

Risk Management

Note: This Policy and Procedure must be read in conjunction with Westmont Aged Care Services Ltd Contingency Plans and Emergency Procedures Manual.

POLICY

Home visits and community activities

A consumer's home is considered a workplace while staff and volunteers are providing services. When accompanying a consumer on a community activity the community environment is also considered a workplace. Westmont Community Care will develop and implement a framework integrating a systematic approach to identifying hazards and risks associated with delivering and providing services at a consumer's home or in the community.

Westmont will train, educate and support staff and volunteers to prevent and minimise safety hazards and risks associated with delivering services in a consumer's home or in the community.

Westmont will not provide services in a consumer's home or in a community setting where a formal assessment has identified that the risks associated with providing those services poses and unacceptable risk.

Maintenance of a safe work environment for staff and volunteers is a joint responsibility for staff, volunteers and managers. Westmont staff or volunteers who identify a potential safety hazard or risk while delivering and providing services in a consumer's home or in the community will always be required to consult with the Director of Community Care or relevant delegate.

Working alone

Westmont understands staff and volunteers who are required to work alone, in isolated areas or after hours may face different levels of risk due to various factors such as exposure to violence or poor access to emergency assistance. In order to eliminate, and if this is not reasonably practicable, minimise the risks to staff and volunteers when working alone, undertaking work in isolated areas or working after hours, Westmont will utilise the risk management process in line with Westmont's risk management framework in the Westmont Aged Care Services Ltd Emergency Procedures Manual.

DEFINITIONS

Community activities – any activity based in a community environment that is not under the direct control of Westmont, where a staff or volunteer provides services and supports to a consumer.

Home visit – where a staff or volunteer attends a consumer's home that is not under the direct control of Westmont for the purposes of assessing or providing services at the consumer's home.

Working alone – means working anywhere a person is unable to get immediate assistance from other staff or other persons.

Remote or isolated work – means work that is isolated from the assistance of other persons because of the location, time or nature of the work.

After hours – means a period of time when normal weekday operations have ceased or where work is conducted after a certain period.

PROCEDURES

Prior to visiting the consumer's home

A delegated staff member will complete the Pre-Home Visit Risk and Safety Screening Phone Checklist prior to the development of the care plan and/or providing services to a consumer to determine staff and volunteer safety.

If a risk is identified, the delegated staff member will discuss the issue with the Director of Community Care to determine whether Westmont can provide services to the consumer. The Director of Community Care will record and review the risk using the Risk Investigation Tool (RI). An initial home visit to the consumer will only proceed if the Director of Community Care has reviewed any identified risks and implemented sufficient controls to ensure staff and volunteer safety.

Home safety inspection

The Home Inspection (OHS) Checklist is completed by a Westmont delegate prior to a staff or volunteer providing services to a consumer. The completion of this risk assessment will determine any safety issues and special provisions required for each individual consumer. The risk assessment may include:

- Access to the home
- Whether there is adequate parking and lighting
- Whether paths and steps to the home are safe
- Animals and pets in and around the home and neighbourhood
- Any evidence of intimidation, assault or harassment
- Fire and electrical safety
- Identifying slip and trip hazards and manual hazards
- Mobility of the consumer
- Condition of cleaning equipment and whether it meets Westmont's Domestic Assistance Guidelines
- Whether the consumer's cleaning chemicals meet Westmont's Domestic Assistance Guidelines
- Slope and trip hazards of front and rear yards

The Westmont delegate will determine whether any risks identified are considered low risk and able to be managed with existing procedures. Information about the risk is recorded in consumer service notes and/or Carer Notes.

If a risk is considered medium/significant or high/extreme it is referred to the Director of Community Care to determine whether Westmont can provide services to the consumer. The Director of Community Care will record and review the risk using the Risk Investigation Tool (RIT). An initial home visit to the consumer will only proceed if the Director of Community Care has reviewed any identified risks and implemented sufficient controls to ensure staff and volunteer safety.

The Home Inspection (OHS) Checklist can be reviewed and updated as the consumers needs or environment changes. Staff are encouraged to complete Carer Feedback forms for any consumers where they observe changes in care needs, mental or emotional changes, changes in family situations or living arrangements, changes in eating habits, falls, injuries or damage to consumer property, and hospitalisation.

A new Home Inspection (OHS) Checklist is developed if a consumer moves to a new home or the existing document is more than five years old.

Staff and volunteer movement

Westmont maintains staff and volunteer contact details electronically.

Westmont maintains an electronic roster for all care staff and cleaners. Care staff and cleaners are required to provide services at the time rostered or within 15 minutes of the start and end time. Care staff and cleaners must ring Westmont and advise if they are running later than 15 minutes for a rostered service. Care staff and cleaners must always carry their phone on them while providing services to consumers.

