



Promoting Inclusion for People with Intellectual Disabilities

## Kare Corporate Safety Statement (CSS).

### Kare Policy Document.

Policy Owner: *Quality, Risk and Safety Manager.*

Rev. No.	Approved by the Policy management committee	Approved by Kare Board.	Launched at Heads of Units	Operational Period
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**\*\*\* This document needs to be read in conjunction with the relevant site specific Safety Statement (SSSS).**

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## Section 1 Introduction

Kare is a voluntary organisation providing services and supports to people with intellectual disabilities and their families in mid and south Kildare, east Offaly, west Wicklow, and northeast Carlow.

At the heart of Kare's work is the belief that people with an intellectual disability are equal members of society and should be supported to live as valued, included, and active participants in their communities.

Kare works in partnership with each individual who uses its services to support them in developing their skills, independence, and personal goals, empowering them to live the life of their choice.

[Appendix 1](#) gives a description of Kare's Services and Supports (Strategic Plan).

[Appendix 2](#) gives a list of the locations of Kare's Services and Supports

[Appendix 3](#) refers to Kare's Open Disclosure Policy

[Appendix 4](#) shows the Organisation Structure

Kare recognises that the effective management of safety, health, and welfare is a fundamental responsibility that requires the active engagement and co-operation of every person associated with the organisation. The commitment to a safe and healthy environment is shared by all—employees, management, service users, families, contractors, and visitors alike.

Successful implementation of Kare's Health and Safety policies and procedures depends on:

- Clear communication of health and safety expectations and responsibilities at all levels.
- Active participation in health and safety training, risk assessments, and emergency preparedness activities.

- A culture of openness where concerns, hazards, incidents, and near misses are promptly reported and addressed without fear of reprisal.
- Collaborative problem-solving to identify and implement practical solutions that protect the wellbeing of everyone in the organisation.
- Ongoing commitment to continuous improvement in health and safety standards, recognising that safety is an evolving process requiring vigilance and adaptation.

By fostering a spirit of shared responsibility and mutual respect, Kare ensures that health, safety, and welfare are not only compliance requirements but integral to the organisation's values and everyday practice.

Kare's Safety Statement is underpinned by the following legislation, regulations and national policies:

- Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work Act 2005
- Safety, Health, and Welfare (General Application) Regulations 2007
- Code of Governance for State Bodies
- Health Act 2007 (Care and Support of Residents in Designated Centres for Persons (children and adults) with Disabilities Regulations 2013.
- HIQA National Standards for Residential Services for Children and Adults with Disabilities.
- New Directions Interim Standards for Adult Day Services
- Health and Safety at Work in Residential Care Facilities 2012 (HSA)
- Health and Safety Authority Guidance Document for the Healthcare Sector (2006)
- Health and Safety Authority Guidance on Lone Working in the Healthcare Sector
- HSE Lone worker policy 2022
- HSE risk enterprise framework 2023
- HSE Incident Management Framework
- HIQA Infection Prevention Control Standards

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Kare's Safety Statement is supported by all of Kare's policies, processes, and procedures. Kare's Health and Safety Framework includes this Safety Statement and the following:

- Risk Management Policy which describes how risks should be managed and therefore should be referred to in conjunction to this policy.
- Unit/Department Risk Registers include detailed Risk Assessments with regard to identified safety, health, and welfare risks.
- Fire Safety Policy which outlines how fire safety is managed
- Unit/Department Emergency Response Plan which details the procedures for managing emergencies.

The Health and Safety Representatives Oversight Committee will ensure that Kare's Safety Statement is reviewed each year, updated as appropriate and communicated to all staff through the Heads of Units.

Acknowledging the diverse nature of Health and Social Care Services and the large number of work locations, specific safety measures will be implemented by means of local Site specific Safety Statements

Kare maintains a specific Safety Statement for each of its physical locations. These statements outline additional information relevant to the Health and Safety (H&S) management of that location, addressing unique risks, procedures, and control measures in place to ensure the safety of staff, service users, and visitors.

## **Section 2 Mission and Aim of Kare's Corporate Safety Statement (CSS)**

Kare is committed to ensuring, in so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of its staff, people who use the service and all other persons who may be affected by its activities. It will do this by creating a culture where safety, health and welfare are an integral part of all Kare's policies, procedures, and practices.

The aim of the Corporate Safety Statement (CSS) is to outline the overarching systems and procedures that are in place within Kare to manage the safety, health and welfare of staff, people who use the service and all other persons who may be affected by the activities of the organisation.

### Section 3 Statement of Intent

Kare is fully committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety, and welfare of its employees, the people who use our services, and all others who may be affected by our activities. This commitment is underpinned by the requirements of the **Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005**, and the **Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007**.

