

Key Safe

**Policy, Procedure and Practice
December 2014**

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INFORMATION SHEET

Service area	Adults and Older People
Date effective from	December 2014
Responsible officer(s)	Telehealthcare Service Care Management Staff
Date of review(s)	3 years
Status: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory (all named staff must adhere to guidance) • Optional (procedures and practice can vary between teams) 	Mandatory
Target audience	Communities Directorate Staff
Date of committee/SMT decision	December 2014
Related document(s)	N/A
Superseded document(s)	N/A
Equality Impact Assessment completed	Yes
Adult Safeguarding Audit Tool Completed	Yes

1.0	POLICY	PRACTICE
1.1	<p>Introduction</p> <p>A Key Safe is a small secure box with a keypad, which is designed to hold keys and is affixed to the outside of a property. The Key Safe box opens when a pre-set code (PIN number) is entered to allow access to the stored keys inside. A Key Safe box does not require a power supply and is made from highly durable steel which is weatherproof. Each Key Safe can be accessed by an individual PIN number which is chosen by the service user and can be changed at their convenience as required.</p> <p>Key Safes are widely used throughout the care industry and is a useful means of providing access to a client's home for services such as homecare, nurses or paramedics and family members. Most Key Safes have been provided in order to support the setting up of, or an increase in a domiciliary care package.</p> <p>However, by fitting a Key Safe, the client does not have full control over who enters their home. Service users are strongly advised to inform their building and contents insurance providers, of the installation of a Key Safe to ensure that it does not affect their insurance cover.</p>	
1.2	<p>Aims and Objectives</p> <p>The aims and objectives of this Policy, Procedure and Practice document are to ensure that there are robust guidelines in place for the safe installation and use of Key Safes across the borough to allow access to dwellings for the purpose of providing domiciliary care to a service user, who has been assessed as eligible.</p> <p>Whilst home carers are very familiar with accessing service user's homes, it is important to remember that having strangers letting themselves in and out of their property, will not be normal for new service users. The procedures below will demonstrate an attitude of respect for a service user's right to privacy and dignity and to protect their security as far as possible.</p>	
1.3	<p>Provision of Key Safes</p> <p>A professional judgement will need to be made on an individual basis, as to whether a Key Safe is appropriate or required by a service user. The provision of a Key Safe would be recommended to a service user if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The client lives alone or with a partner who also fulfils eligibility criteria • The client has Lifeline fitted and there are no key holders available in an emergency • The client is confined to a wheelchair or is bed bound 	

	<p>and is unable to make independent transfers, in order to access or open the door</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main aim is to support an increase in an existing care package or setting up a new care package • It has been established that the client would have difficulty in getting to the door • The client is in hospital and a Key Safe is required to facilitate discharge <p>The provision of a Key Safe would not be recommended to a service user if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The client’s level of mobility is expected to be only temporarily impaired and likely to improve with time, rest or rehabilitation. However, client’s needs would have to be assessed on an individual basis and those in receipt of intermediate care may be found to be eligible due to their care needs. • The client does not fall within the stated categories of need i.e. is physically capable of getting to the door • A request for a Key Safe appears to be intended as a convenient means of access • The client is capable of giving consent and does not agree to the installation • The client wishes to retain control and/or independence over access to their property 	
<p>1.4</p>	<p>Safety of Key Safe boxes</p> <p>In accordance with fitting instructions, whenever possible the Key Safe should be fitted covertly on a property. For someone to potentially break into a Key Safe box, they would need to know it is fitted in the first instance. There are two ways that a Key Safe box could potentially be broken into. They are either that the intruder uses the correct PIN number to access the Key Safe or to physically break into the box. Key Safe boxes have been endorsed by various Community Neighbourhood Teams nationally.</p> <p>The advantages and disadvantages of having a Key Safe installed would be fully discussed with the service user prior to installation by the Telehealthcare Service. The advantages would include not requiring a keyholder to be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and the Key Safe being a Police approved item recognised by many insurance companies. The disadvantages include the possibility of a small number of people being aware of a potentially vulnerable person being in situ and any potential</p>	

