



PalliativeCare
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Palliative Care

ACT

VOLUNTEER MANUAL



Welcome to the PC ACT Volunteer Manual

Palliative Care ACT (PC ACT) is the representative voice for palliative care in the ACT. Formed in 1985, PC ACT is a not-for-profit community-based organisation, a registered charity and a founding member of the national peak body Palliative Care Australia. PC ACT:

- promotes palliative care in the community;
- provides community education in aspects of palliative care;
- delivers palliative services to support patients, carers and their families with care, compassion, respect and dignity;
- advocates for, and promotes, provision of best quality palliative care services; and
- supports other likeminded organisations through partnerships and collaboration.

This manual explains our processes and policies and is designed to assist you in answering any questions you may have regarding the organisation's operations.

The information in this manual helps us ensure:

- we meet our basic legal obligations;
- helps all staff and volunteers to make consistent and reliable decisions and promotes a culture of fairness; and
- helps established a clear understanding of expectations, rules and consequences.

Please take the time to familiarise yourself with the information in this manual. Hopefully you will find it fair, easy to read, and understandable.

Should you have any further questions please contact the PC ACT office and discuss them with your supervisor?

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What is palliative care?

There are a number of definitions for *palliative care*. The World Health Organization has the most well-known definition. It describes palliative care as:

... an approach that improves quality of life of patients and their families facing problems associated with life-threatening illness, through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification and impeccable assessment and treatment of pain and other problems, physical, psychological and spiritual.

Definition of formal volunteering

Formal volunteering is an activity which takes place through not-for-profit organisations or projects and is undertaken:

- to be of benefit to the community and the volunteer;
- of the volunteer's own free will and without coercion;
- without expectation of financial remuneration; and
- in designated volunteer positions only.

Principles of Volunteering

- Volunteering benefits the community and the volunteer.
- Volunteer work is unpaid.
- Volunteering is always a matter of choice,
- Volunteering is not compulsorily undertaken to receive pensions or government allowances.
- Volunteering is a legitimate way in which citizens can participate in the activities of their community.
- Volunteering is a vehicle for individuals or groups to address human, environmental and social needs.
- Volunteering is not a substitute for paid work.
- Volunteers do not replace paid staff nor constitute a threat to the job security of paid staff.
- Volunteering respects the rights, dignity and culture of others.
- Volunteering promotes human rights, tolerance, diversity and equality.

Mission and Values

Our mission

To influence, foster and promote the delivery of quality care at end of life for all and to offer compassion and support to the terminally ill, their carers and families.

Our values

All staff, volunteers and board members adhere to the following set of values:

- **Respectful**
- **Ethical**
- **Professional**
- **Accountable**
- **Collaborative**
- **Compassionate**
- **Commitment to Service**

Our staff and volunteers currently operate across a range of settings, including:

- in PC ACT's non-clinical respite facility;
- in Clare Holland House (a hospice run by Calvary Health Care ACT);
- in residential aged care facilities;
- in clients' homes;
- in hospitals ; and
- through the life story program

Your space

Our offices are in the Tom Elvin Centre (TEC) which is located at 5 Flemington Road Lyneham (access via Northbourne Avenue at the Kamberra Function Centre). This is where you will have meetings, training and in service sessions. Our office is your safe base to come and debrief, have a coffee and catch up with other volunteers or staff. Please make use of your space and feel free to pop in any time.

Working safely

We want you to feel safe and secure in whatever environment you work with us and not just because we have a duty of care towards you. (ACT work health and safety legislation clearly defines our responsibilities in relation to providing you with a safe working environment.) Unless you feel safe you are unlikely to be able to fully attend to your client and care for them as we would like you to.

But at the same time, you also have a responsibility to follow those of our policies and procedures that are relevant to your workplace and the tasks you perform along with any from the facility in which you are working, eg Clare Holland House has policies that have to be complied with by all volunteers and staff. You will be told about these latter as part of your training and/or induction to the workplace.