At Kare, we strive—so far as is reasonably practicable—to:

- Provide a **safe place of work**
- Ensure **safe means of access and egress**
- Maintain **safe equipment**
- Implement **safe systems of work**
- Provide **appropriate information, instruction, training, and supervision**
- Supply **suitable protective clothing and equipment** where risks cannot be eliminated
- Drive **continuous improvement** of our processes and procedures to minimise risks to health, safety, and welfare
- Prevent risks to health from **articles, substances, and equipment**
- Prepare and regularly revise **Emergency Response Plans**
- Appoint, where necessary, **competent persons** to advise and assist in maintaining health, safety, and welfare

We recognise that the successful management of health and safety is dependent on the active involvement and responsibility of every employee. Each person must take ownership of safety within their area of work to ensure effective risk management and a safe working environment. I fully support the implementation of the policies and procedures outlined in this statement and reaffirm Kare's ongoing commitment to providing a safe and healthy environment for all.

Margaret O'Neill



Chief Executive Officer - December 2025

## **Section 4      Roles and Responsibilities of the Board of Directors and Chief Executive Officer**

### **Kare's Board of Directors:**

Kare's Board of Directors, in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), holds overall responsibility for ensuring that appropriate resources are allocated and that health and safety is effectively managed throughout the organisation. This responsibility is exercised in accordance with the duties set out in the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

### **Kare's Chief Executive Officer (CEO):**

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Kare holds key responsibility for the effective implementation and oversight of health and safety within the organisation. In fulfilling this role, the CEO will:

- Ensure that all pre-agreed Kare policies relating to health and safety are presented to the Board of Directors for approval in line with Policy management index.
- Oversee that all Kare activities are carried out safely and without risk to the health of employees, people who use the service, and others, in compliance with statutory requirements, approved codes of practice, and Kare's internal health and safety policies.
- Ensure that Kare's health and safety performance is formally reviewed on an annual basis, and that the required competencies for managing health and safety are developed and maintained at all levels of the organisation.
- Liaise with relevant regulatory bodies, including the Health and Safety Authority (HSA), to ensure compliance and cooperation.
- Ensure that adequate resources, including funding and facilities, are made available to enable the effective implementation of Kare's Safety Statement and related health and safety measures.



## Section 5 Roles and Responsibilities of Line Managers

Line Managers play a critical role in the effective implementation of Kare's health and safety policies and procedures within their areas of responsibility. Each Line Manager is expected to:

- Manage the **implementation** of Kare's **Safety Statement** and all related health and safety **policies and procedures** within their Unit or Department.
- Ensure that all staff within their area are **familiar with** and **adhere to** Kare's health and safety policies and procedures.
- Ensure that **new employees** are briefed on Kare's Safety Statement during their **Unit/Department Induction**.
- Co-ordinate health, safety, and risk management activities within their area, including maintaining the **Risk Register** and reviewing the **Emergency Response Plan**.
- Ensure that staff are familiar with the **Unit/Department Risk Register** and the associated **Risk Assessments**.
- Monitor **health and safety performance** within their area and **report** results as required.
- Maintain up-to-date H&S records, such as **daily and weekly checklists**, **risk assessments** and **incident reports**.
- Initiate **corrective actions** to improve health and safety standards as needed.
- Communicate with **contractors and visitors**, where appropriate, regarding relevant health and safety matters.
- Collaborate with staff to **identify health and safety improvement areas** and **training needs**.
- Facilitate staff to **attend training** and ensure the **implementation of knowledge and skills** acquired.
- Ensure all **health and safety incidents** and **near misses** that occur in their area are **reported** promptly.
- Follow up on incidents and near misses to **identify corrective actions** and prevent recurrence.

- Promote ongoing **communication** on health and safety issues by ensuring time is allocated for discussion during **Staff/Team Meetings**.
- Facilitate staff representation in health and safety matters through the **Health and Safety Representatives' system**.
- Ensure the **weekly Health and Safety Checklists** for their Unit or Department are **completed**, and that any identified actions are followed through in a timely manner.

## **Section 6     Roles and Responsibilities of Employees**

All employees have a legal duty under Sections 13 and 14 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 to take reasonable care to protect their own health and safety, as well as that of their colleagues and others who may be affected by their actions or omissions at work.

