

Workplace Health and Safety Policy

Policy Statement

Mind-Ed is committed to providing a safe environment for all of our program team members and participants, as well as preventing any workplace injury and illness where possible.

We recognise that health and safety within our Mind-Ed is an integral part of our everyday processes, and as such we comply with and maintain current knowledge of our obligations under Western Australian legislation, codes of practice, Australian standards and federal workplace health and safety legislation. We ensure that all program team members have had adequate training in workplace health and safety and it is a standing agenda at all program team meetings.

All of our program team members have a duty of care to ensure that they work in a manner that is not harmful to their own health and safety or the health and safety of participants.

Safe Work Australia (www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au) leads the development of national policy to improve work health and safety, and workers' compensation arrangements across Australia. It does not regulate or enforce workplace health and safety legislation. Our Mind-Ed is regulated under the Work Health and Safety Act 2020 (WHS Act). We understand that non-compliance with this legislation can result in penalty.

Procedure

In our Mind-Ed, we have appointed the CEO as our workplace health and safety officer. The duty of the workplace health and safety officer is to ensure due diligence in relation to the Mind-Ed workplace health and safety obligations, including: ensuring that program team members, participant and others are protected against harm, and ensuring that the Mind-Ed has suitable, safe operation systems in place.

'Due diligence' in relation to workplace health and safety is defined as taking reasonable steps to:

- Acquire workplace health and safety knowledge and keep this knowledge up to date
- Understand the legislative requirements in regards to workplace health and safety for your Western Australia
- Understand the Mind-Ed operations and the hazards and risks associated with the operations
- Ensure that the Mind-Ed has, and uses, appropriate resources and processes to eliminate or minimise health and safety risks arising from the daily operation of the Mind-Ed



Workplace Health and Safety Policy

- Ensure that the Mind-Ed has appropriate reporting processes in place for incidents, hazards and other work health and safety issues, and
- Ensure that the Mind-Ed has, and uses, processes for complying with duties or obligations under the Act, and that these processes are being followed.

If the workplace health and safety officer fails to exercise due diligence, they may be liable for penalties and can be prosecuted regardless of whether there has been an injury or incident at the workplace, or the Mind-Ed has been held liable.

In order to aid compliance with our work health and safety obligations, the workplace health and safety officer conducts a Mind-Ed Safety and Security Assessment on an annual basis.

All members of Mind-Ed are aware of the person appointed as our workplace health and safety officer through the induction process. Information relating to workplace health and safety issues are addressed at team and Board meetings and information is conveyed to all members of the program team by the workplace health and safety officer during induction training, annually thereafter, or whenever there are changes or updates implemented.

We have current workers' compensation insurance and these details can be accessed by contacting the workplace health and safety officer or can be found in your employment contract. We also keep a register of any work-related injuries, illnesses and incidents which is reviewed regularly and monitored to prevent a recurrence, where possible.

To support the health, safety and wellbeing of our organisation we have policies and procedures in the following areas:

- Incidents and all injuries involving all program team members, participants and others that occur in the workplace are documented and managed professionally and ethically, according to relevant legislation and guidelines.
- We maintain a safe, physical work environment that includes ensuring regular breaks are taken, adequate staffing levels, and a smoke-free environment.
- We have a duty of care to safeguard the health of our members which covers psychological health as well as physical health.
- We strive to encourage consultation between management and the MMR team on all matters pertaining to workplace health and safety matters as obligated under legislation.
- We endeavour to provide a working environment in which all team members, contractors, participants and visitors are not subject to unlawful discrimination, sexual harassment, violence or bullying.
- We strive to ensure the program environment and facilities are adequate, and provide for the comfort, safety and security of program team members, contractors participants and visitors.



Workplace Health and Safety Policy

- We have clear lines of accountability and responsibility for the delivery of safe and effective quality care.
- New members of the MMR team are to disclose any pre-existing injury that may be affected by certain working conditions required by the role before accepting the position.

Manual handling

Manual handling is the act of pushing, pulling, or using other bodily force to lift and carry loads and includes activities involving awkward posture and repetitive actions. There may be points within the operations of our Mind-Ed that require program team members to perform some form of manual handling. If manual handling tasks are performed incorrectly, poorly or for long periods of time they can pose risks to the individual. Some examples of manual handling include: packing boxes, pushing or pulling of trolleys, lifting/carrying heavy objects and leaning over for long periods of time.

