

Referrals, allocations and new support policy – version 4

Date approved for use: 14th December 2022

Scope

- 1.1 This policy is a Dimensions Group policy. This means it applies to all its subsidiaries as listed [here](#).
- 1.2 This policy tells us what processes and toolkits to use when managing a referral and setting up new support.
- 1.3 Its purpose is to ensure colleagues are aware of their responsibilities and are setting up high quality support.
- 1.4 All our colleagues should follow this policy. However, it is most relevant to Business Development, Operations, Housing and Finance colleagues involved in the referrals and support set up process.
- 1.5 To go straight to the policy content click on the linked section title below or go to the page:

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Policy statement

- 2.1 For the purpose of this policy, we will refer to all people coming to us for support as ‘referrals’. We will refer to the process of matching referrals to properties as ‘allocations’.
- 2.2 Dimensions aims to give people maximum choice and control over what they do, how they spend their time, who supports them and how they are supported. This principle is applied to all referrals which come to us.

- 2.3 No matter where a referral comes from, a local authority, NHS trust or private individual, we treat everybody equally from our first meeting with them to our last.

The impact of not implementing this policy

- 3.1 If we don't follow the guidance in this policy, we could incorrectly set up new support, which could lead to poor standards of support and potential placement breakdown.
- 3.2 People we support, their representatives, commissioners and social workers might lose confidence in us. They might go to another provider for support.
- 3.3 It may also get us in trouble with our regulators and others:
- local authorities or other commissioners
 - the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH)
 - other registered providers if we provide housing management via a management agreement and their tenure policy is not used
 - freeholders if we lease the property.

Policy content

Nomination rights

- 4.1 At all times, Dimensions-owned properties and that of other landlords with whom it has a leasehold arrangement will be used in best way possible. Dimensions reports annually to its Board on how its properties are let, offering assurance on their use for a social purpose. Operations Directors are responsible for the management of contractual nomination rights in their region. Nomination rights to local authorities will be strictly observed and the requirements of - in the majority of Dimensions' referrals - Referral Panels adhered to, although Dimensions will also observe the requirements of local Housing Registers and Common Allocations Policies where appropriate to the designation of the properties. CORE forms (see [Tenure Policy](#)) will share appropriate information with the Government about use of properties and the correct security of tenure will be given to the incoming tenant, affording the maximum possible security of tenure. The correct rent will be set and charged (see [Rent and service charge setting policy](#)).
- 4.2 Sometimes a local authority with nomination rights will be unwilling or unable to refer a person to a support setting in good time. This may impact adversely

on our expected income. If this happens, the Operations Director will need to make a judgment on the appropriateness of sourcing referrals from elsewhere. This will be done in full cooperation with the local authority where possible and always with respectful, timely notification.

- 4.3 We are committed to helping people we support exercise choice and control over their lives. This means fully involving them in decisions about who they live with. If they object to a local authority's referral moving into their home, it may mean we need to support them in their objection. This will be the case even when that local authority has nomination rights. Contacts with the local authority must be respectful and have regard for the authority's allocations policy where appropriate.
- 4.4 So, while we should do all we can to respect contractual relationships, we also reserve the right to decline referrals in the best interest of people we already support. This, again, will be done in a respectful, collaborative way with appropriate regard for the allocations policy of the local authority where appropriate. Where a referral is declined and this action means that the property is under-occupied, this will be acknowledged and discussed with the local authority and all reasonable effort made to secure a new referral as quickly as possible to optimise use of the property. Since declining a referral may impact negatively on income, we will need to manage such situations carefully. The Regional Finance Manager must be involved in the decision.

The referral process

- 5.1 The regional Business Development Manager is ultimately responsible for the successful management of all referrals into their region. Working in conjunction with the Referral & Assessment Managers, the Business Development Teams are responsible for ensuring best use of properties by appropriately letting vacant properties.
- 5.2 Where we feel that we cannot deliver support effectively, then we may decline a referral or direct them elsewhere. Our reasons for this will be communicated as soon as possible after making the decision and we will do it in the person's preferred format, and we will not hold any personal information about them for longer than six months afterwards.
- 5.3 Dimensions is committed to protecting our colleagues and people we support from discriminatory behaviour. When the person being referred to us has a history of discriminatory behaviour, we will consider the referral against Dimensions' resources to manage and intervene on a case-by-case basis and use Dimensions Discrimination Toolkit where appropriate.

- 5.4 The 'named lead' could be a Referrals & Assessment Manager; Business Development Manager; Operations Director or Locality Manager, dependent on the level of complexity, timescales and whether the referral is for new support or to fill a vacant room.
- 5.5 If there is any uncertainty about who the named lead for a referral should be the decision will be made by the Regional Managing Director.
- 5.6 The named lead is responsible for following the most up to date referral process. Using the tools available within the process toolkit to ensure that:
- a full risk appraisal is completed
 - an appropriate assessment is undertaken
 - a costing includes all relevant needs, and
 - a clear proposal of support is put forward
 - the correct tenancy and rent type are created, appropriate for the property in question.
- 5.7 The process and toolkit with all relevant documentation are held in the [**Referrals & Call Off Toolkit**](#) on the intranet and will be updated as required.

The support set up process

- 6.1 The Operations Director is ultimately responsible for the successful management of all new support in their area. They may delegate associated responsibilities to a named lead, who may or may not be the same named lead as in the referral process.
- 6.2 We will not start to set up any support setting or provide support, before having payment arrangements agreed in writing for the full package of support including but not limited to:
- any transition costs
 - behaviours support input
 - clinical practice input
 - housing adaptations
 - any additional training costs, such as training colleagues in British Sign Language (BSL).