	<p>damage to the Key Safe/their property in a person trying to unlawfully obtain access to the Key Safe. There may also be a psychological aspect for some service users, in regards to the thought of their keys being outside of their property in a Key Safe.</p>	
1.5	<p>Legal Context The Data Protection Act 1998 obliges the Council to keep all personal information secure and to ensure that it is only accessed and used for lawful purposes and where appropriate, with the consent of the individual to whom that data relates. Key Safe access codes are covered by these provisions.</p>	<p>Data Protection Act</p>
1.6	<p>Measures to help safeguard property There are numerous measures which can be taken to safeguard a service user's property, in case a Key Safe was accessed for purposes it was not intended for. A major deterrent currently being piloted by various Police forces across the country, are the use of identifiable liquids. There are several brands of identifiable liquids available at present, which include SmartWater, enigmaTag and SelectDNA. Each brand performs in a similar fashion in that it is a colourless, odourless liquid by which applying it to property items, it will assign each item with a forensic signature which makes them uniquely identifiable. The liquid when applied to property will be virtually impossible to remove and can only be seen under special UV light. Intruders would not be able to detect what property has been marked with the liquid. Identifiable liquids act as a major deterrent to thieves looking to sell stolen goods, because it greatly increases the chances of detection and subsequent arrest by the Police.</p> <p>Another alternative would be to register property on the Immobilise database. The registered property would be identifiable to all law enforcement agencies across the country. This in turn will help the Police reunite property to their lawful owners and will also help to catch criminals. Almost any possessions with a serial number can be registered for free. Watches, jewellery, art and antiques can also be registered for a small fee.</p>	<p>SmartWater Ltd engimaTAG SelectDNA</p> <p>Immobilise Database</p>
2.0	<p>PROCEDURE</p>	<p>PRACTICE</p>
2.1	<p>Use of Key Safes Responsibility for access to the property of a service user, in order to allow homecare staff to provide a personal care service, lies with the person living at the property.</p> <p>Arrangement for using a Key Safe to access a property must be agreed with the person living at the property. Wherever possible, a Key Safe should be fitted and authorisation for access should be obtained from the service user before a package of care commences. Key Safes should not be used to restrict a person's freedom and in instances where a</p>	

	<p>service user does not have capacity to consent to a Key Safe, a best interests decision may be required.</p> <p>Key Safes are only installed with the consent of the service user and where necessary, the owner of the property, if the service user is living in rented accommodation. The Council will ensure that the service user has been fully informed of the terms and conditions under which a Key Safe is being provided, prior to its installation. The Telehealthcare Service will ensure that it has formal written confirmation of the receipt of this information and consent to installation before any work is undertaken. The Council will provide Key Safes on the basis that they are fit for purpose and that once installed and purchased, the Key Safe and its contents become the property and responsibility of the service user.</p> <p>The Telehealthcare Service or Age UK (dependent on who installs the Key Safe) will fully explain to the service user, the extent of the information they hold in relation to the Key Safe and its PIN number. Staff members will also advise service users, to make direct arrangements with any other person whom they wish to have access to their Key Safe. The Council will not be party to these arrangements for the avoidance of vicarious liability.</p> <p>In the event of a service user no longer requiring the Key Safe, for example, as a result of being admitted into permanent residential or nursing care or the service user passing away, the removal of the Key Safe will be the responsibility of the service user (or their estate, where appropriate). If a service user changes their mind and wishes to have a Key Safe removed from their property, the Telehealthcare Service can arrange this but the cost of the Key Safe will not be reimbursed.</p>	
<p>2.2</p>	<p>Installation of Key Safes</p> <p>A Key Safe can be requested via two routes. A Social Worker can assess a client as eligible for a Key Safe and if the client is not in receipt of Lifeline, the client will be asked to complete and sign the Key Safe Consent Form. The completed Key Safe Consent Form will then be forwarded to the Care Arrangers. On receipt of the Consent Form, the Care Arrangers will forward the form to Age UK, who will then make contact with the client to arrange installation. Once the Key Safe has been installed, the Care Arrangers will raise an invoice to the client in order to charge for the installation of the Key Safe.</p> <p>If a client is currently in receipt of Lifeline, the request for the Key Safe will be made directly to the Telehealthcare Service either by a Social Worker or self referrals will also be accepted. On receipt of a referral, the Telehealthcare Service will make contact with the client to arrange a home visit. The client will be asked to complete the Key Safe Consent Form and an installation date will be arranged.</p>	

