



## **Standards for Service for Springwell Providers** (last updated August 2022)

### **COMMUNICATION on CONSUMER ISSUES**

Springwell's goal is for our Care Managers to be aware of all consumer related issues. Provider staff are often our eyes and ears in the consumer's home.

Please contact a consumer's Springwell Care Manager regarding any concerns, including:

- Issues between the consumer, a consumer's family member(s) and a vendor staff member
- Changes in the health or functional ability of a consumer
- Changes in a consumer's home environment
- Questions and recommendations regarding a consumer's services (examples: need for additional hours or the recommendation that there be a change from a HHA to a SHCA)

Please contact Springwell staff by using their direct phone number or DID. Springwell Care Managers are often in the field and therefore an individual Care Manager may not be available immediately. For matters that cannot wait until the Care Manager returns, Springwell has an on-call Care Manager. If the Care Manager on-call does not answer when you call, please leave a message. They frequently check voice mail and will return your call promptly. (Please note that a complete list of Care Manager DID#s is shared via email with all of our vendor agencies on a quarterly basis.)

When appropriate, Springwell Care Managers will contact the consumer and/or family members about the issues a vendor reports.

Please note that administrative changes should not be communicated to a Care Manager but should instead be sent to [providerdirect@springwell.com](mailto:providerdirect@springwell.com). Examples of administrative changes are listed under "Provider Direct."

### **Family Members being the workers for our consumers**

EOEA's regulations don't prohibit family members who are employed by Springwell's vendor agencies from being assigned to a Springwell consumer. However, Springwell feels strongly that such a situation could be fraught with problems and it is our preference not to. If you feel that a family member is an appropriate assignment, Springwell would want to be aware of this and approve it prior to the case being assigned.

### **REQUESTS for SERVICES**

Springwell created a software system that gathers all service requests from individual Care Managers and sends out an email listing all requests to those vendors who provide the requested service. This email "blast" is sent each morning Monday through Friday. Included in this blast is all the information that a vendor needs to determine if they have a worker who can fill a particular case.

Each morning, when vendors receive the blast, they should review the listings and contact the listed Care Manager via their DID (which is included with the request) if you wish to take on the case. When you contact

the Care Manager, they will provide identifying consumer information to determine if the case is a good fit for your agency.

Once your agency fills a case, please email the following to the Care Manager:

- Name of Worker (first and last)
- Start date of service
- Days and hours of service

### **COMPLIMENTS and REPORTS of DISSATISFACTION**

Springwell tracks all feedback received about the in-home care provided by vendors including feedback received from the following:

- Consumers
- Family members
- Community professionals
- Care managers
- Finance department staff members

These reports include the name of the consumer, the name of the vendor and the type of issue being reported. All feedback is entered into our software which then sends an email to the identified contact person at your agency. All reports must be reviewed and initially responded to within 48 hours, unless a shorter response time is mandated by the Department of Public Health regulations found at 105 CMR 155.00. It is understood that some issues take more than 48 hours to investigate and resolve and that a follow-up email will be necessary.

Springwell reviews all reports as they come into the agency and is required by EOE to document a resolution to each report. In addition, Springwell analyzes the data from all reports to identify and respond to trends.

### **PROVIDER DIRECT**

Springwell has a team of staff members who manage Provider Direct. They check the Provider Direct email throughout the day, respond to questions, and update consumer records as needed. Vendors should email all administrative communication about Springwell consumers to provider direct at [providerdirect@springwell.com](mailto:providerdirect@springwell.com). Please always copy the Care Manager so they are aware of consumer updates as well. For your convenience we have provided a consumer change form to assist in making sure we receive all necessary information in order to make adjustments in a timely manner. Please see Attachment A.

Administrative communication includes:

- Service suspensions
- Service reinstatements
- One time change in worker, day of service, or hours of service
- Permanent change in worker
- Permanent change in day(s) of service
- Permanent change in total number of hours

Please email this information to [providerdirect@springwell.com](mailto:providerdirect@springwell.com) as it becomes known. Such information should not be held till the end of the month and communicated to Springwell as part of a vendor's billing preparation process.