To meet these responsibilities, Kare employees are expected to:

- Keep up to date with, and adhere to, Kare's Safety Statement and all related health and safety policies and procedures.
- Take personal responsibility for their own health, safety, and welfare, and for that of any person who may be affected by their behaviour while at work.
- Be familiar with the Risk Register and associated Risk Assessments relevant to their work area.
- Implement control measures identified in both individual and Unit/Department Risk Assessments, as appropriate.
- Attend all required training, and participate in any assessments reasonably requested by Kare.
- Use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and clothing to ensure their health, safety, and welfare while at work.
- Ensure they are not under the influence of any intoxicant (including drugs or alcohol) during working hours.
- Report all incidents and near misses immediately, using Kare's appropriate reporting procedures.
- Check that all equipment is in safe working order prior to use.
- Report to their Line Manager any defects in equipment, the workplace, or systems of work that could pose a risk to safety, health, or welfare.

Please note:

Breaches of Kare's health and safety policy, processes, procedures, or guidelines—as outlined in this Safety Statement—will be treated as serious misconduct and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

## **Section 7      Roles and Responsibilities of the Health and Safety Officer**

Kare will appoint a Health and Safety Officer who will be responsible for promoting, coordinating, and supporting the effective implementation of health, safety, and welfare practices across the organisation. The Health and Safety Officer will play a key role in ensuring compliance with relevant legislation, internal policies, and best practices.

### The responsibilities of the Health and Safety Officer will include:

- Ensuring that Risk Assessments relating to the safety, health, and welfare of individuals using Kare locations are:
  - Carried out systematically
  - Documented accurately
  - Accompanied by appropriate control measures, which are clearly communicated and adhered to
- Monitoring overall health and safety performance, identifying trends, and providing reports and recommendations for improvement.
- Investigating accidents, incidents, and near misses in a timely and thorough manner to determine root causes.
- Recommending and supporting the implementation of corrective and preventive actions to reduce the likelihood of recurrence of accidents, incidents, and near misses.
- Coordinating regular Health and Safety Oversight Representatives Committee meetings and Health and Safety Advisory meetings, including:
  - Ensuring prepared and circulated meeting minutes
  - Tracking outstanding actions and ensuring they are followed through to completion
- Liaising with Line Managers on health and safety matters, providing advice, support, and guidance as required.
- Ensuring in conjunction with the facilities department that all contractors working

with or on behalf of Kare are compliant with Kare's Safety Statement and relevant health and safety requirements.

- Acting as a point of contact for liaison with the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) and other relevant statutory bodies on health and safety matters.
- Ensuring that Kare's policies, procedures, and processes are fit for purpose and support the health, safety, and welfare of all individuals associated with Kare's activities, including staff, service users, visitors, and contractors.

## **Section 8      Roles and Responsibilities of the Health and Safety Representatives Oversight Committee**

Kare will appoint a Health and Safety Representatives Oversight Committee to support the Health and Safety Officer to coordinate the development and management of health and safety practices at work.

The Health and Safety Representatives Oversight Committee will include employee representatives from across the organisation.

The terms of reference of the group identify:

<b>Purpose</b>	<p>Kare will appoint a Health and Safety oversight Representative group to support the Health and Safety Officer to coordinate the development and management of health and safety practices at work.</p> <p>To review organisation information in relation to organisation Health and Safety issues from an oversight and compliance to policy and best practice perspective in line with the obligations outlined in the Safety, welfare at work Act 2005.</p>
<b>Aim</b>	<p>To oversee the management of Health and Safety in the organisation and to provide a level of assurance to the board subcommittee on Risk, Quality and Safety that there are appropriate and effective systems in place that cover all aspects of Health and Safety oversight.</p>
<b>Objectives</b>	<p>Ensure the Organisation has a robust Health and Safety Framework in place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Review and develop H&amp;S related policies and procedures ensuring they align to Kare's H&amp;S framework for approval.</li><li>- Monitor a selection of fire drills from locations across the organisation to ensure effective objective setting and reviews are in place.</li><li>- Review internal and external inspection reports related to H&amp;S issues of concern.</li><li>- Review and update the organisation's Safety Statement on an annual basis.</li><li>- Ensure each Unit / Department has a Risk Register which is reviewed annually.</li><li>- Define the organisations health and safety at work performance measures including targets and benchmarks each year</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monitor the performance of the organisation with regard to safety, health and welfare of employees</li> <li>- Review specific items submitted by Health and Safety representatives and agree actions required.</li> <li>- Coordinate the communication of safety, health and welfare issues throughout the organisation.</li> <li>- Summarise information in preparation for the H&amp;S Advisors group meeting.</li> </ul>
	<p>Ensure the organisation meets all legal and compliance requirements related to Health and Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keep up to date with relevant legislation, regulation, codes of practice and guidelines and advise the organisation of any changes required to its policies, processes, and procedures to ensure compliance</li> <li>- Undertake the training, where relevant, in order to be effective in their role as committee members</li> <li>- Monitor Kare's policies, processes and procedures to ensure they address safety, health and welfare issues and make recommendations for improvements as relevant</li> <li>- Review H&amp;S related training requirements and compare data for compliance with training needs.</li> </ul>
	<p>Ensure a review of the organisational data related to H&amp;S is conducted and provide a summary and recommendations to the board on steps the organisation may need to take to enhance the H&amp;S framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide analysis of data related to the following areas for feeding into Board reports and IMR reports to the HSE: Drug errors Review H&amp;S service user incidents Review H&amp;S staff incidents</li> <li>- Analyse HSA Inspectors' reports and make recommendations</li> <li>- Examine accident and incident reports in relation the Health Safety and Welfare at Work Act and make recommendations to overcome unhealthy or unsafe conditions or work practices.</li> </ul>
	<p>Implement their functions under the Safety, Welfare at work act 2007, which does not impose any duty of care, will be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• represent the employees in consultations with the employer.</li> <li>• assist the line manager to investigate potential hazards and dangerous occurrences in the workplace.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assist in the investigation of complaints by any employee they represent relating to that employee's health, safety and welfare at work.</li> <li>• make representations to the employer on matters arising from potential hazards, dangerous occurrences or complaints related to employees' health, safety and welfare at work.</li> <li>• assist the Line Manager in carrying out inspections of the workplace at regular intervals especially following accidents, dangerous occurrences  <i>Note: dangerous occurrence' means an occurrence arising from work activities in a place of work that causes or results in –</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) <i>the collapse, overturning, failure, explosion, bursting, electrical short circuit discharge or overload, or malfunction of any work equipment,</i></li> <li>(b) <i>the collapse or partial collapse of any building or structure under construction or in use as a place of work,</i></li> <li>(c) <i>the uncontrolled or accidental release, the escape or the ignition of any substance,</i></li> <li>(d) <i>a fire involving any substance, or</i></li> <li>(e) <i>any unintentional ignition or explosion of explosives</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>• represent employees in consultations at the workplace with inspectors of the Health and Safety Authority and any other enforcing authority.</li> <li>• attend meetings of the Health and Safety Representatives.</li> <li>• undertake the necessary training in order to be effective in their role as Health and Safety representative.</li> </ul>
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The Health and Safety Representative Oversight Committee will meet every quarter and will record minutes of these meetings. They will provide a written report to the advisory group on a quarterly basis as well as the QRS subcommittee to the board on a quarterly basis.



## Section 9 Roles and Responsibilities of Health and Safety Advisory Group

Each Location in Kare will appoint a Health and Safety Advisor to represent them with regard to safety, health and welfare matters. Their function, as outlined in the terms of reference of the group is to:

<b>Purpose</b>	Kare will appoint a Health and Safety advisory group to support the Health and Safety Oversight representatives and the Health and Safety Officer to coordinate the development and management of health and safety practices at work.
<b>Aim</b>	To oversee the local management of Health and Safety and to provide a level of assurance to the H&S Oversight representatives group that there are appropriate and effective systems in place that cover all aspects of Health and Safety across the organisation.
<b>Objectives</b>	<p>To carry out their functions which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Represent the employees in consultations with the H&amp;S oversight representatives group.</li> <li>• Assist the line manager to investigate potential hazards and dangerous occurrences in the workplace if required.</li> <li>• Attend meetings of the Health and Safety advisory group.</li> <li>• Undertake the necessary training in order to be effective in their role as Health and Safety advisors.</li> <li>• Act as <i>Infection prevention and control</i> Worker Representative in their location</li> <li>• Ensure H&amp;S practices are prioritised and reported on appropriately in their workplace</li> <li>• Ensure that they seek advice on behalf of their team when required</li> <li>• Ensure that the team in their location are aware of their</li> </ul>

	<p>responsibilities for implementing the H&amp;S framework in that location i.e. daily and weekly checks, transport checks, reporting of incidents and near miss incidents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure that H&amp;S reports shared on a quarterly basis are shared with the staff team for discussion and learning.</li></ul>
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The Health and Safety Reps Group will meet quarterly and will record minutes of these meetings. The minutes of the Health and Safety Reps Group will be published on Kare connect for access by staff.

## **Section 10 Contractors and Visitors**

### **Contractors**

A contractor is defined as any person who is not an employee of Kare and who enters Kare premises to provide a service, such as maintenance, building works, IT support, or any other contracted work. This definition explicitly includes sub-contractors engaged by the primary contractor.

