

Prevention of abuse, assault, neglect and exploitation

ALARA has a duty of care to protect clients, carers, families, volunteers and staff from abuse, assault or neglect. We also have a duty of care to protect vulnerable stakeholders from exploitation. This fact sheet has been developed to provide information regarding the measures the organisation has in place to minimise these risks. If you require any further information or would like a copy of ALARA's policy and procedure please feel free to speak with a Coordinator / Facilitator or the Chief Service Officer.

What is abuse, assault, neglect and exploitation?

Abuse is the violation of an individual's rights through the act or actions of another person. Abuse can be financial, physical, psychological, emotional or sexual. An example of psychological abuse is the use of threatening behaviour which causes feelings of fear, shame and humiliation or repeated verbal abuse (shouting) causing intimidation.

Assault is an act which intentionally or recklessly causes another person to fear or suffer immediate and unlawful violence.

Neglect is the failure to provide the necessary care, aid or guidance to dependent adults or children e.g. a parent or support worker failing to provide adequate food or supervision which results in someone being put at risk.

Exploitation is taking advantage of a person's vulnerability to use them or their resources for profit or advantage.

What does ALARA do to prevent abuse, assault, neglect and exploitation?

ALARA aims to prevent individuals being abused, assaulted, neglected or exploited.

Some of the ways in which ALARA achieves this are by:

- Requiring staff members and volunteers to have a Disability Services Positive Notice Card (Yellow card). In addition staff and volunteers—including senior management and Board Directors — working with or coming into contact with clients who are children are required to have a current Positive Notice Card for Child Related Employment (Blue card) or exemption card. Both cards involve a criminal history check.
- Requiring staff, volunteers and decision makers to have a National Police Checks on staff prior to commencing their engagement with ALARA and every three years.
- Undertaking reference checks on all new employees and volunteers.
- Training staff and volunteers about preventing, detecting, reporting and responding to reports or suspicions of abuse, assault, neglect or exploitation.
- Providing information to clients and carers about their right to be protected from abuse, assault, neglect, or exploitation, how to make a complaint and how to access an advocate.

- Providing information and training to staff about ALARA's Code of Conduct, NDIS Code of Conduct, Aged Care Rights and the importance of maintaining professional boundaries.

How do you report abuse, assault, neglect or exploitation?

It is important to let someone know if you suspect or know that you or someone else has been abused, assaulted, neglected or exploited.

You may find it difficult or uncomfortable to do this but this can protect you or someone else from any further problems.

You can:

- Report your concerns directly to a Support Worker, your Coordinator / Facilitator, the Chief Service Officer, or the Chief Executive Officer.
- Fill in a Complaint (Stage 2) form and return this to ALARA. Support can be provided with this process.
- Staff or volunteers should follow the Staff Grievance process.

ALARA will then discreetly investigate your report. Acts of a criminal nature will be referred to the appropriate authorities for investigation. There are mandatory reporting requirements for certain serious complaints or incidents to the relevant authorities and the funding body. Where possible ALARA will ensure there is no further contact between the alleged victim and the alleged offender and safeguard against retribution. Support and counselling will be available and ALARA will work with other authorities to resolve the situation and to ensure that you or the person involved is protected from further harm.

Other contacts

If you do not want to contact someone at ALARA with your concerns or are unsatisfied with the response from ALARA you can contact:

Complaints Unit Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors

Freecall: 1800 491 467

Email: feedback@communities.qld.gov.au

NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission

Freecall: 1800 035 544

TTY: 133 667 and ask for 1800 035 544

On-line Contact Form:

<https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/>

Australian National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline

Freecall: 1800 880 052

NRS: 1800 555 677

Public Guardian

Phone: (07) 3234 0870

Toll Free: 1300 653 187

Queensland Family and Child Commission

Phone: (07) 3900 6000

Email: info@qfcc.qld.gov.au

Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission

Freecall: 1800 951 822

On-line Complaint Form:

<https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/makingcomplaintlodge-complaint/online-complaintsform>

Department of Child Safety

Phone: 1300 683 390

A/Hr Crisis: 1800 177 135

Your local Police

Phone: 131 444

Remember:

- At any time the person making a report can have an advocate present to support them in any meetings or discussions.
- All concerns and reports are managed confidentially and there will be no retribution for a person expressing their concerns.
- It is the right of every client, carer or other person to express concerns, make complaints and have these taken seriously.
- Everyone has the right to a life free from abuse, neglect, threats, assaults and exploitation.