## SERVICE DELIVERY

When Springwell signs a contract with a provider for services, it is our expectation and (for many of the below) EOE's expectations that the following will happen:

- You, the provider, will employ a significant number of staff so as to cover unplanned absences or the sudden departure of workers so our consumers will experience minimum disruption as possible.
- When a worker is assigned to a Springwell consumer, it is our expectation that the worker will provide consistent service to that consumer. Multiple no shows, cancellations and/or leaving early all result in the consumer not receiving the total authorized hours and is disruptive. Continuous occurrences of this would result in a meeting between the vendor agency and the Coordinator of Care Partnerships to discuss solutions and next steps.
- No permanent changes are to be made to a consumer's schedule without prior notification to the appropriate Springwell staff member.
- The provider shall not increase, decrease, or in any way alter the type and amount of authorized service to be delivered to Springwell consumers without approval from the Care Manager

## TIMESHEETS

- are to be signed by the consumer on a **daily** basis and the following must be included on the timesheet, in ink, prior to asking for a signature
  - Consumer's name and worker's name
  - Date of service
  - Time the worker started service and completed service with the consumer.
- Anytime a worker changes their schedule, whether it be permanent or one time only, it is the actual hours that should be listed on the timesheet and not the scheduled hours
- Please know that we instruct our consumers not to sign inaccurate or blank timesheets. Please share this with your workers and ask that they not pressure a consumer to do so. If there are any discrepancies, your worker should bring it to their supervisor immediately and Springwell staff can work out the issue with the coordinator. The sooner any questions are identified, the less chance there is for misunderstanding on both sides.
- If a consumer is unable to sign a timesheet for any reason (blindness, cognitive ability, physical ability to hold a pen), the method by which the hours will be "approved" must be agreed upon with Springwell's Care Manager and not determined solely by the vendor agency.
- Whenever there is a question about the time that a worker spent with a consumer, the timesheet is used for clarification. The timesheets **MUST** state the actual hours worked. If the timesheet lists service from 10-2 but in actuality it occurred from 12-4, we consider this to be an inappropriate timesheet submission, even if the total hours are the same.
- Resolving reports of billing differences as told to Springwell by a consumer or family member.
  - When a consumer or family member reports to Springwell that a worker doesn't stay for the full amount of hours yet we see timesheets that reflect all the hours, Springwell expects you, the provider agency to actively investigate what is happening. This can include bringing the worker into your office to get their side of the story but assuming that the two stories are still very different, it can include :
    - An unannounced phone call to the consumer's home at the time when the worker is scheduled to be there to confirm that they are in fact there
    - It could also include making an unannounced visit to the consumer's home for the same reasons.
    - Depending on the circumstances, Springwell may also do one or both of these to ascertain for ourselves what the situation is.

- It is considered a serious breach for a worker to submit a timesheet for hours not worked and Springwell is unable to pay for such services. In addition, when we become aware of such instances, we will have the worker pulled from all of our consumers and not allow the worker back with any of our consumers.

### **TIMESHEETS- Telephony systems**

- In the event that a consumer does not have a landline, prefers that the worker does not use their home phone or encounters a transmission issue the worker/vendor agency is responsible to
  - Create a paper timesheet according to the above rules (on-going) or
  - Contact the vendor office upon arrival and departure from the consumer's home to verify the hours in the event of a (temporary) transmission issue
- Vendors should maintain copies of telephony records for the same period as they would for the signed timesheets in the event that they need to be reviewed for consumer request or for audits

### **MONTHLY BILLING for SERVICES**

Vendors are required to submit a monthly bill via Provider Direct by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month following service. Springwell Provider Direct staff checks the Provider Direct mailbox on an on-going basis and updates service plans and resolves issues. This is done on an on-going basis so that vendors can post their services by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.

