# 32. Safe Environment Policy and Procedure

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## Purpose

Safety for our participants is pivotal to the provision of high-quality supports and services. This policy is designed to ensure that all participants have access to services and supports that are:

- Free from violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation or discrimination

- Located in safe environments appropriate to their needs

- Risk-averse; risks to participants are identified and managed effectively

- Implemented by Staff/workers who are competent in relation to their role, hold relevant qualifications, expertise and experience in providing person-centred, needs-based support

- Transparent; where incidents are acknowledged, responded to, managed effectively and any key learnings recorded.

## Scope

All Staff must ensure that they focus on the safety of every participant. Staff must also be responsible for their safety within the workplace.

## Policy

Australian Quality Care will ensure that participants can identify our front-line workers.

Australian Quality Care will review the safety of the participant's home environment and work safely with the participant.

If required, Australian Quality Care will work with other providers and services to identify and treat risks, ensure safe environments, and prevent or manage injuries.

## Procedure

### Staff identification

Participants in all environments must be able to easily identify Staff. Staff identification could be in the form of a uniform or identification tags or badges. Staff must introduce themselves at the beginning of each service delivery.

# Home supports

All Staff must use the identification provided by Australian Quality Care upon entering a participant's environment.

Staff must greet the participant and introduce themselves at the beginning of the service.

Physical identification must be worn in the form of a uniform or identification tags.

Staff must inform the participant when they are leaving the environment.

At access to the service, and during the initial support planning design, Australian Quality Care will determine if the participant's home environment (where the supports are undertaken) is safe.

Australian Quality Care will work with the participant, family and advocate to ensure that the home is safe for the participant and others. If required, the service will perform an assessment of the premises.

# Establishing a safe environment

If the participant accesses other providers, our team will work with these providers to:

- Identify any environmental risks

- Ascertain how to treat the risks

- Review the environment to ensure safety

- Undertake removal/avoidance of any hazards

- Devise a risk management plan to prevent and manage injuries.

# Infection control

AQC will exercise the highest standards of hygiene in its facilities. This applies to:

- Provision of clean and adequate toilet and handwashing facilities

- Provision of food preparation facilities meeting all necessary standards

- Promotion of good personal hygiene practices such as handwashing posters

- Display of information regarding proper food handling practices

- Provision of a suitable waste collection and removal facilities, particularly for syringes and medical supplies

- Staff, volunteers and, if necessary, participants, will be provided with appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to minimise infection risks

- Staff and volunteers receive training regarding infection control practices

- At times when an identified major infection risk (such as a pandemic) is identified, further professional advice may be sought from Queensland health regarding any precautionary

measures to be taken. This may include temporary closure of the service or exclusion of infected participants or staff.

## Standard and Transmission-based Precautions

The precautions are divided into **standard precautions** and **transmission-based precautions**.

**Standard precautions** routinely protect carers and residents from infectious disease. They are the minimum infection control standard when in contact with others in care.

Australian Quality Care requires all staff to:

- Perform hand hygiene, before and after every episode of contact with another resident/client

- Safely use and dispose of sharps

- Routinely clean the environment as well as clean and sanitise re-suable equipment

- Conduct and encourage respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette

- Avoid touching where possible when there is a risk of spreading disease

- Managing waste and linen appropriately, and

- Use personal protective equipment when in contact with blood and body fluids (secretions and excretions excluding sweat) or if the staff member has break in their skin. Skin is a natural barrier to the spread of infection.

**Transmission-based precautions (TBPs)** must be followed depending on how the infection is spread (transmitted from one to another).

The type of TBPs applied is based upon the mode of transmission of the pathogen. For diseases that have multiple routes of transmission, more than one TBP category is applied. The following are the routes of transmission.

- Airborne transmission, e.g., pulmonary tuberculosis, chickenpox, measles

- Droplet transmission, e.g., influenza, pertussis (whooping cough), rubella

- Contact transmission (direct or indirect), e.g., viral gastroenteritis, Clostridium difficile, MRSA, scabies

TBPs should be tailored to the infectious agent involved and the mode of transmission.

To minimise the exposure time of other people in office-based practices or hospital waiting rooms, people identified as at risk of transmitting droplet or airborne diseases (for example, a child with suspected chickenpox) should be attended to immediately and placed into appropriate transmission-based precautions to prevent further spread of disease.

### Personal Protective Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is one element of good practices (precautions) that prevent the spread of infection.

## Related Documents

- New Employee Details

- Participant Intake Form

- Privacy and Confidentiality Agreement

- Risk Management Policy and Procedure

- Staff Training Plan

- Supporting Planning and Service Agreement Collaboration Policy and Procedure

- Training needs analysis

- Work Health Safety Environmental Policy and Procedure

## References

- [NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators 2020 – Version 3](#)

- [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (QLD)](#)