



Abuse Neglect and Safeguarding Policy

Key points I need to know:

- Abuse and neglect have no place at Hōhepa.
- The safety of people is paramount.
- Abuse/neglect can take many forms – be aware and alert.
- If you witness or suspect abuse/neglect you must report this immediately.
- If a staff member is responsible for abuse or neglect of a person we support, this could lead to a police investigation as well as potential termination of employment.

Policy Statement

Hōhepa Wellington is committed to protecting the safety, wellbeing, and dignity of all people we support. This policy outlines our commitment to identifying, preventing, and responding to suspected or actual abuse and neglect. It is designed to raise awareness of the risks and signs of abuse and neglect and to clearly state the responsibilities of the organisation, its staff, volunteers, and contractors in recognising, reporting, and addressing concerns to ensure the safety of those in our care.

Hōhepa Wellington acknowledges the findings and recommendations of the Abuse in Care Royal Commission of Inquiry (*Whānaketia – Through pain and trauma, from darkness to light, 2024*). While Hōhepa Wellington was not involved in the Inquiry, we recognise its significance for the wider care and support sector and are committed to ensuring our policies and practices reflect the lessons, principles, and improvements it calls for, where applicable. We will continue to align our safeguarding approach with evolving best practice and sector standards to uphold the safety, wellbeing, and dignity of all people we support.

Responsibility

General Manager

Key Principles:

- **Prevention:** Implementing measures to prevent abuse and neglect before they occur. This includes staff training, awareness programs, and creating a safe environment.
- **Protection:** Ensuring that individuals are protected from harm. This involves having clear procedures for reporting and responding to suspected abuse or neglect.
- **Respect for Human Rights:** Upholding the dignity and rights of all individuals, ensuring they are treated with respect and fairness.
- **Confidentiality:** Maintaining the confidentiality of all reports and investigations to protect the privacy of those involved.
- **Empowerment:** Empowering individuals to speak up about abuse and neglect and to participate in decisions affecting their care.
- **Collaboration:** Working collaboratively with other agencies and organisations to address and prevent abuse and neglect.



Scope

This policy shall apply to all people who receive support and services from Hōhepa, all employees, volunteers and related service providers. It covers abuse and neglect by family/ whānau, employees, volunteers, other service providers, agencies and/or people we support.

Definitions

Abuse: An action or behaviour that results in physical, psychological, spiritual, sexual or material maltreatment of people we support. See a detailed list of the various types of abuse in the Abuse and Neglect Procedure Guideline.

Neglect: An omission or non-action that results in physical, psychological, spiritual, sexual or material maltreatment of people we support.

Safeguarding: Policies, procedures and actions taken to

- protect people from maltreatment or abuse
- prevent harm through early identification and intervention
- ensure people grow, live and work in safe environments
- promote welfare, wellbeing, dignity and rights

Abuse Prevention and Safeguarding

Prevention is paramount and can be achieved through ensuring:

People we support and families understand their rights, understand the complaints process, ensure adequate supports are in place, this might include external advocacy.

Employees participate in learning, which includes an introduction via our policy statement as part of the orientation programme, plus an annual face to face session related to the prevention, identification, and action to be taken should abuse/neglect be actual or suspected. This may also include but is not limited to professional boundaries, identification of abuse and neglect, responding appropriately to actual or suspected abuse and neglect, knowing our statutory obligations.

The service builds a culture of honesty and integrity, ensures the complaints process is user friendly, monitors adherence to our code of conduct, user evidence-based practice, ensures the services are person-centered in our approach, understands our legal requirements and has recruitment processes in place to build a safe workforce.



References

Crimes Act 1961; see sections 151, 152 - [link](#)

The Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights - [link](#)

Children's Act 2014 - [link](#)

Family Violence Act 2018 - [link](#)

Privacy Act 2020 - [link](#)

Health Act 1956 Section 22(C)(2)(c) and (f) - [link](#)

Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 - [link](#)

Associated Documents

Abuse Neglect and Safeguarding Procedure Guidelines

Ngā Paerewa Health and Disability Sector Standards – NZS 8134.2021

Incident Reporting Policy

Complaints Policy

Open Disclosure Policy

Code of Conduct

Disciplinary Procedure

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