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Risk and Safety Policy

Summary: The Risk and Safety Policy provide a set of guiding principles for supporting people to make decisions that involve some risk to them. These principles provide the framework for the identification, assessment and management of risk in a person centred environment.





Risk and Safety Policy

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| Policy Manual | Safeguarding Policy and Practice Manual |
| Approved by | Deputy Secretary, ADHC, FACS |
| Summary | The Risk and Safety Policy provide a set of guiding principles for supporting people to make decisions that involve some risk to them. These principles provide the framework for the identification, assessment and management of risk in a person centred environment. |
| Replaces document | Client Risk Policy, 2008 |
| Authoring unit | Contemporary Residential Options Directorate |
| Applies to | People who are being supported in ADHC operated and funded accommodation support services |
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Version control

The first and final version of a document is version 1.0.

The subsequent final version of the first revision of a document becomes version 1.1.

Each subsequent revision of the final document increases by 0.1, for example version 1.2, version 1.3 etc.

Revision history

| Version | Amendment date | Amendment notes |
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| V1.0 | January 2016 | Replaces Client Risk Policy, 2008 |

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1 Background and purpose of policy

1.1 Background

The Risk and Safety Policy (the Policy) embodies the principles of legal and human rights found in the New South Wales Disability Service Standards (the Standards), the person centred guiding principles of the Lifestyle Planning Policy and the commitment to deliver culturally responsive services to Aboriginal people under the Aboriginal Policy Statement (the Statement) and the Aboriginal Service Charter (the Charter).

The Policy operates within ADHC's Safeguarding and Lifestyle Planning frameworks and defines how people with disability and their families exercise their rights and entitlements, under the Standards, Statement and Charter, to make informed decisions involving risk.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the Policy is to present a set of guiding principles that provide a framework for supporting people to make decisions that involve some risk to them.

The management of risk as required under the Policy enables support workers to assist people in a manner that fulfills their duty of care responsibilities.

The Risk and Safety Policy is **mandatory** in **ADHC operated** and **ADHC funded** non-government disability support services (NGOs).

The following Person Centred Guiding Principles are fundamental to a person centred approach when supporting people to make decisions involving risk as they plan to achieve their goals. The Policy is supported by the Risk and Safety Procedures, Guidelines, Tools and Templates and Other Resources.

The Procedures are **mandatory** for use in **ADHC operated** disability support services.

The Procedures may be adopted or adapted by ADHC funded non-government support services to suit their organisational structure. They describe the My Safety Plan and how to complete it.

The My Safety Checklist is a **mandatory** tool in **ADHC operated** disability support services.

The Guidelines introduce the risk management framework and person centred risk management tools. The Guidelines are **not mandatory** and contain additional information and scenarios to enable line managers to facilitate discussions with support workers about the concepts of duty of care and dignity of risk. They also provide guidance to anyone supporting a person to manage risk and achieve positive outcomes for lifestyle, safety, health and wellbeing.

2 Policy Statement

2.1 Person Centred Guiding Principles

2.1.1 Person at the centre

1. The person is central to decisions about taking and managing risk to the full extent of his or her capacity, and is able to access support to identify, assess and treat risk in accordance with her or his circumstances, lifestyle preferences and goals.
2. The person is supported to identify and use decision making opportunities that enable him or her to take reasonable and considered risks in the pursuit of his or her goals and lifestyle choices.

2.1.2 Inclusion of others

3. Risk identification, management planning and support is provided, wherever it is requested or required by the person, by his or her family, guardian, friends, specialists¹ and support workers.

2.1.3 Communication

4. The person has access to information, or is provided with the skills and support to access information to the full extent of his or her capacity, in an appropriate format enabling her or him to make informed choices when taking and managing risks.
5. The person is encouraged to self-advocate, to communicate lifestyle choices and decisions, and to develop and gain self-confidence in risk taking and management.
6. Support workers consult with relevant others, such as other service providers, throughout the risk management process, and include them in risk planning meetings to ensure risk management is consistent across all environments.
7. Information and documentation about risk taking and management in relation to a person with disability is made available to others providing support services to the person in compliance with the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* and *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002*.

¹ Specialists include physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech pathologists, behaviour support practitioners, psychologists, dietitians etc.

2.1.4 Development and review

8. Every person has a My Safety Checklist completed at least once a year; and where risks are identified, he or she has a current My Safety Management Plan.
9. Every person entering a support service is supported to complete a My Safety Checklist and, if required, to develop a My Safety Management Plan prior to entry into the service.
10. The My Safety Plan is reviewed with the person every three months, or more often if needed, in consultation with family members, friends and others who know the person such as, guardians, specialists and support workers, when requested or required by the person.

