



Saint John of God  
Community Services clg.

## **Kerry Services Policy 31**

### **Provision of Information to Residents Policy and Procedure**

Completed May 2025

THIS DOCUMENT OUTLINES ST JOHN OF GOD COMMUNITY SERVICES CLG.  
Kerry Services

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## **Provision of Information to Residents**

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### **1. Policy and Procedure Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that every person supported by Saint John of God Kerry Services is given information in a way that they can access and understand and in a timely manner.

### **2. Scope:**

This policy applies to all staff working in Saint John of God Kerry Services

### **3. Format of information**

- Any information given to people supported by Saint John of God Kerry Services must be in a format they can access and understand easily. This includes:
  - written information in easy to read format;
  - video format;
  - objects of reference.
- Which format is used depends on the person's:
  - literacy skills;
  - verbal understanding;
  - ability to recognise photos / symbols.
- Staff working with each person should have a good understanding of the abilities and strengths of the person they support and should make a decision on the best format for the person in consultation with their Supervisor and/or MDT team.

### **4. Making information Easy to Read**

- All staff working directly with people supported by Saint John of God Kerry Services need to be aware of National Policy in Total Communication System;
- In addition, staff should use the following guidelines when making any information easy to read;
- Easy to Read documents are made up of short, simple sentences that will communicate the most important messages you need to get across. These are usually accompanied by pictures that will aid understanding;
- Complicated concepts can still be explained in Easy to Read documents;



- You do not have to rewrite a document line by line. Just make sure you have the most important information;
- Keep your sentences short and start each new sentence on a new line;
- Explain difficult words if you need to;
- Put visuals on the left hand side of the written information;
- Make the font Arial size 14 minimum;
- Write numbers in numerical form i.e. 3, 5, 8 rather than the words three, five, eight;
- Avoid capital letters, apart from the beginning of sentences / abbreviations /where grammatically correct;
- Do not use bold / italics / underlining in the main body of the text. You can use bold to show subheadings and to highlight certain words or sections;
- Use even spacing between words, keeping it consistent throughout the text;
- Avoid splitting words at the end of a line, i.e. do not use hyphens;
- Avoid running sentences over two pages;
- Do not over simplify if you are writing a document for adults e.g. Stomach/tummy.

#### **4.1 Further guidelines and information can be found in:**

- Lámh is the recognised manual signing system used in services. [www.lamh.org](http://www.lamh.org)
- National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) – Resources/ Plain English <https://www.nala.ie/resources>
- SJOG Easy to Read Website <https://easytoread.sjog.ie/>
- Multimedia Advocacy Guides
- Recommended Images banks:
  - SJOG Image Library [www.brandfolder.com/sjog](http://www.brandfolder.com/sjog) (plus SJOG password)
  - Photo symbols [www.photosymbols.com](http://www.photosymbols.com) (plus SJOG password)
  - Boardmaker) Boardmaker © the Picture Communication Symbols ©1981-2009 by Mayer- Johnson LLC. All Rights Reserved Worldwide. Used with permission. Boardmaker(TM) is a trademark of Mayer-Johnson LLC Boardmaker is recognised as the primary standard symbol system in SJOGCS.

- Potential Communication Strategies – See Appendix 1 in Total communication systems Policy for a list (not exhaustive)

## **5. Support to access information and make choices**

- When giving information to any person supported by, a member of Saint John of God Kerry Services staff will spend time with the person and give them any assistance they need to access and understand the information.
- Information will be given to people as soon as possible, so that they have an adequate amount of time to understand the information and to make choices and decisions about it.
- If necessary, the information will be given to the person more than once, to allow them to make properly informed choices and decisions.
- Every person supported must be given choices throughout their day.
- These choices must be provided in different formats (i.e. using photos / symbols / objects of reference / verbal language) according to the individual person's abilities and strengths.
- Staff working with each person should make a decision on the best format for the person in consultation with the person in charge of the residence / centre or as advised in their communication assessment.
- Advice should be sought from other professionals (e.g. speech & language therapy) if the person in charge and the key staff are unsure of the most appropriate format to use.

## **6. Provision of information regarding day to day operations**

Information will be provided to people on the day-to-day running of the residence they live in or the centre they attend, in a format that they can access and understand.

### **6.1 This involves providing:**

- staff rotas using photos;
- daily activity schedules using photos / symbols / objects of reference / text;
- schedules of any planned outings using photos / symbols / objects of reference / text;
- signage on rooms around the building using photos / symbols / objects of reference / text;
- accessible notices regarding the complaints policy and procedure;
- accessible notices regarding emergency procedures and assembly points.
- Where communication assessments are used these need to be in accessible format and staff need to be familiar with these.



- The person in charge of the residence / centre should decide on the formats needed for all of the above according to the abilities and strengths of each person living in the residence / attending the centre, in consultation with each person's key Worker and support staff.
- Advice should be sought from other professionals (e.g. speech & language therapy) if the person in charge is unsure of the most appropriate formats to use.
- Any staff rotas and schedules provided in the residence / centre MUST be kept updated according to changes in staffing and daily routines. This is to ensure that all people in the residence / centre have accurate information provided to them each day and reduces any potential confusion for people.

## **7. Local advocacy**

- Each residence / centre may have its own advocacy group which meets regularly where this is practical and in the interests of best practice.
- This would ideally be a self-advocacy group with staff support provided. However, if the people supported in the residence / centre are unable to advocate for themselves, then other forms of advocacy should be considered i.e. peer advocacy, family advocacy, staff advocacy.
- The person in charge may consult with an Independent Advocacy Service.



## 8.1 SIGNATURE PAGE

I have read, understand and agree to adhere to the attached Policy and Procedure:

[illegible]