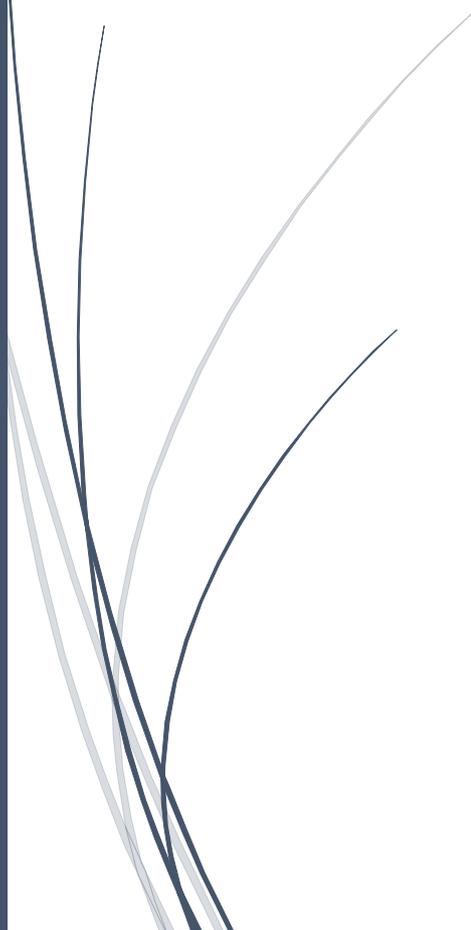


May 2018

Intimate Care Policy

Franciscan Province of Ireland





proibhinse fhroinsiasach na h-éireann
franciscan province of ireland
provincial office – 4, merchants' quay – dublin 8 – ireland

Intimate Care Policy –

Intimate care involves those activities that people generally do for themselves, such as, washing, dressing and toileting. Franciscan personnel are not ordinarily involved in the provision of intimate care and are not authorised to carry out such tasks.

There are organisations that, for example, care for children with disabilities where intimate care is provided. The members of such organisations are authorised to provide such care by virtue of their membership of the organisation. They are subject to the policies and procedures of the organisation. Children who go on the Franciscan pilgrimage to Lourdes may require some degree of intimate care. The volunteers who accompany the children are given guidance and direction on these matters by the committee that organises the pilgrimage.

School children (generally aged at least 17) who accompany the (adult) pilgrims are not permitted to provide intimate care for the sick pilgrims. Such care is provided by the nursing and other adult volunteers. School children are required to wear blue shirts to ensure that they are easily distinguishable from the other volunteers and do not find themselves in a situation where they are asked to provide such care.

It is not possible to anticipate every eventuality and situations can arise when adults are required to depart from normal practice.

In general, adults should not do for children what children can do for themselves. A child who has a toileting accident, for example, may need some adult assistance but that does not necessarily mean accompanying the child to the toilet.

Touching children may be appropriate in certain situations, for instance, in comforting a distressed child. Some rules apply.

Offering physical comfort/reassurance should always be done in response to the child's needs and wishes. Adults need to be sensitive to what is being communicated by the child's behaviour (children who are not comfortable being touched will draw back from contact). Any physical contact should take place in the presence of others. Children should only be touched over their clothes and above the waist (and away from the breast area for girls).

As in all such situations, knowing as much as possible about the children for whom the adults are responsible will help the adult staff and volunteers respond appropriately to their needs. Groups that are involved in planning activities and trips away should always ask the parents of the children whether there is any information that needs to be shared with the adult carers.

Aidan McGrath OFM
Minister Provincial

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