

## Counteracting Abuse, Neglect and Discrimination Policy

### **Purpose**

To provide guidelines for all contractors to:

- Encourage members to express their individuality and to promote member independence (as far as practicable)
- Identify, report and prevent, (as far as practicable) any risk to members from abuse, neglect or discrimination, wherever this may arise, in line with the Good Friends values, the Health and Disability Services Code of Consumer Rights (the Code of Rights), and relevant legislation
- Ensure that any and all incidences of abuse, neglect or discrimination are reported, investigated and corrective actions initiated where appropriate.
- Ensure that all contractors understand that Good Friends has a no tolerance policy toward neglect, abuse and discrimination. Any abuse and/or neglect and/or discrimination against or towards a member will be taken seriously, investigated and treated as serious misconduct and may, if proven, result in termination of contract.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all contractors, members, families/whanau, nominated representatives and volunteers.

### **The standard is met when**

1. All members feel welcome, are treated as individuals with their own set of values and ideas and their choices and independence is acknowledged, respected and supported, wherever practicable.
2. All members and their family/whanau are provided with information on the Code of Rights.
3. Information about advocacy and advocacy services is made available to members.
4. The right of every member to an independent advocate of their choice is upheld and supported.

5. All members receive fair treatment, dignity and support under the Code of Rights and the Health & Disability Service Standards whilst receiving services.
6. All members receive treatment and care without being subjected to discrimination, coercion, harassment and sexual or other exploitation.
7. All members are able to make a complaint without fear of consequences.
8. Any instance of actual or suspected abuse, neglect or discrimination is taken seriously, and a full investigation commenced by management.
9. The incident management policy is followed where there is any report of abuse, neglect or discrimination regardless of where it originates – from contractors, family, other members(s) / family/whanau or the wider community.
10. All investigations and complaints in relation to member abuse are dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993 and the Health Information Code 1994 and documented.
11. All contractors receive education in Abuse, Neglect and Discrimination and this policy - at orientation and as part of ongoing education, including training and support for situations where members might be physically or verbally abusive towards them.
12. All contractors are encouraged and supported to take on an advocacy role for all members.
13. Resource information on abuse, neglect and discrimination is made accessible to all contractors.

**Management will promote and implement preventative measures in order to maximize independence and minimize the risk of member abuse, neglect or discrimination. These include:**

- Contractors do not take over, they encourage the member to keep doing things for themselves
- Member's opinions including spiritual, sexual and political are valued, recognizing each person as an individual
- Cultural difference is allowed for in language, food, dress, spirituality and custom
- The member, and where appropriate, family/whanau, is consulted at every phase of planned care and intervention to ensure the member's individual likes, dislikes and preferences are being recognized
- Privacy is provided during all personal activities
- Contractor and member wellness are actively promoted

- Managers promote an open-door policy
- All potential contractors are subject to employment history checks and police checks as part of the recruitment process.
- All contractors are encouraged to attend learning and development sessions to promote early intervention
- Contractors are encouraged to recognize any personal or work place stress and seek appropriate support and advice. Education includes information on stress indicators and stress reduction.

## Definitions

**Abuse** occurs when a person experiences harmful physical, mental, sexual, financial or social effects caused by the behaviour of another person with whom they have a relationship of trust.

- **Physical Abuse** – Infliction of pain, injury or force.
- **Mental /verbal** – Behaviour that causes mental or emotional anguish or fear.
- **Sexual abuse** – Sexually abusive and exploitative behaviours involving threats and/or force or the inability of the member to give consent
- **Material or Financial Abuse** – The illegal or improper exploitation and/or use of funds or other resources.
- **Psychological or Emotional Abuse** – Use of threats, humiliation, bullying and any other forms of verbal or mental cruelty that could result in physical distress, mental or emotional anguish, stress or fear. It includes the denial of basic human rights such as choice, self-expression, privacy and dignity.
- **Institutional** – Mistreatment or abuse by a regime or the individuals within the organization

**Discrimination** – Discrimination on the basis of race, ethnic or national origin, religion, ethical belief, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status, employment status, family status, political opinion

**Abandonment** – Desertion or willful forsaking of an elder or person having the care and custody, under circumstances in which a reasonable person would continue to provide care and custody.

**Neglect** occurs when a person experiences harmful physical, mental, material and /or social effects as a result of another person failing to perform behaviours which would reasonably be expected in the relationship.

**Active Neglect** – Conscious and intentional deprivation by a carer in providing the basic necessities resulting in harmful physical, psychological, material or social effects.

**Passive Neglect** – Refusal or failure by a carer, because of inadequate knowledge, infirmity or disputing the value of the prescribed services, to provide basic necessities, resulting in harmful physical, psychological, material and/or social effects.

**Self-Neglect** occurs when a person experiences harmful physical, mental, material and /or social effects as a result of failing to provide themselves with the necessities for physical and /or mental wellbeing. Physical neglect of oneself and living environment that may lead to deterioration in health status.

## **Reference**

HDSS 8134.2008 1.1.3, 1.1.7 – Consumer Rights

Consumers are treated with respect and receive services in a manner that has regard for their dignity, privacy and independence.

Consumers are free from any discrimination, coercion, harassment, sexual, financial or other exploitation.

HCSS 8158:2012 1.7 Freedom from abuse or neglect

Consumers<sup>1</sup> are free from any discrimination, coercion, harassment, sexual, financial , or other exploitation, abuse (physical, psychological, sexual, or financial) or neglect.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this policy, the word 'member' is interchangeable with the word 'consumers', to be applicable to both Home and Community Support Services and also Aged Residential Care.