To ensure health and safety standards are maintained, the following requirements apply to all contractors operating within Kare premises:

- All contractors will be issued with the Kare Contractor Rulebook, which outlines the organisation's health and safety expectations and procedures.
- Contractors must adhere to the guidelines and requirements set out in the Kare Contractor Rulebook at all times.
- Contractors are required to sign in upon entering any Kare Unit or Department and sign out when leaving, to maintain accurate records of personnel on site.
- Contractors must follow all relevant health and safety guidance as provided by Kare staff or documented in the Contractor Rulebook.

### **Visitors**

A visitor is any person who is not a Kare employee or contractor and who enters Kare premises for the purpose of visiting or meeting someone. This definition also includes Kare employees who do not normally work at the specific location they are visiting.

To ensure the safety and security of all individuals on site, the following procedures apply to visitors:

A record of all visitors will be maintained at each Kare location.

All visitors are expected to treat all people they encounter within Kare with respect, upholding the organisation's values and culture.

Visitors must follow any instructions given during an emergency, including evacuation procedures or other safety directions.

Visitors are required to follow all relevant health and safety guidance as advised by Kare staff or outlined in site-specific instructions.

**Note:** This will be specified in each location specific safety statement relevant for that premises.

### **Access to Kare Buildings**

All visits and contract work must be pre-arranged and agreed in advance.

Visitors should only go to Kare buildings with a scheduled appointment or for the purpose of collection / delivery.

**Note:** This will be specified in each location specific safety statement relevant for that premises.

## Section 11 Facilities Department – Roles and Responsibilities

The Facilities Department plays a central role in supporting a safe and compliant working environment across all Kare locations. The department is responsible for ensuring that appropriate resources are allocated to maintain and improve the physical infrastructure and systems required for health, safety, and welfare in the workplace.

### **Key responsibilities include:**

#### **1. Budget Management**

Manage the Facilities budget effectively and ensure that funds are allocated appropriately to meet statutory obligations and organisational needs.

Prioritise funding for critical H&S areas, including building maintenance, fire safety, statutory inspections, security, and safety-related equipment.

Work together with the Finance department to track and report on the Facilities budget and ensure transparency in expenditure aligned with Kare's financial and safety governance.

#### **2. Maintenance and Compliance**

Ensure that all facilities, plant, and equipment are maintained in safe and serviceable condition in compliance with legal requirements.

Oversee statutory inspections, servicing, and certifications (e.g. fire alarms, lifts, emergency lighting, water systems, gas safety).

Manage the prompt repair or replacement of defective infrastructure or equipment that could present a health and safety risk.

#### **3. Contractor and Vendor Management**

Ensure all contractors and service providers working on Kare premises comply with health and safety procedures outlined in the Kare Contractor Rule book.

Review and maintain safety documentation (e.g. Risk Assessments) for facilities-related

works.

Monitor contractor performance to ensure safe work practices and adherence to regulation.

#### **4. Health and Safety Risk Management**

Identify and mitigate facilities-related risks through site inspections, audits, and risk assessments in collaboration with the Quality department.

Contribute to the development and review of the organisation's Emergency Response Plans (e.g. fire safety plans, evacuation procedures).

Ensure physical infrastructure supports accessibility, fire safety, and ergonomic standards.

Be represented on Kare H&S oversight representatives group.

#### **5. Collaboration and Communication**

Work closely with Line Managers, the Quality department, and other departments to ensure that facilities-related H&S needs are addressed proactively.

Provide technical support and advice on facilities and infrastructure-related H&S matters.

Participate in H&S committees or working groups where required.

Outsource external expertise where required to manage H&S in the workplace.

#### **6. Training and Support**

Ensure that relevant facilities staff are trained and competent in their health and safety duties.

Support site-based teams in understanding and fulfilling facilities-related safety requirements (e.g. manual handling of equipment, use of fire extinguishers, etc.).

## **Section 12      Engagement of Health and Safety Consultant**

Kare will engage the services of a Health and Safety consultant as required to provide expert advice and guidance in the development, implementation, and continuous improvement of effective health, safety, and welfare policies, processes, and procedures throughout the organisation.

### Selection Criteria

In selecting a Health and Safety consultant, Kare will ensure that the individual or firm:

Possesses relevant qualifications, certifications, and professional memberships in occupational health and safety.

Demonstrates extensive experience working within the health and social care sector or comparable settings.

Has a proven track record of successfully supporting organisations in compliance with statutory requirements and best practice standards.

Exhibits the ability to deliver practical, tailored advice that aligns with Kare's values and operational needs.

Can provide timely and responsive support, including training, audits, risk assessments, and incident investigations as required.

### Integration and Governance

The Health and Safety consultant's recommendations and reports will be reviewed by the Health and Safety Officer and senior management.