The most likely work safety issues you might face are associated with:

- operating as a lone worker;
- workplace hazards;
- transporting clients;

- personal hygiene;
- lifting objects; or
- related to office work, e.g. too much typing without suitable ergonomic equipment

Workplace hazards

Each workplace can have its own hazards, such as loose cables or wet floors in tea rooms. Each workplace also must have mechanisms in place to identify and minimise these hazards, and to take remedial action. You have a responsibility to identify any hazards in your workplace and report them to your program manager and/or relevant facility staff.

Reporting injuries

If you or a colleague are injured, follow these steps:

1. Remove any source of danger to make sure you are not injured when helping a colleague.
2. Provide first aid.
3. Seek medical help if necessary.
4. Advise your supervisor as soon as possible. You will have to complete an incident report.
5. If advised by your supervisor, report the incident to the facility manager, e.g. the manager of a residential aged care facility or the home owner.

More information

This handbook does not contain all the documentation we use in PC ACT. The policies outlined in this manual are provided because they are particularly relevant to your role as a volunteer. An electronic copy of this manual is available on My Impact (volunteer management system used by PC ACT) and a hard copy of the Manual is available in the Volunteer Handover Room at Clare Holland House.

In addition, some of our programs, like the Life Stories program and Hospital volunteer support program, have their own specific training, handbook and related documentation. These will be provided to you should you become involved with those programs.

Feedback

While we have included everything we think you need to know, we may have omitted the odd bit of extra information that you would like to know. If so, please tell us as we really do want this handbook to be comprehensive, accurate and above all useful. We also welcome your feedback on what it is like being a volunteer or how we can improve your life as a volunteer. Talk to any of the PC ACT staff, via email office@pallcareact.org.au or phone us on 6255 5771

Your rights and responsibilities

As a volunteer for PC ACT you have certain rights and responsibilities. Some of these arise from various legislation while others simply represent good practice.

If you have any questions about your rights or responsibilities please talk to PC ACT Program or General Manager.

Your rights

You have a right to:

- be treated fairly and with respect in accordance with the principles of Equal Opportunity legislation;
- be recognised and included as a valued team member;
- have a clearly written position description;
- know to whom you are accountable;
- be supported and supervised in your role;
- say *No* if you feel you are being exploited or are asked to do something you are unable or unwilling to do;
- access the policies and procedures of PC ACT;
- orientation, training and education in relation to your duties;
- adequate information about your client to allow you to fulfil your duties towards the client;
- a suitable assignment;
- information about communication lines within PC ACT;
- adequate counselling support and grievance and complaints arrangements;
- access to our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) ;
- proper insurance cover;
- appropriate work health and safety protection;
- reimbursement for certain expenditure in accordance with the Reimbursement Policy;
- appropriate working area and equipment;
- access to relevant decision-making processes within PC ACT;
- negotiate your working hours (no more than six hours per week, unless negotiated and mutually agreed upon with PC ACT Program Manager);
- have your confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the principles of the *Privacy Act 1988*; and
- appropriate forms of recognition for work done and contributions made.

Your responsibilities

As a volunteer you have certain responsibilities. You will:

- be responsible to your program manager for your actions as a volunteer;
- be responsive to any requests made of you by medical or other staff with whom you are working;

- maintain client confidentiality. This means you will not discuss a client or their family or carer with another person, outside the context of you work with PC ACT;
- never give medical, financial, legal or any other advice to a client, even if you have the relevant qualifications;
- respect a client’s philosophies, beliefs and rights and refrain from imposing your beliefs on them;
- always behave in an ethical manner ;
- attend all your PC ACT commitments, unless agreed otherwise with a program manager;
- participate in support, debriefing and on-going training;
- ask for support when needed;
- identify yourself as a PC ACT volunteer and not a member of PC ACT staff or the board;
- act within the constraints of your role (see Professional Boundaries Policy);
- value, support and respect the rights of PC ACT staff and other volunteers;
- be cognisant of your duty of care towards clients and co-workers;
- adopt appropriate work health and safety practices, consistent with the advice provided by PC ACT;
- act as a member of the PC ACT team;
- respect and acknowledge decisions made by co-workers and managers;
- give feedback that will assist the development of your program;
- address areas of conflict or concern with the appropriate staff member;
- be aware of protocol when representing PC ACT;
- give formal and, if possible, timely notice of your intention to leave the program;
- care for PC ACT’s equipment and property and that of the location in which you are working;
- comply with PC ACT’s policies and procedures. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action or dismissal;
- maintain a record of your volunteer hours and any costs you are entitled to have reimbursed;
- not make any comments to the media, or in public, or on public forums about PC ACT unless authorised to do so by the CEO;
- in all undertakings be conscious of the requirement to meet your duty of care (to cause no harm) to those you serve on behalf of the community;



