
Freedom from Violence, Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation and Discrimination Policy and Procedure

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PURPOSE OF POLICY

To ensure participants of Knoxbrooke are supported in ways and environments free from violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination.

To ensure Knoxbrooke undertakes activities to prevent any incident of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination occurring.

To ensure that Knoxbrooke takes all reasonable steps to respond in a timely manner to any allegation of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination.

To ensure that Knoxbrooke has appropriate safeguarding framework and a continuous improvement approach to ensuring that participants are free from violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination.

DEFINITIONS

Violence

The threat or use of physical force that results in injury, psychological harm or death.

Abuse

The violation of a person's human rights, through an action of another person. Abuse includes, but is not limited to the following:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- psychological or emotional abuse
- financial abuse
- chemical abuse
- abuse through denial of access to legal remedies

Neglect

Failure to provide the necessary care, aid or guidance to someone who needs it. Neglect includes, but is not limited to the following:

- physical neglect
- passive neglect
- wilful deprivation
- emotional neglect
- failure to act with the appropriate duty of care

Exploitation

The action or fact of treating someone unfairly in order to benefit from their work. Exploitation includes, but is not limited to the following:

- labour exploitation
- sexual exploitation
- domestic servitude

Discrimination

- The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, sex or ability

Restrictive Practices

Any intervention that is used to restrict the rights or freedom of movement of a person with a disability. Restrictive practices include, but is not limited to the following:

- chemical restraint
- mechanical restraint
- seclusion
- environmental restraint
- physical restraint

Support Network

Those that provide support to people with disabilities. They may be unpaid (freely given) or paid (receive payment or wage) for the support. Unpaid members of a support network may include family, friends and/or neighbours. Paid members of a support network include advocates, disability support providers, health services and/or planners. If appointed, legal guardians are also an important part of a support network and may be either paid or unpaid. Except in the case of a legal guardian, consent must be provided prior to contacting people in a participant's support network.

POLICY

Knoxbrooke is committed to safeguarding all participants, promoting and maintaining a safe environment for all people that is free from violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination.

Knoxbrooke has zero tolerance to any behaviours or practices that present as violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination. All staff and volunteers are responsible for implementing all procedures and work practices in a manner that upholds each participant's human and legal rights. Any incidences of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination are not acceptable and will be dealt with appropriately. Where it is suspected that a criminal offence has occurred, the matter will be immediately reported to the police.

Knoxbrooke will continue to review the services and supports provided looking for opportunities to improve them and to strengthen our safeguarding process.

Related:

- *Child Safe Policy and Procedure*
- *Code of Conduct Policy and Procedure*
- *Police Check Policy and Procedure*
- *Whistle-blower Policy and Procedure*
- *Investigation Procedure*
- *NDS Zero-Tolerance Framework*

PROCEDURE

Knoxbrooke and its staff are responsible for undertaking activities to prevent incidents of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination of people with disabilities. Knoxbrooke uses the NDS zero-tolerance framework in its approach to identifying, preventing, responding to and reporting any allegations of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination.

To prevent incidents of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination of participants Knoxbrooke will:

- provide participants, and their support networks, with information about their rights, the use of advocates and facilitate access to advocates
- provide participants, and their support networks, with information on what constitutes violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination
- undertake security screening and checks of staff, volunteers and contractors prior to commencing work
- undertake regular security checks during the engagement of staff, volunteers and contractors with Knoxbrooke
- provide staff, volunteers and contractors induction and training on what constitutes violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination, their role in the prevention, identification and reporting of incidents
- provide staff with training regarding behaviour support, restrictive practices and that the use of any unauthorised restrictive practices is an abuse of a person's rights

To identify and report allegations and incidents of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination of participants Knoxbrooke will:

- act on all allegations and incidents of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination by supporting and assisting the affected participant
- use the NDS zero-tolerance framework in its approach to identify, respond to and report all allegations of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination
- provide participants, and their support network, with information about how they may raise issues related to violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination, report allegations of incidents and the way they will be supported during the reporting process and in the future
- promote a culture where participants, and their support network know that it is "ok to complain" and any issues will be received respectfully and investigated appropriately
- ensure that the person who has experienced violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination have the opportunity to be safe, receive medical treatment as required and that any immediate source of harm is removed.
- support participants, in accordance with their preferences, to inform members of their support network of incident or allegation, where safe to do so

- provide staff, volunteers and contractors with information and/or training on the identification of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination, their responsibilities in reporting allegations and incidents and whistle-blower protections
- report all criminal acts to police immediately
- report allegations and incidents to police in a timely manner, in accordance with participants and their guardians' preferences
- report all incidents and allegations to statutory bodies in accordance with reporting requirements
- follow all directives of police and statutory bodies in relation to reporting incidents and allegations

To investigate allegations and incidents of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination of participants Knoxbrooke will:

- follow all directives of police and statutory bodies in relation to internal investigations and timing of those investigations
- undertake investigations of incidents and allegations of violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination in accordance with Knoxbrooke's Investigation Procedure
- provide support to participants during the investigation process
- where appropriate, provide information on the progress of the investigation to participants and their support network, during the investigation
- provide participants, and their support network, appropriate information regarding the outcome of the investigation, individual and systemic recommendations made as a result of the investigation, actions that will be undertaken and timeframes for their completion
- provide participants, and their support network, information on redress options