Key findings and proposed improvements will be incorporated into Kare's Safety Statement, Risk assessments, policies, and procedures following consultation with relevant stakeholders

if required.

Consultant input will inform ongoing risk management, training programmes, and emergency preparedness.

Kare will maintain open communication channels with the consultant to support continuous enhancement of its health and safety performance.



## **Section 13      Communication and Consultation**

Kare is committed to ensuring open, consistent, and effective communication and consultation on matters relating to health, safety, and welfare across all levels of the organisation.

### **Stakeholder Communication**

Kare will inform all relevant stakeholders—including staff, people who use the service, family members, contractors, and members of the public—about its health, safety, and welfare policies and procedures through appropriate induction processes, communications, and ongoing engagement activities.

### **Organisational Communication Structures**

#### Senior Management Meetings

Health and Safety will be a standing agenda item at the Heads of Units/Departments meetings, chaired by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). These meetings facilitate the communication and escalation of safety, health, and welfare issues throughout the organisation.

#### Unit/Department Staff Meetings

Health and Safety will also be a fixed item on the monthly staff meetings at Unit/Department level to ensure ongoing communication, consultation, and discussion. These meetings will include:

Updates on the Safety Statement

Updates and review of the Unit/Department Risk Register and Emergency Response Plan

Feedback from Health and Safety Advisors meetings, including organisation learning following incidents in other locations and quarterly data analysis reports.

Results of audits and inspections both internal and external

Health and safety incidents, including corrective actions or new control measures, where relevant

### Board Oversight

The Quality, Risk and Safety Sub-Committee of the Board of Directors will receive quarterly reports on key health and safety matters. This ensures ongoing governance, oversight, and strategic direction in relation to health and safety performance and compliance.

### H&S Representatives committee

Meet each quarter in line with the terms of reference above.

### H&S advisors group

Meet each quarter in line with the terms of reference above

### Heads of Units Meetings

Meet on a bi monthly basis and receive a verbal and written report related to H&S as well as update on policy changes since the last meeting.

## **Section 14      Information, Instruction, Training, and Supervision**

Kare is committed to providing ongoing and continuous information, instruction, training, and supervision to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety, and welfare of all individuals in the workplace. This commitment aligns with the requirements set out in Sections 9 and 10 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

### **Kare will provide:**

Individuals who use Kare's services with appropriate support, information, and training relating to their health, safety, and welfare, tailored to their individual needs.

Ongoing support to Line Managers to equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to effectively manage risks, ensuring a safe and responsible working environment for all.

Job-specific training for staff on Kare's health and safety policies, processes, and procedures, including information on associated hazards, risks, and individual roles and responsibilities.

A structured Performance Management process that enables staff to identify and address their health and safety training needs in collaboration with their Line Manager, including mandatory training applicable to their role.

Mandatory Health and Safety training for new employees as an integral part of their induction programme.

Continuous support for members of the Health and Safety Representatives Oversight Committee, ensuring they understand their roles and responsibilities.

Training for Health and Safety Advisors focused on their specific roles and responsibilities within the organisation.

Kare will ensure that all required training is scheduled and delivered in accordance with the

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Staff Training & Development Policy, fostering a culture of continuous learning and compliance with health and safety standards.

Training records will be maintained on Kare TMS HR system.

Kare have a system in place that line managers complete a performance management Staff Annual & Interim Review and Reflection meeting with each staff member on an annual basis. This is documented locally in the HR file of the staff members and noted on TMS (time management system) record.

There is a performance management policy on Kare Connect. In addition to the annual formal meeting there is one are two or three informal meeting in the year and ongoing supervision also.

Each month, each line manager will ensure to have informal supervision discussion with each staff member. These discussions may happen in person, over the phone, or on a Microsoft teams call.

The discussions will cover items such as:

- Training gaps or needs
- Challenges experienced
- Concerns about quality and safety of the care provided
- Roster
- Adverse events
- Location issues
- Keyworker role

## Section 15 Fire and Emergency Response Plan

Section 11 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 requires Kare *‘to have in place adequate plans and procedures to be followed and measures to be taken in the case of an emergency or a serious and imminent danger within the workplace’* e.g. fire, disruption to water/electricity supplies, flooding, outbreak of illness, adverse weather, etc.

It is essential that plans are in place for all foreseeable internal emergencies/incidents that may occur. Plans will assist in mitigating risks for employees, service users, visitors and all that are in contact with the delivery of health services. All plans should be periodically tested and include contingency arrangements.