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Policy Documents

Relevant to your Volunteer Role



Client's Rights and Responsibilities Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to inform Palliative Care ACT (PC ACT) clients and carers of clients their rights and responsibilities when being supported by PC ACT.

Scope

This policy applies to all volunteers working for PC ACT, or in partnership with PC ACT.

Responsibilities

CEO: The CEO ensures that PC ACT Board Members, employees and volunteers comply with this policy.

Employees: Employees will support volunteers in complying with this policy.

Volunteers: Volunteers must adhere to this policy.

Policy

PC ACT respects the rights of its clients and their families and carers. Our employees and volunteers aim to provide high quality services and support to clients and be responsive to client needs.

All clients of PC ACT have the right to:

- be treated fairly and with respect and consideration, regardless of culture, age, religion, lifestyle or medical condition;
- have your family and carers treated fairly, with respect and consideration;
- be informed about PC ACT services, policies and procedures;
- be assessed to receive services without discrimination;
- be consulted about your service needs and preferences and to choose what services to receive;
- refuse assessment or service at any time;
- make any reasonable service request;
- be advised of any changes to services or support;
- request a new or different volunteer at any time;
- be able to involve an advocate or interpreter at any time;
- have your confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the principles of the Privacy ACT 1988 and other relevant legislation;
- have access to your own records;
- refuse to provide personal information, acknowledging that refusal may impact on service delivery;
- provide feedback to the organisation; and
- be made aware of the grievance and complaints practice of PC ACT and be able to access the complaint process without retribution.

Clients of PC ACT also have some responsibilities when receiving services. All clients have the responsibility to:

- respect the rights and privacy of PC ACT employees and volunteers;
- respect the rights and privacy of other clients and carers;
- provide the relevant information to enable employees and volunteers to provide the assistance required;
- ensure a healthy and safe environment for employees and volunteers if they are delivering services in your home;
- inform PC ACT of the services you wish to access;
- inform PC ACT of any changed circumstances that may impact on the services received;
- accept the results of any actions or decisions you make in relation to PC ACT services; and
- keep appointments and inform PC ACT beforehand if you are unable to do so;

As service providers, PC ACT employees, Board members and volunteers have responsibilities to clients. All PC ACT employees and volunteers delivering services have a responsibility to:

- enhance and respect the independence and dignity of the client;
- ensure that the client's access to a service is decided only on the basis of need and the capacity of the service to meet that need;
- inform clients about options for PC ACT support;
- inform clients of their rights and responsibilities in relation to pc act services;
- involve the client and carer in decisions on the assessment and service delivery plan;
- negotiate with the client before a change is made to the service being provided;
- be responsive to the diverse social, cultural and physical experiences and needs of clients;
- recognise the role of carers and be responsive to their need for support;
- inform the clients of the standards to expect in relation to services they may receive;
- ensure that the client continues to receive services agreed with PC ACT, taking the client's changing needs into account;
- respect the privacy and confidentiality of the client;
- allow the client access to information held by PC ACT;
- to allow a carer access to information held by the provider about the client where the carer is the legal guardian or has been so authorised by the client;
- deliver services to the client in a safe manner;
- respect a client's refusal of a service and to ensure any future attempt by the client to access a PC ACT service is not prejudiced because of that refusal;
- deal with client's complaints fairly and promptly and without retribution;

- accept the client's choice and involvement of an advocate to represent his or her interests; and
- take into account the client's views when planning, managing and evaluating service provision.