Manual handling injuries account for nearly 50% of all WorkCover claims. The most common types of injury are lower back pains, neck pain, and problems with shoulders and arms – including forearm, elbow, wrist, hand and fingers. The objectives of Safe Work Australia Work Health and Safety Act 2020 (WHS Act) is to reduce the number and severity of musculoskeletal disorders associated with tasks involving manual handling. These are injuries which affect the musculoskeletal system (i.e. bones of the skeleton, ligaments, joints and cartilage) and restrict movement of the human body.

Under these regulations, our Mind-Ed aims to identify tasks involving hazardous manual handling and to undertake risk assessments to reduce or eliminate risk as far as practicable.

Risk factors likely to cause manual handling injuries are therefore included in our risk assessments and include:

- Layout and condition of the work environment
- Work organisation
- Position of the body whilst working
- Age, skill and experience of workers

To mitigate these risks, MMR members are advised to avoid:

- Twisting, bending or extensive reaching
- Repeated or prolonged stooped posture
- Lifting requiring extended reach
- Prolonged bent neck posture when working on a low, flat bench and,
- Repetitive tasks for a prolonged time.



Workplace Health and Safety Policy

To prevent injury, MMR members are advised to:

- Wear appropriate footwear to prevent slips or falls
- Ensure adequate lighting>
- Clean areas regularly and wipe any spills immediately, and
- Check equipment is in good working order and there is adequate space in which to work.

Before doing any type of manual handling, MMR members are required to assess the situation by asking the following questions:

- Should two people be lifting this or am I able to lift this safely and without risk or injury?
- Is my pathway clear of all objects?
- What distance am I going to be going?
- Can I see clearly?
- Can I split the load to make it lighter?
- Size up the load – if in doubt, seek assistance.

Personal responsibility

It is the responsibility of each member of the Mind-Ed to report any identified tasks, equipment, or work area that may be a risk to the workplace health and safety officer. A further detailed risk assessment will then be conducted and, if necessary, changes will be made to reduce the risk of injury including additional training as needed.

Incidents and injury and adverse participant events

Policy

Within this Mind-Ed due to the nature of the work undertaken, there is an increased risk of participant incidents and adverse events. The incidents can range from minor to life threatening and must be taken very seriously and approached with caution. Within Mind-Ed we have designated the Chief Executive Officer primary responsibility for risk management, including following up on program team members and participant incidents, injuries and adverse participant events including any near misses.



Workplace Health and Safety Policy

It is a legal requirement under the Work Health and Safety Act 2020 (WHS Act) and for insurance purposes, to report any injury sustained or thought to be sustained in the workplace, whether it affects program team members, participants or others. Consideration and action are taken to ensure that thorough reporting and management that this also leads to effective further prevention, where possible.

Mind-Ed encourages the identification, analysis and prevention of errors, failure or inadequate systems that can potentially be a risk to participant safety. To assist with risk management strategies all incidents and near misses should be reported. This will help in making improvements to prevent reoccurrence. Incidents that should be reported include:

- Slip, trip or fall
- Self-harm or injury of a participant
- Adverse participant outcome
- Any technical failures e.g. telephone or webchat, where participants have been unable to access support
- Employee assistance program or referral pathways
- Failure or inadequate participant handover or identification of a participant at the point of transfer of care
- Delayed treatment, delayed follow up or delayed referral
- Any deviations from standard practice.

Actual and potential risks are identified and actions are taken to increase the safety and improve the quality of care and support. The privacy of individuals involved is maintained and we operate a no blame culture.

Procedure

Reporting

In our Mind-Ed, we use the Incident Report Register to report any slips, lapses, near misses, incidents or deviations in participant support that might result in harm.

Incident reports must be:

- Completed as soon as possible after an incident occurs, preferably within 24 hours
- Provided to the Chief Executive Officer to manage, follow-up and facilitate a review of current systems and processes to prevent a recurrence, and
- Filed in a designated 'incident' file.



Workplace Health and Safety Policy

For injury occurring at Mind-Ed or during course of work, WorkCover reporting protocols must also be followed. It is a legal requirement to report all injuries sustained in the workplace.

Risk assessment

Within Mind-Ed our workplace health and safety officer will regularly conduct a thorough review of all hazards relevant to the cause of any injury or incident that has occurred, with a view to identify appropriate controls and preventive measures in order to optimise the safety of our program team members and participants. (for further details see the MMR Risk Management Policy).