- 6.3 The named lead is responsible for following the most up to date support set up process. Using the tools available within the process toolkit to ensure that:
- all stakeholders involved sign up to the transition plan and support design
 - all roles and responsibilities are clearly assigned to both internal teams and external stakeholders
 - a transition plan is in place, where possible, including several visits for the person we support to their new home
 - all relevant documentation is in place before the individual moves in and the support setting goes LIVE.
- 6.4 The process and toolkit with all relevant documentation are held in the [Service Set Up Toolkit](#) on the intranet and will be updated as required.

Relevant legislation, guidance and related policies and templates

Legislation

- 7.1 Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) (Amendment) Regulations 2015
- 7.2 Care Quality Commission (Registration) Regulations 2009 (as amended)
- 7.3 The Domiciliary Care Agencies (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- 7.4 Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act, 2014
- 7.5 Data Protection Act 2018
- 7.6 General Data Protection Regulations (UK-GDPR)
- 7.7 Regulator of Social Housing 'Tenancy' Standard
- 7.8 Equality Act 2010

Guidance

- 8.1 Guidance for providers on meeting the regulations (Care Quality Commission 2015)

Group policies

- 9.1 Data handling and protection
- 9.2 Delegated authorities

- 9.3 Treasury management
- 9.4 Arrangements for Health and Safety
- 9.5 Risk management
- 9.6 Aids and adaptations
- 9.7 Rent and service charge setting
- 9.8 Tenure
- 9.9 Joint working
- 9.10 Support planning
- 9.11 Behaviours of distress
- 9.12 Vehicles for people we support
- 9.13 Epilepsy management
- 9.14 Medicines
- 9.15 Personal care
- 9.16 Safer swallowing (dysphagia)
- 9.17 Recruitment and selection
- 9.18 Equality, diversity and inclusion

Related procedures, decision flowcharts, forms and so on

- 10.1 [Referrals & Call Off Toolkit](#)
- 10.2 [Service Set Up Toolkit](#)

Equality statement

- 11.1 This policy promotes equality, diversity and human rights by directing colleagues to:
 - set up support of the highest quality
 - help empower people we support to make decisions for themselves around the support they wish to receive
 - respect those decisions whatever the person's race, age, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation or whether or not they are married
 - act only in a person's best interests when either making a decision on their behalf or being consulted by a decision-maker

- take the least restrictive option when making decisions around new support
- never discriminate in decision making around a referral based on their ethnicity, faith, disability, gender, sexual orientation, marital status or age.

11.2 We promote equality, diversity and human rights by treating all people we support and employ equally and fairly whatever their:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

11.3 The equality impact analysis (EIA) is in the intranet's Document library. You can link to it from here: [Referrals, allocations and new support - version 4 - initial equality impact analysis.](#)

Data protection statement

12.1 This policy involves handling personal data. So when you carry out any procedures this policy describes, you should also think about what our Data handling and protection policy says.

12.2 Our Data handling and protection policy is our promise to handle personal data correctly under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (UK-GDPR). It tells you how to keep that promise. It balances everyone's rights to data privacy with the work we do.

12.3 Information held about referrals will be held and processed in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK-GDPR. Analytical reports will be produced to monitor trends, but individuals will not be identified in these reports.

12.4 For information on how we handle personal and sensitive data, please our privacy notices.

Review

13.1 We will review this policy three years from its original publication. But if changes in legislation, regulation or best practice mean we need to, we will review sooner.

13.2 If the changes are big, we will equality impact analyse (EIA) the policy again and send out to consultation in line with our Policy development and consultation policy.

13.3 For smaller changes, we will update this same version. We will record this in the Version control section below.

Glossary

14.1 Not all these words appear in this policy. But you may find other people use them when talking about tenancies.

Term	Definition
People we support	For the purposes of this document, the term people we support means all individuals who use Dimensions services.
Stakeholders	For the purposes of this policy, this term refers to anyone (internal and external) with an interest/active involvement in a successful move for the person we will be supporting. For example, a family member, Support Worker or Social Worker.
Nomination Rights	The local authority having 'nomination rights' for our supported living and residential care provisions means they have the ability to refer/choose people to fill any available vacancies we have.
Security of tenure	To have 'security of tenure' means, legally, you are allowed to keep living in a building that is your home that you have rented from the owner/landlord.
CORE form	COntinuous REcording of Data. This is information collected by the Government on all new social lettings about the tenant and the property CORE form and rent. The information recorded is anonymous and does not have a name on it.

People and groups involved in writing and approving this policy

Policy owner:	Emily O’Callaghan, Head of Business Development
Policy author/reviewer:	Jodie Taylor, Referral & Assessment Manager
People and groups consulted:	Business Development Team; Diversity Matters; National Colleague Forum Policy Subgroup

Version control

Version number	Approved date:	Communication date:	Summary of minor changes
4	14 th December 2022	14 th December 2022	<p>Reviewed and updated to latest Group policy standards and language. Some words have been replaced by simpler ones.</p> <p>Change of policy owner and author/reviewer.</p> <p>4.1 Updated and some terms added to the Glossary.</p> <p>5.1 The word ‘void’ replaced by ‘vacant’ and ‘business unit’ by ‘region’.</p> <p>5.3 Updated and re-worded.</p> <p>5.4 The word ‘void’ replaced by ‘vacant room’.</p> <p>6.2 updated and added to including additional training costs such as BSL that may need to be considered.</p> <p>Glossary updated.</p>

Next review due: December 2025