	<p>Once the Key Safe has been installed, the Telehealthcare Service will raise an invoice to the client in order to charge for the installation of the Key Safe.</p> <p>Key Safe boxes are currently supplied and fitted for a fee of £32.59 (fee is subject to change). Key Safe boxes are usually supplied within 7 working days of receipt of a request.</p> <p>If a service user experiences any faults with the Key Safe box, the Telehealthcare Service will check the Key Safe to fix any faults. A replacement Key Safe will be offered for no additional cost if a mechanical fault occurs. If a service user loses their PIN code or the Key Safe is tampered with, a new Key Safe box will need to be requested and the replacement will incur a charge of £32.59 (fee is subject to change).</p>	
<p>2.3</p>	<p>Capacity to consent to a Key Safe</p> <p>If a person has been assessed as needing a Key Safe, the service user would be asked to sign a consent form to allow the Key Safe to be installed. If there was any doubt that the service user did not have capacity to consent, a formal mental capacity assessment would have to be completed by a social worker. If the service user was assessed as lacking capacity, a best interests meeting would be held with their next of kin or significant other family member/carer and the social worker, in order to decide if it would be in the service user's best interests to have a Key Safe installed at their property to aid the care they receive.</p>	
<p>2.4</p>	<p>Refusal of a Key Safe</p> <p>Occasionally a service user may refuse to have a Key Safe fitted. It is very inadvisable for keys to be left hidden outside of a property and this practice should be strongly discouraged. However, if a service user continues to keep keys outside of their property, the risks of this action should be fully explained to them to ensure they are fully aware of the risks involved.</p>	
<p>2.5</p>	<p>Access and Security</p> <p>Service users, who have a Key Safe installed by the Local Authority, will be asked to set a PIN number for their Key Safe with help and support from their family or carers, if required. If clients have difficulty setting their own PIN number and do not have any family or carers to support them, they can call the Contact Centre who will load a request for a home visit from the Telehealthcare Service. A member of staff will make contact with the client to visit and support them in setting up their PIN number. At this stage, the service user should be advised to limit the number of people who have access to the PIN number. It should only be for people who are solely linked with providing care and support.</p> <p>Service users will be asked to share this PIN number with the Telehealthcare Service in order to ensure that in an</p>	

emergency, staff and emergency services would be able to access their property as and when appropriate. Key Safe PIN numbers will not be recorded on CareFirst. The Telehealthcare Service can be contacted on 0151 907 8306.

If staff members from either the local authority or a domiciliary care agency, have been given a Key Safe PIN number, it should never be stored with the client's name and address, nor should it be passed onto another individual without the consent of the client unless it is felt that there is a significant risk of harm. If the PIN number is disclosed under these circumstances then it should be documented on the client's record.

When staff are using Key Safes, they should always be vigilant of people around them and ensure that they are not being overseen accessing the Key Safe. After returning the key, the staff member should ensure that the Key Safe is shut and secure and that the PIN code has been "cleared" from the keypad.

If a PIN number is lost or stolen, the client should be contacted immediately and requested to reset the PIN number. The new PIN number should be communicated to the Telehealthcare Service and Domiciliary Care Staff where appropriate (please see below).

If a member of staff requires a Key Safe PIN number in order for them to access an individual's property to provide care or treatment, or to pass onto a third party, for example, a care agency, then permission should be sought from the service user to share this information. An assumption should not be made that the service user is happy for this information to be passed on automatically. The use of a Key Safe should also be extended to allow healthcare professionals use for the purpose of providing services, but only with the full agreement of the service user.

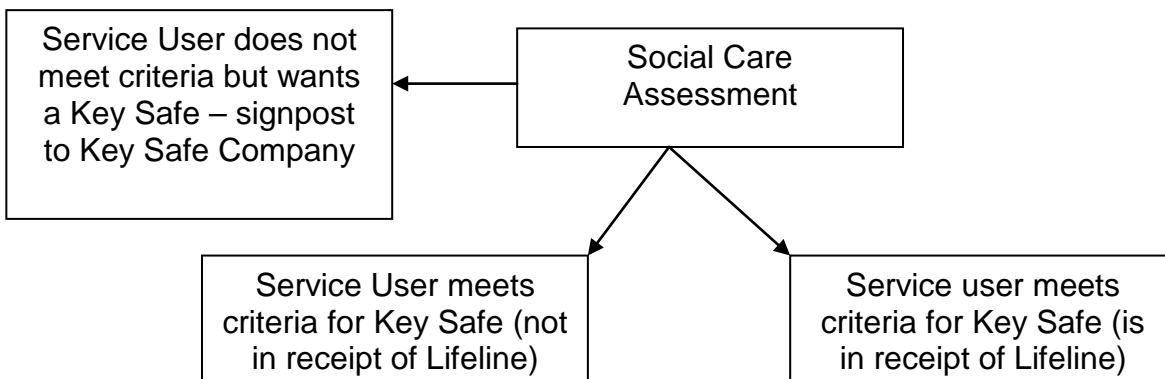
If a situation is considered an emergency, the PIN code can be accessed from the Telehealthcare Service. Once a PIN number has been disclosed, arrangements will need to be made with the client in order to arrange for the PIN number to be changed. The Telehealthcare Service will maintain a database for the purpose of storing Key Safe PIN numbers for current or previous Telehealthcare Service clients. The database will hold the client's name; address; telephone number, assessment details and Key Safe PIN number. Please note for clients who are not in receipt of Lifeline, but receive a domiciliary care package, the Telehealthcare Service does **not** hold any record of their Key Safe PIN code.