Kare’s Fire Safety Policy outlines the organisation’s approach to managing fire safety including:

- Roles and Responsibilities
- Fire prevention and Fire Detection Systems
- Emergency Response and Fire Drills
- Information and Training

Each Kare Unit / Department has an Emergency Response Plan which outlines the actions to be taken in the event of particular emergency events occurring including:

- Fire
- Power outage, including scheduled power outages
- Water loss
- Mechanical heating failure
- Person using the service going missing
- Flood
- Adverse weather conditions
- Violent incident

Each Unit/Department Leader will ensure that the Location Emergency Response Plan is kept Up-to-date and reviewed at least annually.

**Internal emergency/incident plans are included in services Site specific Safety Statements.**

It is the responsibility of the Line Manager to ensure a Risk Assessment with regard to Fire and an Emergency Response Plan is in place for the location/s they are responsible for and that they are kept up to date.

The Line Manager/Person in Charge of Kare Community and Short Break houses will ensure that each individual staying overnight has an up-to-date Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) and that there is an Emergency Pack in place.

The Local Service Leader will that ensure each individual who requires support to evacuate the building has an up-to-date Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan. (PEEP)

All Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) must be kept current and reviewed at least annually to ensure their continued relevance and effectiveness.

## Section 16 Managing Risk

Kare's Risk Management Policy outlines the approach for identifying, assessing, and managing risks associated with the organisation's activities, with the goal of minimising the potential for adverse outcomes and promoting a culture of safety, learning, and continuous improvement.

The policy addresses risk management across the following key areas:

Organisational/Corporate Risks – Identifying and managing risks that may impact the organisation as a whole.

Unit/Departmental Risks – Managing risks specific to operational areas or services.

Individual-Specific Risks – Addressing risks associated with particular individuals who use Kare's services.

Adverse Events and Learning – Monitoring and learning from incidents, near misses, issues, concerns, and complaints.

Risk Management Training – Providing information and training to staff to support effective risk management practices.

### Responsibilities

Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that a Risk Register is developed and maintained for each Unit or Department under their remit. This includes:

Ensuring the register captures all relevant risks, including those related to the safety, health, and welfare of people.

Keeping the register up to date and reviewing it at least biannually (every six months).

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Ensuring that specific Risk Assessments are reviewed when there is a change in circumstances or where control measures are no longer effective.

### Individual Risk Assessments

Where applicable, an Individual Risk Assessment will be carried out in response to a particular activity, behaviour, or area of concern relating to a person who uses Kare's services. Identified risks and agreed control measures will be documented and incorporated into the individual's Personal Support Plan, ensuring a consistent and person-centred approach to risk management.

### Risk Transference

Consideration must be given to the transference of clinical risks into the area of occupational health and safety, particularly where clinical supports and interventions impact staff safety. In situations where the activities or support needs of individuals using the service present potential risks to employees, these must be appropriately identified, assessed, and managed as part of Kare's integrated risk management approach.

Where necessary, clinical advice should be sought—for example, from Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Behaviour Specialists, or other relevant professionals—to ensure that control measures are both clinically appropriate and practically feasible from a staff safety perspective. This collaborative approach ensures that both the needs of the individual and the safety of staff are balanced effectively.

Control measures arising from such assessments must be documented, incorporated into the relevant Risk Register or Individual Risk Assessment, and communicated clearly to all relevant staff.



## **Section 17      Health and Safety Incident reporting**

Kare recognises the critical importance of prompt and accurate reporting of health and safety incidents in order to:

- Minimise the impact of any adverse outcomes
- Enable corrective and preventive actions to be taken to avoid recurrence
- Ensure relevant Risk Assessments are reviewed and updated with appropriate control measures
- Fulfil statutory reporting obligations to regulatory authorities
- Allow for the compilation of incident statistics to support learning and drive continuous improvement across the organisation

### Reporting Procedure

All staff must report health and safety incidents on the Kare CID system within 24 hours of the event occurring.

In cases where an incident results in an injury requiring intervention or presents an immediate concern, the staff member must verbally inform their Line Manager or designated person as soon as possible after the event to agree on any immediate actions required.

### Reporting in HIQA-Registered Houses

For HIQA-registered services, including Kare's Community Houses and Short Breaks Houses, the Social Care Leader (Person in Charge) is responsible for incident notifications to HIQA:

Serious injuries (requiring A&E treatment or hospitalisation) must be reported via a NF03

form on the HIQA Portal within 3 days.

Non-serious injuries (requiring only first aid or a GP visit) must be included in the Quarterly Report (NF39A).

### National Incident Management System (NIMS)

Kare is committed to the national reporting of health and safety incidents through the State Claims Agency's National Incident Management System (NIMS). All reportable incidents will be recorded on NIMS by Kare's NIMS Administrator.

### Regulatory Notifications

Kare will notify relevant regulatory bodies such as HIQA, TUSLA, and the HSE of serious health and safety incidents as required by legislation, regulation, or contractual obligation.

