process:	Procedural Review Process		
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Policy Aims

The aim of this policy is to provide guidance on a proactive approach to prevent a situation which results in a person going missing and to identify what needs to be done in the event of a person going missing.

An unexpected absence in the case of a person for whom such an event is deemed to be unsafe or at least unusual is potentially a serious matter. For people who routinely come and go an unusual or unexplained absence would consist of something out of the ordinary that would give reason for concern. For example if a person who is normally punctual does not return at a typical time and does not respond to a phone call to check if they are ok.

Many people we support are free to come and go as they wish and this is established as part of the way they live their lives. We support and encourage such independence. When a person, who routinely comes and goes when they wish to, leaves the premises then there is no issue. Where vulnerabilities exist these should be discussed with the person and incorporated into strategies of support to minimise risks arising from this. However there is a significant obligation on the service not to overly restrict the person. In fact the imposition of restrictions is one of the issues that must be considered in decisions about supporting the person. People who use services may not only be vulnerable to safety concerns but are also vulnerable to having unreasonable rules placed on them.

For a person who needs regular or constant supervision when out and about the criteria for concern are generally more clear cut. Once such a person leaves the premises without appropriate supervision there is cause for concern and action must be taken immediately.

The criteria which concern each person's safety and also safeguard their rights to freedom of movement and autonomy will vary significantly between individuals. Therefore preventative strategies must be based on staff knowledge of the person, their preferences and their history of past incidents if these exist.

Staff are expected to use their knowledge of each person to identify their vulnerabilities and put in place appropriate Personal Risk Management Plans (PRMP) to minimise the risk of an unexpected absence of any person using services.

What to do if someone using a service has an unexplained absence

In the unlikely event of someone from your service going missing, the Association has, in conjunction with the Gardai, developed a plan around what to do.

- Carry out a complete search of the premises including any out houses/sheds and gardens.
- If the person is not located, ring the Gardai.
- Inform the Gardai that you are calling from Western Care, where you are located and the name of the missing person.
- Inform your line manager of the disappearance and what action you have taken.
- The family of the missing person should be informed, the line manager and staff should decide how best to do this.
- When the Gardai call to your location, supply them with a recent photograph of the missing person (preferably taken within the previous 12 months), a full description and any particular approaches that should be taken with the person.
- Also inform the Gardai of the time and location the person was last seen and where their favourite places might be, e.g. the cinema, bowling alley, shop, pub, etc.
- Keep the service manager and the person's family updated with progress.
- When the situation has been resolved, an Incident Report should be completed and forwarded to your line manager as per the Incident Reporting procedure.
- HIQA must be notified, as appropriate.

Policy and Procedure Feedback Form

A Policy and Procedure Feedback Form is available on the Western Care Association Intranet (under Procedures) which will provide an opportunity to comment on any policy/procedure.

Your comments will be forwarded to the person who has the lead for the on-going development of the policy/procedure.

All comments will be collated by the person responsible and will inform the three-yearly review cycle for updating procedures.

MISSING PERSON PROFILE

My Name is: _____

My Contact Number is: _____

My Address is: _____

INSERT
PHOTOGRAPH
HERE

My Age is: _____

My Height is: _____

My Hair Colour is: _____

My eyes are this colour: _____

Today, I was wearing..... *(Describe clothes)*

I communicate by.....

The best way to communicate with me is.....

**Other important things to know about me that could help, for example.....
Places I love to go, Things I love to do, Things I am afraid of, Things that stress me.....**

USE OF THE MISSING PERSON PROFILE

- **This document is only to be used in the event that the person goes missing.**
- **Give this to An Garda Síochána**

**THIS PROFILE IS TO BE STORED IN THE EMERGENCY PLAN
IN A LOOSE WALLET AT THE FRONT OF THE FOLDER**