The Key Safe PIN number should be changed on a regular basis and should be considered at the service user's review,

	<p>in conjunction with family or carers where appropriate.</p> <p>As a further security measure, as and when a staff member leaves a particular service or care agency, or ceases to provide care and support to a particular service user, it is advised that the Key Safe PIN number should be changed. A request to change the Key Safe PIN can be made via the Telehealthcare Services Installation Officer.</p>	
<p>2.6</p>	<p>Guidance for Staff using Key Safes</p> <p>It is the responsibility of the relevant manager to ensure that all staff are fully briefed on the policy for the safe use of Key Safes.</p> <p>If staff have any concerns regarding the access arrangements to a service user's property, they should be reported immediately to their manager. Staff should <u>never</u> make any arrangements to hold keys in respect to a service user's property.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of each member of staff to ensure the keys are secured properly in the Key Safe box after use.</p> <p>If a staff member is unable to replace the key safely and securely into a Key Safe, the staff member should contact the Telehealthcare Service immediately for advice. The service user should be informed of these actions. The Telehealthcare Service should be notified immediately, if a staff member observes any faults or damage to a Key Safe box.</p> <p>If a staff member accesses the Key Safe to find no keys are held within the Key Safe, the Telehealthcare Service should be notified immediately. Emergency contacts for the service user, as specified on their assessment documentation, would try to be contacted in the first instance to try to gain access to the property. In an emergency situation where access was required immediately, the Emergency Services would have to be contacted.</p> <p>Staff members should never disclose a Key Safe PIN number to any other person. This includes relatives, neighbours and other staff, they should always be referred to the Telehealthcare Service.</p> <p>On entering or leaving a service user's property, staff must ensure that they have made the property and the environment safe and secure, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the means of entry/exit is closed/locked behind you • Ensure that windows are appropriately secured • Ensure that any intruder alarms are set in accordance with the manual instructions • Ensure that gates are closed and secure 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all electrical and gas appliances are made safe • Ensure that all taps are turned off • Close curtains and blinds where applicable • Ensure that the lighting in the property is appropriate • Ensure that any equipment used by the service user is within reach e.g. telephone or lifeline <p>Staff must never use a Key Safe to enter a service user's property outside of their commissioned working hours. Inappropriate use of a Key Safe will be dealt with in accordance with Halton Borough Council or company procedures.</p>	
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APPENDIX ONE: KEY SAFE PATHWAY



APPENDIX TWO: KEY SAFE CONSENT FORM

I, (Please print full name)

of Post Code:.....

Telephone Number:.....

Key Safe Agreement

1. Agree to the installation of a Key Safe Unit to the exterior of my home and understand that the cost of the Key Safe is £31.95, that I will be invoiced for this amount and that the Key Safe unit will then become my property and responsibility.

2. Also understand that if I do not pay the invoice then debt recovery will commence to recover monies owing to Halton Borough Council.

3. I understand that the Unit will be installed free of charge to me, but that I will have to make my own arrangements for removal of the Unit if I wish.

4. I refuse to give permission for a Key Safe to be installed and will make alternative arrangements to enable care staff to gain access to my home.

5. I would like a Halton Borough Council Community Warden to arrange to visit me to set my personal code on the Key Safe Unit. Please tick box

YES NO

6. I would like my code to be stored securely at Halton Borough Council's Contact Centre. (If on the Telehealthcare Service)

YES NO

N.B If you have set the code to the Key Safe Unit yourself, and would like the code to be stored securely at Halton Borough Council's Contact Centre or have any enquiries concerning the Key Safe Unit, please ring the Contact Centre on 0303 333 4300

Off Hook Dialling issue Identified Yes No

Please sign your name here Date.....

Career/Advocate (Where Service User unable to sign) Date.....

Date requested for fitting:..... AM / PM

Location: (Where Key Safe to be fitted)

APPENDIX THREE: KEY SAFE INFORMATION LEAFLET



KeySafe%20Information%20Leaflet.pdf