Springwell can only pay for services that have been delivered to a consumer when the consumer was home to receive them. Springwell expects that you, the provider, will bill us from services recorded on actual timesheets and not based on a worker's schedule. Springwell expects that you have sufficient practices and internal controls in place to do so and may ask that you detail such procedures if there is a question as to billing for hours not delivered to consumers.

Springwell staff is happy to assist you with fixing errors received when trying to post in Provider Direct. If you send an email asking for help with posting errors that are required to be fixed in order to post your bill please include "billing issue" in the subject line of your email (so it can be identified and made high priority).

Please note: Springwell's goal is to fix service plans throughout the month so that there is no delay in your posting bills by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.

When you finish posting your bill, please send an email to [providerdirect@springwell.com](mailto:providerdirect@springwell.com) stating:

- you have posted the invoice
- total \$ amount you billed and posted for that month
- a statement saying: ***"I certify that the services posted for this invoice were delivered to the consumers on the dates and in the amounts as posted. The total is \$xx.xx for x,xxx units"***

Your contract allows for an additional 30 days for charges that have been miscoded or for late timesheets. Late billing is not handled through the Provider Direct billing system. If you have late billing, please email it to [providerdirect@springwell.com](mailto:providerdirect@springwell.com), separately from the current monthly bill.

When Springwell does not pay for billed services we include a detail of what is not being paid with the month's check. If you have a charge listed on your A/R and have not received a check for that charge, this generally means that we didn't receive the billing for that charge. In these situations, follow up with Springwell's AP Accountant immediately.

If Springwell determines that you, the provider, received payments not authorized, such payments may be deducted from a future payment owed to the provider.

## **ENSURING QUALITY**

Springwell is continuously engaging in a quality improvement process to help ensure that we are providing the highest quality service possible. Included in this process are the following 3 types of surveys that are required by EOE:

### **1. Observation of Point of Service Surveys (POS)**

A review of vendor activity is conducted annually at a consumer's annual assessment. A consumer's Care Manager is required to conduct this survey with the consumer during the vendor worker's scheduled work time. (Please note that in order to ensure that this survey is conducted at the appropriate time it is imperative that all schedule changes are communicated to the consumer's Care Manager as those changes happen.)

### **2. Staff Surveys**

Springwell Care Managers and Finance department staff complete a survey on each vendor on a semi-annual basis.

### **3. Consumer Surveys**

On an annual basis, Springwell asks all consumers to rate the services they receive from our vendors.

Springwell compiles the results of the above 3 surveys on an on-going basis. Each response is looked at individually and aggregate data on all responses to a particular survey are reviewed to identify trends and implement improvements if necessary. Each vendor receives information on the results of surveys conducted on their services. Please review such feedback as it is received and inform Springwell of any response to such feedback, including changes in procedures.

## **COMMUNICATION on ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES**

Our goal is to provide vendors with accurate, timely information that supports quality service. The on-going communication Springwell provides vendors includes:

- quarterly summary report which includes:
  - Total # of consumers vendor served in month
  - Total \$ paid to vendor broken down by type of service
  - # new requests that vendor picked up
  - # new requests that were picked up directly from our daily email blast
  - Average # of days from inquiry by your agency to service start date
- Reports of Dissatisfaction and Compliments
- Survey results

## **CUSTOMER SERVICE**

Finally, to be as effective as possible, it is Springwell's policy that all employees respond to phone calls and emails from consumers, family members and community professionals within one business day. This initial call may only be to inform the caller that his message has been received and that they will be back in contact

as soon as they have the information being requested. We ask this of vendors, to do the same that your staff strive to return our calls and emails within one business day.

## **RESOLVING VENDOR ISSUES**

As shared above, Springwell has a number of methods to track issues our consumers and staff report about vendors and in our efforts to treat all vendors in the same manner, we have developed a set of criteria as to the different levels of action we will take.