Service Policy

Access to services

The CEO is responsible for ensuring that a person's race, colour, religion, gender, age, disability, sexual preference or nationality will not unfairly affect their access to our services.

Any condition (such as membership) or pre-requisite that applies to the access of a service will be declared.

Membership and communication

The CEO will maintain a database of members to ensure that communication with them can be effected promptly and effectively.

Communication with the general public about end of life and palliative care issues

The CEO will ensure that advice to members of the public in relation to access to external services is delivered impartially without favour to providers.

The CEO will ensure that any contribution, donation, sponsorship or gratuity received by a sponsor which could materially affect the impartiality of advice given, or which might be perceived as cash-for-comment, is declared.

Development of service policies and procedures

The CEO or their nominee will ensure that policies and procedures are developed and adhered to relation in the organisation's support services.

Cultural Security for Clients Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define Palliative Care ACT's (PC ACT) approach to developing and delivering services that are culturally secure and responsive to clients' cultural diversity.

Scope

This policy applies to all PC ACT employees, volunteers, contractors and services. Cultural security in this policy refers to practices that ensure that individuals are afforded the same favourable outcomes regardless of the cultural outlook they hold. Cultural security applies to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, or any specific population with consideration given to age, gender identity, disability, faith and sexual orientation.

Policy Statement

PC ACT recognises, respects and promotes cultural diversity and within its capacity, will provide services that are culturally secure.

To this end, PC ACT will:

- respect and respond to cultural needs during the design, delivery and review of services at an organisational and individual level;
- respect and promote clients' cultural and community connection;
- develop connections with culturally appropriate organisations and groups to promote the meaningful participation of clients within their chosen community;
- provide cultural awareness training to employees and volunteers;
- make available information to clients, their families and carers in formats appropriate to their cultural needs; and
- where relevant, seek specialist advice from organisations and key community members regarding culturally secure practices.

All PC ACT staff and volunteers will:

- be aware of their own cultural background/experiences, attitudes, values, and biases that might influence their ability to assist clients from diverse cultural populations. It is essential that staff and volunteers correct any prejudices and biases they may have regarding different cultural groups;
- seek education wherever possible to enhance their understanding and to address the needs of culturally diverse clients. This may involve learning about cultural, social, psychological, political, economic, and historical material specific to the particular ethnic group being served;
- recognise that ethnicity and culture may have an impact on a client's behaviour;

- assist clients to become aware of their own cultural values and norms, and facilitate discovery of ways clients can apply this awareness to their own lives and to society at large, as well as within the organisation;

Compulsory Reporting Policy (for Residential Aged Care clients)

Overview

PC ACT is committed to ensuring that the legislative requirements for compulsory reporting are met and that appropriate training is delivered to all volunteers and staff.

PC ACT will ensure that any volunteer or staff that reports a reportable assault/s is not victimised and that any informant/s identity is protected.

Failure to respond within the process and timeframes of this policy and procedure may result in disciplinary action.

Definition	
Reportable assaults	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Unlawful sexual contact with a resident; or▪ Unreasonable use of force on a resident

Procedure

This procedure must be followed when there is an allegation or suspicion of assault against a client of PC ACT.

Policy

For all volunteers and staff

Any volunteer or staff member who witnesses or suspects an assault on a resident MUST:

1. Ensure the immediate safety of the resident
2. Report the alleged assault immediately to PC ACT's General Manager. If they are unable to contact the General Manager, they must contact the manager of the Residential Aged Care Facility, or the most senior person available.
3. Complete the Incident/Accident Report
4. NOT discuss the alleged assault with other staff members or visitors to the facility
5. Cooperate fully with the police and the Office of Aged Care Quality and Compliance if required

Subsequent processes in relation to the reported incident are the responsibility of the residential care facility and not the PC ACT volunteer or staff member.

