

Protecting NDIS Participants from Harm Policy and Procedure

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to outline how St George Community Transport Limited (STGCT) actively prevents violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation or discrimination towards NDIS participants

POLICY APPLIES TO

This policy and procedure applies to all St George Community Transport (STGCT) staff.

POLICY

STGCT has a moral, ethical and legal responsibility to ensure all participants are safe and takes proactive steps to protect its participants from harm.

DEFINITIONS

Violence – behaviour involving physical force intended to hurt, damage, or kill someone or something.

Abuse (in the context of this policy) – verbal, physical and /or emotional mistreatment and/or lack of care of a person or child. Abuse can include bullying, child abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional and Psychological abuse, racial, cultural and religious abuse and domestic violence.

Neglect – the failure to provide a person or child with the necessities of life, such as food, clothing, shelter, medical attention or supervision, to the extent that their health and development is, or is likely to be, significantly harmed.

Exploitation – the act of treating someone unfairly for one's own advantage.

Discrimination – treating or proposing to treat someone unfavourably because of a personal characteristic protected by law.

PROCEDURES

STGCT's Board must promote best practice, continuous improvement and a service delivery culture that promotes and supports participant safety. This will be assessed in yearly Performance Reviews of all staff.

Upon commencement, all staff must undergo an Induction that includes information on supporting participant safety and the promotion of child safe environments. Staff member's knowledge of this policy and procedure will be assessed in annual Performance Reviews. Additional on-the-job and formal training will be provided where required.

The Service believes that people with disability have the right to:

- Be treated with dignity and respect;
- Make their own decisions and choices;
- Live in a safe environment;
- Have protections available to other adults in the community;

- Be treated fairly and without discrimination or exploitation;
- Have their rights and responsibilities clearly explained to them.

Prevention

To protect its participants from harm, STGCT will employ skilled staff who respect the rights of people with disability (including children), are aware of current policies and legislation pertaining to abuse, neglect, violence, exploitation and discrimination and who will support people and their families or guardians to access complaint mechanisms and raise any concerns they have about services.

All staff, volunteers and contractors must undergo criminal history screening and hold a cleared working with children check.

STGCT staff will introduce themselves to all NDIS participants and will acquaint themselves with the participant's Risk Assessment, Medical Emergency Information, Consent to Store and Share Information and Support Plan. All STGCT will wear the organisation uniform during the delivery of support services and should have their name badge clearly visible to the participant.

STGCT will also provide a safe physical environment for the delivery of services.

The Finance, Audit and Risk Board Sub-Committee will review the incidents on a bi-monthly basis and will report to the Board on this item. STGCT will maintain a Continuous Improvement Register which will be reviewed during the Risk Management Review for each key criteria: Fleet, Claims and Damages, IT Security, Funding, Safety and Insurance, Training and People, Governance and Compliance.

All Conflicts of Interest are to be reported to the Chief Executive Officer and registered in the Conflict of Interest Register.

Protocols

All participants are to be advised of STGCT's obligations to report suspicions or allegations of abuse, neglect, violence, discrimination or exploitation at their initial contact with STGCT.

Any Team Members suspected of abusing, neglecting, discriminating or exploiting an NDIS Participant will be immediately removed from the involvement of the NDIS Participant while allegations are investigated.

The Chief Executive Officer will ensure the interests of the victim take precedence over those of the victim's family or of other members of the community and will:

- Assess the NDIS Participant's need for immediate medical attention and if required, ensure that it is provided;
- Arrange emergency respite care, admission to hospital or referral to the police if the alleged abuser needs to be separated to ensure the NDIS Participant's safety while respecting the rights of the abuser;
- Where necessary contact family members, the NDIS Participant's general practitioner and other community services involved;
- Report all suspected or confirmed cases of abuse to the Governance Body; and
- Once investigated, the Chief Executive Officer will determine if there is a legal requirement to report the incident and will ensure the matter is notified to the appropriate authority/s.

The Service acknowledges that each case of abuse is unique and that the determined interventions should take into account the nature and context of the abusive relationship and whether consent for intervention is given, other than in a situation where the law requires the matter to be reported.

The Service will maintain confidentiality of information and management of communication and documentation related to the incident of abuse in accordance with Privacy and Confidentiality Policy.

Team Members who have been involved in an incident of abuse related to one of their NDIS Participants will be referred to counselling and support if deemed necessary and appropriate.

REVIEW AND EVALUATION

The policy will be regularly reviewed as part of STGCT's quality assurance processes. It will be evaluated against the organisation mission, values and results framework, relevant state and/or federal standards and in consideration of consumer feedback and consultation.

STGCT's *Continuous Improvement Register* will be used to record identified improvements and monitor the progress of their implementation. Where relevant, this information will be fed into STGCT's service planning and delivery processes.

Refer to the NDIS Participant Incident Management Policy and Procedure for more information regarding the actions following identification of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and/or discrimination.

Related Policies and Procedures

- Service Agreement- NDIS_doc393
- Abuse Identification Procedure doc_277
- Abuse Policy doc_134
- Duty of Care & Dignity of risk Procedure_doc285
- NDIS Participant Incident Management Policy & Procedure
- Conflict of Interest Procedure_doc_031
- Privacy & Confidentiality Policy_doc130
- Privacy & Confidentiality Procedure_doc280
- Continuous Improvement Procedure_doc033

Related Templates

- Medical Emergency Form_doc464
- NDIS Consent to Store & Share Information_doc461
- NDIS Support Plan Form_doc462
- Risk Assessment Form_doc161
- Client Transport Access & Home Safety Check_doc249

Relevant Standards

NDIS Practice Service Standards

1. Rights & Responsibilities
2. Provider Governance & Operational Management

Home Care common Standards

1. Effective Management