

WEST LIMERICK INDEPENDENT LIVING CLG

Communication with MDTs and GPs Policy

Policy Reference	WLILP41
Category	Operational Policies — Clinical & Care Practice
Version	2.2 (staff guidance quick guide appendix added)
Status	APPROVED — by the Board of Directors on 9 October 2026
Supersedes	WLILP41 - Communication with MDTs and GPs Policy (approved by the Manager, 03.04.2025); WLILP41 - Communication with MDTs and GPs Policy - DRAFT v2.0
Policy Owner	Board of Directors, West Limerick Independent Living CLG
Applies To	All staff at West Limerick Independent Living CLG ("WLIL") who liaise with external healthcare professionals, including MDT members and GPs, in relation to service user care
Related Policies	WLILP7A - Data Protection Policy; WLILP7D - Data Retention, Rectification and Erasure Policy; WLILP17 - Consent Policy; WLILP30 - Incident Management & Reporting Policy; WLILP47 - Confidentiality and Information Sharing Policy
Review Cycle	Annually, or sooner if changes in practice or regulation occur

1. Purpose

To ensure clear, timely, and professional communication with Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs) and General Practitioners (GPs) to support the health and wellbeing of service users. This policy promotes collaboration, accurate information sharing, and continuity of care.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff at WLIL who are responsible for liaising with external healthcare professionals, including MDT members and GPs, in relation to service user care.

3. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

- Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR — see WLILP7A - Data Protection Policy
- HSE National Consent Policy 2022 (updated to Version 1.2 in January 2024), and the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015 as amended — see WLILP17 - Consent Policy for WLIL's full consent framework, including how consent for sharing information with a service user's GP or MDT is obtained and recorded
- HIQA Draft National Standards for Home Support Services (2024)

4. Objectives

- Maintain effective and respectful communication with healthcare professionals
- Ensure accurate and timely sharing of relevant information
- Support continuity and coordination of care for service users
- Protect service user confidentiality and comply with data protection regulations

5. Communication Principles

- All communication must be clear, factual, respectful, and free of jargon
- Use professional language and ensure accuracy of information shared
- Maintain confidentiality in line with WLILP47 - Confidentiality and Information Sharing Policy
- Document all communications with MDTs and GPs in the service user's record

6. Process for Communication

A. Routine Communication

- Use secure email, written letters, or phone calls to share updates or queries
- Confirm receipt of important communications and follow up if necessary
- Document date, time, method of communication, and a summary of the discussion

B. Urgent Communication

- For urgent matters affecting service user safety or health, contact the GP or MDT member by phone as the first priority
- Clearly state the urgency of the situation and provide concise information
- Follow up with written confirmation of the call and document appropriately
- Where the urgent matter is also a safety incident, notifying the GP or MDT does not replace WLIL's own internal reporting obligations under WLILP30 - Incident Management & Reporting Policy — both should happen

C. Service User Involvement

- Where appropriate, inform the service user or their representative about communication with their healthcare providers
- Respect the service user's consent and preferences regarding the sharing of their information, obtained and recorded in line with WLILP17 - Consent Policy

7. Responsibilities

- Manager — oversee implementation of the policy and ensure staff adherence
- Service Coordinators — maintain regular communication with MDTs and GPs as required, and document all interactions
- Staff — report relevant service user information to Coordinators promptly for onward communication

8. Training and Awareness

- Staff will receive guidance on professional communication standards during induction
- Refresher training will be provided as part of ongoing professional development

9. Records Retention

Records of communications with MDTs and GPs, generated under this policy, are retained in accordance with WLILP7D - Data Retention, Rectification and Erasure Policy, which is the single authoritative source for WLIL's retention periods.

10. Monitoring and Review

- Managers will review communication records periodically to ensure compliance
- This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if changes in practice or regulation occur

This policy reflects GDPR, the HSE National Consent Policy, and HIQA's Draft National Standards for Home Support Services (2024), checked as accurate as of drafting. It is not a substitute for legal or clinical advice.

Appendix — Staff Guidance Quick Guide

The following quick-reference guide summarises this policy for day-to-day use. It does not replace the policy itself.

APPENDIX – STAFF GUIDANCE



Communication with GPs and Healthcare Professionals (Quick Guide)

Simple guidance for supporting safe, person-centred communication



YOUR ROLE (KEEP IT SIMPLE)

You are there to:

- Support the person
- Observe and report concerns
- Communicate appropriately when needed



YOU ARE NOT THERE TO:

- Give medical advice
- Make clinical decisions
- Manage healthcare services



1 CONSENT COMES FIRST



Before sharing any information, make sure the person has given **consent**.



Respect their choices and preferences.



If unsure → contact your Coordinator.



2 WHEN TO COMMUNICATE WITH A GP



You may need to report:

- Changes in health or behaviour
- Concerns about medication (what you observe only)
- After hospital visits or appointments
- Anything unusual or worrying



3 URGENT SITUATIONS

If something is serious:



1. Contact the GP immediately



2. Call emergency services (999/112) if needed



3. Inform your Coordinator

Always record what happened.



4 HOW TO COMMUNICATE

Use:



Phone



Secure email (if available)



Information passed through Coordinator

Keep communication:

Clear • Factual • Relevant



5 RECORD EVERYTHING

You must record:



What you observed



What action you took



Who you informed



Any outcome



If it's not written down → it didn't happen.



6 WORKING WITH OTHER PROFESSIONALS (MDT)

You may:



Share information (with consent)



Attend meetings if asked



Support the person to be involved

You do not:



Lead meetings



Make decisions for professionals



7 ALWAYS REMEMBER



The person is in control of their life.



This is their home, not a clinical setting.



Your role is to support, not direct.



IF IN DOUBT

Contact your Service Coordinator before taking action.



KEY MESSAGE:

OBSERVE – REPORT – RECORD – RESPECT THE PERSON'S WISHES

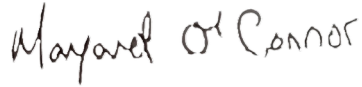
This guide supports WLILP41 – Communication with GPs and Multidisciplinary Teams Policy.

Version 1.0 | May 2025

Approval

Approved by the Board of West Limerick Independent Living CLG on 9 October 2026.

Signed on behalf of the Board, on its instruction, by the General Manager:



Margaret O'Brien O'Connor, General Manager

Date signed: 09-10-2026