All staff and volunteers must participate in the compulsory training related to this policy.

Volunteer Support Policy

Instructions for supporting volunteers within our operations.

Definition of volunteer

In determining the definition of volunteer the CEO will take into account the *Definitions and Principles of Volunteering* by Volunteering Australia.

Types of volunteers

In general the organisation may engage in a volunteer role:

- members of reference groups who provide advice to the organisation;
- students who seek to complete some aspect of their study through their volunteer role;
- persons who support people in palliative care, or their loved ones, including psychosocial support, bereavement, home visiting and other roles; and
- persons who freely chose or elect to volunteer within the organisation by way of support for our mission and objects through administration, fundraising, education, training, awareness raising, marketing or promotion.

Exclusion

This policy does not relate to a volunteer who acts as a member of our governance committees in accordance with the organisation's constitution and governance policies.

CEO to determine who is a volunteer

A person is designated a volunteer only at the discretion of the CEO or their nominee.

Members and volunteers

A member might be authorised to volunteer at the discretion of the CEO, but membership does not automatically convey the authority to volunteer for the organisation.

CEO to determine when volunteering occurs

CEO or their nominee will determine when volunteering occurs. This will ensure that the organisation's volunteering activities are properly managed and protected by insurance cover.

Insurance

The CEO will ensure that adequate insurance is held to protect volunteers against personal accident when engaging in supports endorsed by the organisation, and to protect against the acts of volunteers authorised by the organisation.

Other policies which apply to volunteers

The CEO will ensure that volunteers are inducted into relevant organisational policies including:

- Workplace Health and Safety Policy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Professional Boundaries Policy

- Grievances and Complaints Policy
- Infection Control Policy

Principles of volunteer engagement

- Our volunteers are involved in the life of the organisation and where relevant are included in decisions that affect them.
- PC ACT provides volunteers with clarity about their roles and is clear about expectations and policies that impact on their roles.
- Our volunteers respect the roles of everyone in the organisation.
- PC ACT recognises and celebrates the contribution of volunteers.
- Our volunteers are provided with training and professional development for their roles.
- PC ACT provides all our people with the opportunity to resolve disputes with respect and dignity.

Engagement of volunteers

In determining whether to engage a volunteer the CEO or their nominee will:

- ensure that a vacancy for a volunteer is genuine and does not displace a position identified as a paid position;
- ensure that the work of a volunteer complements but does not undermine the work of a paid employee;
- ensure that a volunteer is not required to take up additional work during industrial disputes or paid employees shortages;
- in developing the role description for a volunteer, differentiate between paid and unpaid roles; and provide for appropriate arrangement for the support, supervision and management of volunteers.

Recruitment and selection

The CEO will ensure that each volunteer position is supported by a role description which explains the scope of responsibilities, reporting arrangements, performance measurement and selection criteria for the position.

Equal Employment Opportunity

The CEO will ensure that a person's race, colour, religion, gender, age, disability or nationality will not unfairly influence recruitment, promotion or reimbursement of a volunteer. Additionally, reasonable accommodations for suitable applicants with disabilities will be considered so long as the accommodation does not cause undue financial hardship or pose safety issues.

Conditions of engagement

Unless otherwise specified your employment conditions are defined by these policies to the extent that they apply to unpaid staff.

- Specific conditions may apply at or about the time of commencement including but not limited to health fitness for the role, security and identity checks. Unless otherwise stated an offer of volunteer position will be conditional on the fulfilment of these

requirements, and may be withdrawn even after commencement if one or more of the conditions fail.

Volunteer induction

The CEO will ensure that each person is inducted into the workplace and role prior to commencing their first shift.

The induction may take many forms but must include a briefing on matters of importance to the employee and the organisation's operation including:

- relevant policies;
- use of equipment (where appropriate);
- toilets, breaks and housekeeping;
- travel reimbursement;
- professional boundaries;
- infection control; and
- mandatory reporting.