### Roles and Responsibilities

Line Managers must ensure that all staff under their supervision are:

- Aware of their obligations to report incidents
- Familiar with Kare's incident reporting procedures
- Supported in taking appropriate action in response to incidents

All employees, contractors, and visitors are required to co-operate fully with any investigation and to provide relevant information to help establish the circumstances surrounding the incident or near miss.

### Open Disclosure

Kare is committed to the principles of Open Disclosure and will ensure that individuals

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affected by a health and safety incident—or their representatives—are informed in a timely, transparent, and compassionate manner, in accordance with Kare’s Open Disclosure Policy.

## **Statutory Reporting to the Health and Safety Authority (HSA)**

Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007, certain incidents must be formally reported to the Health and Safety Authority (HSA). These include:

**Employee Absences:** If an employee is absent from work for more than three consecutive calendar days (excluding the day of the incident) as a result of an injury sustained in a workplace incident, it must be reported on the HSA on line portal. This must be completed within 10 days of the incident occurring.

**Dangerous Occurrences:** All dangerous occurrences, as defined by the legislation (e.g. collapse of scaffolding, explosions, electrical short circuits likely to cause fire), must be reported to the HSA, even if no injury occurred.

## **Responsibilities for Reporting**

Kare’s Human Resources (HR) Department is responsible for completing and submitting an online incident Form to the HSA in the event that an employee is absent for more than three calendar days due to a workplace injury.

Kare’s Health and Safety Officer is responsible for reporting any dangerous occurrences to the HSA in line with regulatory requirements.

## **Record-Keeping**

Copies of all statutory reports submitted to the HSA will be retained in accordance with Kare’s incident management and record-keeping procedures, and will be made available for audit or inspection as required.

## **Section 18      Internal and External H&S inspections**

### **Internal Inspections**

The Health and Safety Framework in Kare will be audited periodically by the Quality department.

The purpose of this is to assess systems compliance, provide independent assurance and identify areas for improvement (in line with the Audit policy). Implementation of audit findings is the responsibility of local line manager.

### **Health and Safety Authority Inspections**

The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) is the national statutory body with overall responsibility for the administration and enforcement of health and safety at work legislation. The HSA monitors compliance with legislation at the workplace and investigates accidents, causes of ill health and complaints.

HSA Inspectors carry out reactive and pro-active inspections of workplaces. Reactive inspections may arise following an accident, incident or complaint. Pro-active inspections may be routine or targeted.

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 permits the HSA Inspectors to take actions where statutory contraventions are observed, this may include;

#### Report of Inspection

Under Section 77 of the 2005 Act, an Inspector may issue a Report of Inspection setting out areas for improvement and advice about health and safety at work. Failure to comply with this advice and other relevant legal requirements may result in further enforcement action including prosecution.

#### Improvement Direction

Under Section 65 of the 2005 Act, an Inspector is empowered to serve an Improvement Direction in relation to activities to which the Inspector considers may involve risk to safety or health of persons.

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An employer is required to respond with an Improvement Plan which the Inspector can approve or require to be amended.

#### Improvement Notice

Under Section 66 of the 2005 Act, an Inspector is empowered to serve an Improvement Notice on the employer stating the Inspector's opinion that the employer or person has contravened a provision of an Act or Regulation, and requiring that the contravention be addressed in line with the direction given in the notice and any accompanying documentation, if any, issued with the notice.

#### Prohibition Notice

Under Section 67 of the 2005 Act, an Inspector is empowered to serve a Prohibition Notice where an Inspector is of the opinion that an activity is likely to involve a risk of serious personal injury to any person. This notice takes effect immediately from when the person or organisation, on whom the notice is served, receives the notice.

For further information refer to:

[https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/inspections/inspectors/actions\\_of\\_inspectors/](https://www.hsa.ie/eng/topics/inspections/inspectors/actions_of_inspectors/)

## **Appendices:**

**Appendix 1:** [Strategic Plan 2021 - 2025](#)

**Appendix 2:** [List of Kare's Locations](#)

**Appendix 3:** [Link to Open Disclosure Policy](#)

**Appendix 4:** [Kare Organisational Chart](#)

## **Appendix 5 - Useful Websites**

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/qavd/riskmanagement/risk-management-documentation/>

<http://www.hsa.ie>

<https://osha.europa.eu/en>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk>

[http://www.who.int/topics/occupational health/en/](http://www.who.int/topics/occupational_health/en/)

<http://www.hiqa.ie/>

<http://www.mhcirl.ie/>

<http://www.ntma.ie/business-areas/state-claims-agency/>

<http://www.hpsc.ie>