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Policy and Procedures for Residential Aged Care - Preventing and Responding to Abuse

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Overview

- Abuse can happen in any organisation
- Preventing it: recruiting, training, creating a culture of trust
- Recognising abuse
- Responding promptly & appropriately



- Abuse happens in older people's own homes
- Abuse can happen in any aged care facility



Abuse happens

- Recognise it
- Respond appropriately
- Sexual assault is unknown territory in aged care
- Model policy came out of the learning we did the hard way



Model Policy

“Abuse of older people: Preventing and responding to the abuse of older people who live in residential aged care”

- Developed by The Benevolent Society, in consultation with experts
- Download and adapt for your organisation from www.bensoc.org.au



Contents

- Background information
- Types of abuse
 - all forms
- Procedures
 - for care staff and supervisory staff
 - for reporting and responding to *physical and sexual abuse*
- Sources of further info and advice



- Perpetrators
 - residents, family members, other visitors, volunteers or staff
- Signs
 - changes in resident's behaviour
 - especially sudden or unusual changes
 - fearfulness around particular person
 - reluctance to talk openly
 - physical signs and symptoms
 - unexplained health changes,
 - conflicting stories, 'accidents'



Responding to signs

- When to respond?
- One or two signs do not mean abuse has definitely occurred
- *But* signs must always be taken seriously, reported and investigated
- Care staff must report to supervisor
- Supervisor must take action



Care staff must report

If they see...

- any of the signs
- inappropriate behaviour towards a resident
- any action or inaction that may be abusive

If

- a resident says they have been abused
- someone else tells them they have abused a resident, or they have witnessed abuse

**Do not dismiss residents' reports
as merely 'dementia talk'**



How to respond

- Procedures for care staff – any form of abuse
 - If there is an immediate threat to a resident
 - If there is no immediate threat
- Procedures for Supervisors
 - Physical or sexual abuse
 - If reported to them, or they observe signs
 - If resident competent/ not competent



Guidelines for Senior Managers /HR Directors/Divisional Directors

- How to respond to the alleged abuser
- If a staff member



Additional resources listed

- Sources of information and advice
 - For supervisors, managers
 - For residents and their advocates
- Sexual Assault Services
- Guardianship Tribunal
- Others eg Advocacy services, community legal centres, industry associations



In conclusion

- Prevention
- Create awareness
 - that abuse *can* happen (including sexual)
 - of the signs
 - of need to take them seriously



Have procedures in place so *care staff*
and *supervisors* know

- when to report, and to whom (and will be safe to do so)
- how to respond



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World Elder Abuse Awareness Day
June 15, 2006



"My World,...Your World... Our World - Free of Elder Abuse"