Absence or lateness

If you are unable to work a shift, or if you think you will arrive more than 10 minutes late, please contact your supervisor as soon as possible. Likewise if you know in advance that you will be unable to work a shift then please notify your supervisor as soon as possible and request the appropriate time-off.

Personnel records and administration

Please notify your supervisor of any changes to your personal details. You may request to receive a copy of each document you have signed.

Self-Care

Please take proper rest breaks to ensure you are alert at work. The supervisor may remove or reassign a volunteer who is too excessively fatigued to safely and properly perform their duties.

Expense reimbursement

To be reimbursed for an authorised expense you must submit an expense form (with receipts) within seven days of incurring the expenses, for approval by the CEO or the nominee.

Performance management

The CEO or their nominee will ensure that arrangements are in-place to provide structured advice to volunteers about their performance, and to collect feedback from volunteers about the organisation's performance.

Ending your volunteering role

We ask that you give our organisation as much notice as possible of your intention to leave. PC ACT staff will consider that you have voluntarily ended your employment if you fail to attend two or more consecutive work periods / shifts without good reason.

The protections that apply in an employer-employee relationship are not the same as in an organisation-volunteer relationship and as such our organisation may end the relationship at any time.

Upon leaving the organisation, you must return any property issued to you, such as ID, uniform, IT equipment, keys etc.

Post-Employment Inquiries

We do not provide references about work performance in writing. If you are leaving your position - you may ask your supervisor to act as a referee in order to respond verbally to enquiries about your work performance from future employers.

As a volunteer you may be contacted to provide information about a former volunteer with whom you have worked. Please note that all enquiries about former volunteers should be directed to the supervisor. Please do not give information about a former volunteer unless you have been specifically asked to do so by management of PC ACT.

Professional Boundaries Policy

Professional boundaries are integral to the relationship between those working in the caring professions and their patients, clients, families or carers.

All staff and volunteers are individually responsible for applying and maintaining appropriate professional boundaries in their day-to-day work and for raising any associated concerns, issues or training needs with their supervisor or manager.

Maintaining professional boundaries/relationships with clients who have lengthy, ongoing, or frequent episodes of care can be particularly challenging in organisations like PC ACT which is committed to person-centered care.

Delivering optimum standards of care may also involve the need to understand and practice within the social, cultural and behavioral expectations of patients, clients and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Procedure

Qualities of a Good Volunteer

The qualities of a good volunteer are many and varied. Everyone brings different strengths to their role, different values, beliefs and practical knowledge and skills. But there are some key skills areas that make volunteers more effective, for example:

- The ability to listen and understand;
- Good communication skills;
- Interest in working within the palliative care field;
- A willingness to collaborate and consult with others;
- An ability to accept and respect the choices of other people;
- Respect for different needs, values, beliefs and culture;
- A commitment to increasing independence and capability in others;
- An ability to share knowledge and skills but not to take over;
- A positive attitude;
- Being aware of realistic goals and limitations – making sure you understand each person and their strengths, needs, goals and support needs;
- Consistency and ability to follow through; and
- A professional approach to your work – human, friendly, but not needy or dependant

Friendships

The role of a volunteer is to support a person and their family/carer. The role of 'a friend' is different from the role of a volunteer and constitutes a conflict of interest in doing your job.

Volunteers may find this difficult as clients are often isolated, lonely and in need of friends, but it is the role of volunteer to build friendships, **not to be the friendship.**

Similarly, relationships with a client's family members are also not appropriate and risks blurring the boundaries of your professional relationship. Be careful not to include clients in your social or family life and activities.

An inappropriate relationship with a client or family member has risks for volunteers including:

- Raising unreasonable demands and expectations from the client or family;
- High volunteer stress and burnout;
- Inability to provide professional and objective support;
- Difficulty setting limits and dealing with behaviour;
- Favouring of certain volunteers over others;
- Distress when relationships break down; or
- Grief and loss for clients when volunteers leave

Gifts

Gifts must never be solicited or requested.