Risk control

Risk control involves the identification and implementation of all practicable steps that could be taken to minimise subsequent and similar incidents to those that have previously occurred or to eliminate/reduce the causes(s) of the injury or incident.

Program team members are informed and/or trained in processes where changes have been implemented, including why they have been implemented, to reduce the likelihood of recurrences. Depending on the circumstances and urgency, changes will take place as soon as practicable following an incident, or during the next program team meeting.

All documentation or evidence in relation to the implementation of improvements is retained for periodic evaluation to ensure the successfulness of the improvement implemented.

Documentation

Documentation of the investigation process, agreed actions implemented, and the evaluation of the improvements implemented is retained using the Incident Report Register.

Smoking, drugs and alcohol

Policy

As a suicide prevention program, one of our aims is to promote the health and wellbeing of all members of the program team, participants and others whilst on our premises. Mind-Ed have a duty of care to provide a safe working environment, this extends to minimising the risks of second-hand smoke exposure. There are also legislative requirements that workplaces must adhere to. While smoking legislation varies between states and



Workplace Health and Safety Policy

territories, generally, smoking is banned in all enclosed public spaces and designated outdoor places.

Smoking is therefore not permitted at Mind-Ed events and is discouraged on the premises and the surrounding area during the hours of employment.

The use of illegal drugs and alcohol is prohibited on and around the site. Strictly no member of the program team should present for work if under the adverse effects of alcohol or illegal drugs. If any member of the program team was to present under these conditions the necessary repercussions would be taken and this could result in the termination of employment or prosecution.

Procedure

Mind-Ed members will be provided information about smoking cessation and nicotine replacement therapies. It is recommended that program team members discuss these options with their General Practitioner.

Health, wellbeing and self-care

Policy

Mind-Ed is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace for program team members, participants and other visitors. We promote the health and wellbeing of our program team members including psychological as well as physical health.

Health and wellbeing are an integral part of every activity we perform, and as such, the health and wellbeing of participants and program team members is a priority of this Mind-Ed. Due to the sensitive nature of the work undertaken it is essential for all program team members to actively look after their mental health and physical wellbeing in order to meet personal, relationship and professional commitments.

Our Mind-Ed has implemented strategies to ensure current information on programs and support services available to the program team are readily available to help them identify and manage any pressures and stressors.

We recognise that regular breaks for program team members during consulting times can reduce fatigue as well as enhance the quality of participant support (for further details see our internal MMR Self-Care Policy).



Workplace Health and Safety Policy

Procedure

- Regular breaks are scheduled by MMR members.
- Strategies are implemented to manage workflow whenever a manager or other team member is unexpectedly absent, or scheduled for leave. Unplanned leave will be covered by existing program team members.
- To promote a healthy work environment, employed team members are encouraged to take leave when the balance of accrued leave is in excess of 20 days.
- MMR team members are encouraged to follow a self-care plan.
- Current information on programs and support services is available to the program team. Occasionally, our program team may be confronted by stressful incidents or situations, including assisting with emergencies. The EAP Policy and Critical Incident Policy provides emotional debriefing and/or counselling in these situations as soon as practicable after the incident has occurred.
- Participant aggression and participant-initiated violence

Policy

Our Mind-Ed is responsible for providing a safe working environment; however, participant aggression and participant-initiated self-violence in Suicide Prevention settings can occur. Due to the nature of the work undertaken program team members may at points experience some participant aggression, this can be down to stress, anxiety or a reaction to suicidal thoughts. It is important that strict protocols are followed if this was to occur in order to keep program team members and participants safe.

Procedure

To minimise the risk of participant aggression and provide support to program team members, our Mind-Ed has the following strategies in place:

- A zero tolerance towards violence policy.
- Training in the workplace policies and procedures to inform team members how to respond to threats from participants including violence, aggression and self-harm.
- Our program team members have easy access to procedures dealing with violence and participant aggression
- We provide support for program team members following interactions with aggressive or self-inflicting violent participants
- Program team members are able to access to breakout areas for short breaks following interactions with aggressive/self-inflicting violent participants



Workplace Health and Safety Policy

- We provide access to program team member assistance programs or counselling services when available
- Help-seeking information and referral pathways are made available at all MMR events.
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Relevant legislation

- Work Health and Safety Act 2020 (WHS Act)

