

# Safe Practice and Environment Policy and Procedures

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## Policy

ELIZABETH MACKNEY endeavours to provide a safe environment for participants, their representatives, support workers and other visiting Allied Health Professional (AHPs). In particular, it is recognised that participants need to be offered services in a safe environment and workers must be protected from injury wherever possible.

The nature of many therapeutic support services does however require some risks to be taken for both the participant's progress and the need to provide services wherever possible in the participant's community (refer to *Service Delivery Model* and *Rights & Responsibilities* in the *Service Agreement*). Hence, it is difficult to ensure that all therapeutic environments are optimal. However, with the provision of appropriate assessments, training, and equipment and the arrangement of workplace conditions and structures, participant rights and responsibilities, ELIZABETH MACKNEY actively attempts to minimise potential hazards.

## Procedures

Regular training on the following practices is undertaken as part of the Risk Management System review (recorded in the **SELF-MONITORING INDUCTION/REFRESHER TRAINING/CPD/PEER REVIEW & UPDATE OF POLICIES & PROCEDURES AND REGISTRATIONS/INSURANCE CHECKLIST**). Further review and updating, if / as required, of procedures is to occur if an incident occurs. (refer to *Incident & Complaint Management Policy*).

Specific policies have been developed for more common situations as below.

## Incidents, Accidents, Risks and Near Misses

Elizabeth Mackney records all incidents (accidents and near misses) and potential risks are recorded on the *Incident & Complaint Report Form*. Initial actions required are described on the form. For more details refer to the *Incident & Complaints Management Policy*.

## Safety during community visits

- At time of referral, ascertain if any risks are likely to be present at time of visits

- On arrival at the participant service site, a self-monitoring community safety checklist is conducted (see “Self-monitoring Community Safety Checklist”). This covers both the physical and psychological environment and the participant's clinical risks. Any hazards (e.g. risk of participant falls, adequate space for services to be provided, abusive environment, dog present, smoking) are managed responsively and documented where necessary (e.g. program plan, incident and complaint report form)

### **Difficult/Possible High Risk participant/situation**

ELIZABETH MACKNEY will NOT continue working in a situation where she feels threatened or uncomfortable.

For Community Visits

- While at the visit:
  - Upon arrival at the new (or existing) participant's place, if in any doubt or concern as to safety (prior to entering the premise) call participant and tell them there has been an unexpected delay & cancel the appointment
  - If a situation arises during the appointment, do not hesitate to leave even if it appears impolite. If a suitable excuse cannot be found simply say you are unwell and remove yourself from the situation
  - If you are unable to leave call 000
- Complete an *Incident & Complaint Report* form
- Contact the participant the next day to discuss the community/home situation (considering the mutual obligations outlined in the *Rights & Responsibilities* in the *Service Agreement* and any strategies that could be put in place to allow the visit to be rescheduled
- If there are still concerns, contact the funding body and explain your concerns. They will likely investigate the situation further and determine ongoing action e.g. visit with 2 people, delay service until situation resolved
- If required, contact a colleague to allow a debrief to occur
- Manage and document as per the Incident Management Policy.

### **Mobile Phone Use Whilst Driving**

- IF REQUIRED when answering or making a call when driving, the hands free connection fitted to the vehicle is to be used AT ALL TIMES.

### **Hazardous Manual Tasks**

ELIZABETH MACKNEY will not undertake moving, transferring or lifting of participants. All manual handling will be carried out by the participant's representative and/or trained worker accompanying the participant to sessions (e.g. support worker).

### **First Aid**

*For injury to participant*

- In general, only the most minor of assistance can be offered to participants by ELIZABETH MACKNEY and should, in the first instance, be provided by the Participant's representative/support worker.
- A First Aid Kit is kept in the car. The kit contents are restocked when required.
- If the condition or injury is serious or if there is any doubt about the person's condition further medical assistance should be sought. This may involve calling an ambulance or transporting the person to the local medical centre.
- Then follow Incident Management Policy

#### *For injury to ELIZABETH MACKNEY*

- ELIZABETH MACKNEY provides first aid supplies for minor injuries that occur in the workplace. A First Aid Kit is kept in the car. The kit contents are restocked when required.
- If the condition or injury is serious or if there is any doubt about the ELIZABETH MACKNEY's condition, seek medical care as soon as possible.
- Then follow Incident Management Policy

#### **Infection Control Program**

A variety of infection control measures are implemented by ELIZABETH MACKNEY including:

- Appropriate levels (as per the latest edition of NHMRC Immunisation Procedures Handbook) of immunisation/preventative cover.
- Application of the fundamentals of 'Standard Precautions' as appropriate to the working environment of AHPs. These precautions apply to all participants and cover:
  - Hand washing between participants. In group sessions where this is impractical use Anti Bacterial Hand Cleanser
  - Cleaning of equipment
  - Use of gloves if contact may be made with bodily fluid
- Appropriate items carried by ELIZABETH MACKNEY in the car
  - First Aid Kit
  - Anti bacterial/hand sanitiser Hand Cleanser
  - Disposable Gloves
  - Face Masks
- Completion and refresher of on-line hand-washing module by [Hand Hygiene Australia](#)
- Participant/s, their representatives/ELIZABETH MACKNEY/support workers/etc are requested to remain at home if they are unwell or have been in contact with a communicable disease or virus that could potentially harm a participant or ELIZABETH MACKNEY. Telehealth is made available if ELIZABETH MACKNEY/the participant is fit for service. ELIZABETH MACKNEY takes advice on what action to implement from their local health authority in the event of an unprecedented health crisis/event e.g. Covid 19

#### **Transport of Equipment**

- ELIZABETH MACKNEY to abide by correct lifting and carrying techniques when transporting equipment in and out of cars
- No equipment should be transported on the back seat unless secured.

#### **Emergency Management**

An 'emergency' could include a natural disaster or a situation where it is unsafe to provide services including: Fire, flood, extreme heat events, thunder / dust storms, very high winds, major transport disruption, power outage – widespread or localised to rooms, pandemic, terrorist attack

- In general ELIZABETH MACKNEY will determine the actions to be taken during/following an emergency based on a risk assessment using available information. This includes information from emergency services and power companies but also information regarding the location and accessibility of ELIZABETH MACKNEY/participants/their representatives/support workers/etc in relationship to the emergency situation. As most AHP supports are not time critical, this risk assessment will primarily focus on the health and safety of ELIZABETH MACKNEY/participants/their representatives/support workers/etc.
- If anyone's health or safety could be compromised by service delivery, the service will be cancelled, or Telehealth offered and all relevant stakeholders will be informed.

**Safety of Therapeutic Equipment**

- Any therapeutic equipment (e.g. instruments) used will be regularly inspected to ensure safe for use. It will be repaired/replaced as necessary.

**Protecting Participant's Property**

- ELIZABETH MACKNEY & NDIS Code of Conduct outline appropriate behaviour for service delivery personal.
- ELIZABETH MACKNEY does not handle any participant cash or have direct access to any bank accounts etc
- All due care taken with participant property