2.1.5 Lifestyle planning

11. The prioritisation and management of risks involves a balanced consideration of what is 'important to' and what is 'important for' the person.
12. The person's My Safety Plan is taken into consideration when deciding on actions aimed at achieving her or his Lifestyle Planning goals.
13. Monitoring the My Safety Plan is an ongoing activity, aimed at supporting the right of every person to change lifestyle preferences, goals and priorities.
14. When changes to risk management strategies are made, the impact of the changes on the lifestyle preferences and goals of the person with disability are taken into consideration.

2.1.6 Considering culture

15. Risk management takes into account the specific cultural, linguistic and religious needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and those from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

2.1.7 Work, health and safety (WHS)

16. WHS obligations are met in a manner that allows people to take reasonable risks in their daily lives and without placing support workers and others at risk of harm.

2.1.8 Incident management

17. Everyone working in ADHC operated accommodation support services, reads and uses the Risk and Safety Policy in conjunction with the Incident Reporting and Management Policy for FACS Ageing and Disability Direct Services and its associated guidelines.
18. ADHC funded non-government support services have an effective incident management and reporting system in place to ensure that their WHS and other legal obligations are met.

2.2 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

ADHC is committed to working in ways that are supportive and empowering of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their families and communities. To make a difference, services need to be responsive and sensitive to the specific needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The Aboriginal Policy Statement underpins ADHC's strategic direction for Aboriginal people.

Cultural sensitivity is fundamental to a person centred approach to risk management. Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must be done in the context of the family, community and the land.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can be well supported if culturally sensitive and person centred approaches are employed during risk management in the following ways:

- recognising the person's culture is a way of acknowledging and valuing the person's identity,
- understanding the person's history and experiences and acknowledge the history of difficulty with relationships between government services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people,
- using the person's communication profile to learn the best way of communicating information about risk management,
- recognising family, kinship and friend relationships and the person's connection to community and the land,
- determining who in the family or community should be approached to discuss risk management issues, assist in decision making and/or provide consent,
- determining which risk management issues or practices are sensitive or taboo and who to refer to if they are,
- ensuring that the person and family understand the risk management options and how they can implement them.

2.3 People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

People bring their values, beliefs and experiences with them when they relocate to another country. The person and family's behaviour, attitude, preferences and decisions about risks are influenced by culture and religious practices.

A person's cultural and religious preferences should be ascertained when the risk management process starts. Demonstrate respect and sensitivity by considering:

- the person and the family's perspective on risk,
- the role of spiritual and religious beliefs and practices,
- the role of the family, including who is considered part of the family,

- how the person and their family communicate and whether an interpreter is required,
- any words or expressions that are taboo,
- the person's role in problem solving and decision making.

Build trust, and practice good communication when exploring the beliefs, values and practices of the person and family. Demonstrate respect, appreciation and sensitivity about the topic of risk. Be prepared to discuss and record what is learned over several meetings.

3 Monitoring, evaluation and review

The Policy will be reviewed if there is any significant new information, legislative or organisational change that makes changes to this document necessary.

Reviews will be completed in consultation with the appropriate parties for relevance and effectiveness.

4 Legislation, policy and standards context

The Policy's person-centred guiding principles align with the principles of the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities relating to independence, autonomy and choice.

The Policy is consistent with the objects and principles of the *Disability Inclusion Act 2014* (the Act). The Policy embodies the objects of the Act by supporting people to be actively involved in risk management processes throughout their lives.

The Policy operates in the context of FACS' Risk Management Framework and Policy (March 2014) which uses a set of core principles to communicate basic values and expectations for decision making and behaviour.

Support workers are to follow FACS' Work Health and Safety Risk Management Policy, and other relevant WHS policies and procedures, to ensure that the people they support, themselves and others are safe, and not exposed to health and safety risks (*Work Health and Safety Act 2011*).

The Risk and Safety Policy also operates in the context of ADHC's Safeguarding Framework, Lifestyle Planning Policy and Guidelines, and Health and Wellbeing Policy and associated procedures and guidelines.

5 Policy and Practice Unit contact details

You can get advice and support about this policy from the Policy and Practice Unit, Service Improvement, Contemporary Residential Options Directorate.

Policy and Practice, Service Improvement
Contemporary Residential Options Directorate
ADHC
policyandpracticefeedback@fac.s.nsw.gov.au

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