Volunteers delivering Meals on Wheels follow a set delivery run, which is maintained electronically. This allows Westmont to know where a volunteer is delivering meals to within the delivery period. Volunteers are encouraged to carry their phone on them when delivering Meals on Wheels.

All office staff must complete the staff in/out board at reception when they are leaving the office to provide services or visits to consumers. The staff member must record details of who they are visiting or task in Outlook and record their estimated return time on the in/out board. If the staff member has not returned within half an hour of the estimated return time, Westmont will call the staff member to check on their health and safety.

Social Connections staff will maintain a consumer pick up and return home bus sheet with consumer names, phone number and address when picking up and dropping off consumers attending Social Connections programs. Staff must always carry a phone with them when picking up and dropping off consumers.

If an outing is programmed for Social Connections, staff must complete an Outing Risk Assessment prior to the outing or ensure there is an Outing Risk Assessment filed that is less than 12 months old. The Outing Risk Assessment review includes wheelchair and bus accessibility, gradient and surface of walkways, steps and outdoor cover, seating and whether there is a disabled toilet. Any identified risks are recorded as well as the control processes to manage risks.

The program notes will indicate the expected time of arrival at the nominated venue and return time. Staff must carry a phone on the outing and report back to Westmont where an outing has gone beyond the expected timeframe. Staff will take first aid kits and emergency information for consumers.

If a risk is considered medium/significant or high/extreme it is referred to the Director of Community Care, who will record and review the risk using the Risk Investigation Tool (RI). An outing will only proceed if the Director of Community Care has reviewed any identified risks and implemented sufficient controls to ensure staff, consumer and volunteer safety.

All staff must follow the 'Worker in Danger' Work Instruction at all times.

Equipment

Staff must carry a mobile phone that is appropriately charged and in good working order. Staff must have 000 and Westmont phone numbers programmed into their phone.

Care staff and cleaners, and staff taking consumers on outings, have first aid kits and carry sufficient personal protective equipment (PPE) to provide the service. Staff should only carry their mobile phone and car keys when providing services in a consumer's home.

Providing services in the consumer's home

The following safety procedures should be adhered to by all staff and volunteers when providing services in the consumers home:

- Park on the street in a well-lit place where you can't be parked in or obstructed
- Be cautious when entering a consumer's home
- If an unfamiliar person opens the door, make sure the consumer is home and that you feel safe before entering
- Ask whether there are other people at home
- Be aware of home layout and exit routes
- Keep keys and mobile phone on you
- Conduct a quick assessment of displayed behaviours of the consumer or other people in the home
- Identify any possible hazards and implement appropriate control measures

Staff should not enter a consumer's home if they hear people arguing, see people using alcohol or drugs or if they feel threatened. If staff become concerned for their safety or are threatened with physical harm they must leave immediately, drive to a safe location and then contact Westmont, or if urgent or necessary, the police.

If a staff member is unable to exit the consumer's home, they must immediately phone Westmont and follow the 'Worker in Danger' Work Instruction.

In the event of an incident staff will be required to ring Westmont immediately and/or 000, or as soon as safe to do so, and report the incident. Staff will complete an Adverse Event Form within 24 hours of the incident.

The Director of Community Care will review and complete the Adverse Event Form and provide debriefing, support and/or ongoing counselling if required.

Fire safety

Staff will implement basic measures to prevent a fire from starting, such as:

- Using your Residual Current Devices (RCD's) with the consumer's electrical appliances
- Ensuring the consumer does not smoke while the services is being conducted
- Ensuring gas ovens are turned off after use
- Monitoring heaters/wood fires in winter

If there is a fire in a consumer's home while staff are providing services, they must:

- Ring 000 immediately
- Do not put yourself at risk
- Assist the consumer to evacuate the home only if it safe to do so
- Move yourself and the consumer onto the nature strip of the house and wait for emergency services to arrive
- Report the fire to Westmont as soon as it is safe to do so

Training

Training in risk management, incident reporting and emergency procedures is provided to staff and volunteers at induction, at meetings and through refresher training.

Staff who work with or provide services directly for consumers must maintain current qualifications in First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).

Review and Continuous Improvement

Westmont is committed to the review and continuous improvement of risk management.

Completion of Pre-Home Visit Risk and Safety Screening Phone Checklists, Home Inspection (OHS) Checklists and Outing Risk Assessments are reviewed monthly. The review identifies whether the checklists were completed and where risks were identified that appropriate action has been taken to record and minimise the risk. Any non-compliance is recorded, reported and actioned.

Client Feedback Forms and Adverse Event Forms are reviewed for opportunities to improve processes. Where an improvement is required, collective planning is undertaken before putting processes into practice. Outcomes are monitored and audited, and processes, procedures and work instructions are updated where improvement is noted. Changes and improvements are communicated to staff through newsletters, emails, meetings, training sessions and reading of updated procedures and work instructions.

Date approved:	September 2020	By Department:	DCC		
To be reviewed:	September 2023	By Department:		Key changes:	