If any of the below occurs, a phone call will be made to the manager of the provider agency

- 3 or more complaints in a month or
- The # of complaints in a month >/5% of the # of consumers receiving service from the provider agency
- The # of complaints in a quarter >/5% of the # of consumers receiving service from the provider agency

The vendor is then placed on a 3 month “watch” with the Coordinator of Care Partnerships. Any additional complaint reports or issues that are learned in this watch period will result in a face to face meeting at Springwell between (minimally) the Coordinator of Care Partnerships and the manager of the provider agency.

If the issues persist enough to require a meeting at Springwell, the outcome of the meeting will include next steps, changes needed and a timeline in which all of these will occur. This will be tracked by the Coordinator of Care Partnerships for the pre-determined period of time. If things do not change as planned or if there are additional complaints, the vendor may be put on suspension to new referrals until things are at the agreed upon levels.

## **POLICIES and PROCEDURES, GENERAL**

- The provider will comply with Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action requirements
- The provider agrees that no workers will solicit or accept gratuities or payment from a consumer or family member for services delivered under this contract
- The provider will be evaluated at an on-site audit by Springwell to confirm compliance with EOEA’s requirements and Springwell’s Standards for Service
- The provider agrees to conduct the following in-house trainings for staff, minimum once per year
  - Conflict of interest
  - Procedure for reporting suspected cases of abuse, neglect, mistreatment and misappropriation of consumer property
  - Rules for completing timesheets (see timesheets) and remediation if they are not adhered to
  - Procedure for reporting change in schedule with a consumer (both one time only changes and permanent) to provider coordinator who in turn will report all changes to Springwell via PD
  - Fraud, waste and abuse
- Requirements of Prevention, Reporting and Investigation of Abuse by Homemakers and Home Health Aides (EOEA PI-07-03 and 105 CMR 155)
  - Provider is aware of and fully complies with the rules of PI-07-03 and 105 CMR 155
- Fraud, waste and abuse (see Fraud, Waste and Abuse document for further detail)
  - The provider acknowledges that it is required under federal and state law to have policies and procedures to prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse and to educate employees about such laws
- In accordance with PI-11-07 issues by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs, the provider may not require any current or prospective direct care worker to sign a non-compete clause as a condition of employment.

- In accordance with PI-11-06, providers must ensure to the best of their ability that consumers who are Risk level 1 do not experience a service interruption and that the consumers who are Risk level 2 have service priority. In order to meet the needs of these consumers, providers may need to reassign workers from consumers with Risk level 4 (first) and Risk Level 3 (if necessary)
- The provider shall (at a minimum) orient all staff to:
  - The nature of home care and its services
  - Issues related to working with the elderly and disabled adults
  - Procedures and requirements for the delivery of services under this contract
- The provider will maintain all hard copy consumer records in secure locked files. Access to consumer records shall be limited to provider staff involved with the direct care of the consumer and appropriate administrative and supervisory staff.
- The provider will establish appropriate administrative and technical safeguards to ensure the security of electronic consumer data.
- Home Health Aide care plans should be signed and returned to the ASAP no later than 20 business days after the first request from our administrative staff. If not received within the 20 business days the Coordinator of Care Partnerships is notified to follow up on requests.
- The provider is allowed to enlist subcontractors when providing service to consumers, but must request and receive the written permission of Springwell to do so. Springwell's preference is that a provider use their own staff. Providers must report all subcontractors to Springwell's Coordinator of Care Partnerships and any changes immediately thereafter. Updates or changes to subcontractors should be sent via letter, which includes the new provider and a brief reason for the change. Subcontractors of vendors agencies are held to the same standards as vendors directly contracted with Springwell Inc. The oversight and monitoring of a subcontractor is the sole responsibility of the provider agency.

Please sign, date and return to Springwell.

By signing the below, I agree to follow all of Springwell's and the Executive Office of Elder Affairs standards for service as included in this document (**Standards for Service for Springwell Providers** updated **August 2022**) and in the contract documents. I also acknowledge that I have shared all information with staff at my agency so they too can ensure that all requirements are being followed.

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Provider Name

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Provider authorized signature

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Title

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Printed Name

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Date