Occasionally clients and family members may offer gifts to volunteers as a “thank-you” for work done, for example, chocolates, flowers, cards etc. We may not want to refuse a small token gift and cause offence. However, acceptance of gifts should always be considered with caution, particularly gifts of money or expensive items. You can always respond “Your thanks is enough – this is my job.”

If there is any doubt or confusion in your mind, please consult with your Program Manager.

Simple Ways for Maintaining Boundaries

- Do not seek out a personal relationship with your clients, or with their family, friends, or support network. Have a balanced work and home life so your personal needs are met outside of work.
- Do not introduce clients to your own family, friends, or support network e.g. don't invite people home for family gatherings etc. Work and home should be kept separate.
- Do not socialise with clients or their family or friends outside of work hours. Your work finishes at the end of your shift.
- Do not supply or use alcohol, drugs or other illegal substances during work.
- Turn up on time for your shift. Don't arrive late and leave early. People notice, including your clients. Organise your commitments and travel so that you have plenty of time
- Do not smoke in front of clients, and do not lend cigarettes.
- Do not borrow, ask for or lend money to clients or family/carers.
- Do not talk about your personal financial or other life problems with clients or family/carers.
- Do not allow clients to drive your own/work motor vehicle and do not drive a client's vehicle.
- Do not give financial, legal, marital, relationship or medical advice even if you have a relevant qualification. If your advice is sought, you should only suggest that they contact qualified professionals for any support needed.
- Respect confidentiality and privacy – do not discuss information about your clients with your family or friends. If you need to talk to someone about detailed information contact your Program Manager.
- Consider whether clients have guardians to assist with personal decision making or administrators to assist with financial decisions and consult as necessary.
- Do not disclose personal information (yours or other volunteers or other clients) e.g. phone numbers, address, email, marital information.
- Do not criticize, complain about or discuss issues relating to other volunteers, staff, or your employer with your clients or their family. Work-related issues and complaints need to be dealt with in the workplace (See the Grievances and Complaints Resolution Policy for further guidance).

Code of Conduct Policy

Palliative Care ACT (PC ACT) expects staff and volunteers to demonstrate fairness, integrity and sound professional and ethical practice always and in every aspect of their employment with Palliative Care ACT.

Staff and volunteers are accountable for their own actions and decisions, and must act in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations relating to PC ACT's Code of Conduct.

Roles and Responsibilities with Respect to the Code of Conduct

All paid employees, volunteers, Board Members, contractors, consultants, trainees and students on work placement with the organisation are responsible for ensuring that they comply with Palliative Care ACT's Code of Conduct.

The CEO is responsible for ensuring that the Code of Conduct is provided to all paid employees, volunteers, Board Members, contractors, consultants, trainees and students on placements with the Organisation on commencement.

Code of Conduct

- Show respect and courtesy in all our dealings with others;
- Always act in good faith and in a professional and ethical manner;
- Perform our work fairly and honestly, with objectivity and integrity;
- Apply our skills, knowledge and experience with diligence and due care;
- Strive to build a safe, harmonious, equitable and non – discriminatory workplace;
- Observe and uphold PC ACT's policies and procedures and follow all lawful directions;
- Uphold the Organisation's values and protect and promote its reputation and standing in the community; and
- Refrain from providing false or misleading information relating to PC ACT, its staff, volunteers or members

Conflict of Interest Policy and Guidelines

Purpose

The objective of this policy is to ensure that actual, potential and perceived conflicts of interest are identified and managed effectively.

Proper management of conflicts of interest is required to maintain Palliative Care ACT's charitable fundraising licences and to comply with Corporations law and funding body requirements.

Scope

The principles and procedures in this Policy apply to all Palliative Care ACT (PC ACT) staff, contractors, volunteers and Board members.

Policy Statement

PC ACT is committed to ensuring that conflicts of interest are identified and managed so that they do not affect the services, activities or decisions of the organisation.

To achieve this we will:

- a. Identify and declare all conflicts of interest;
- b. Develop, implement and monitor action to appropriately manage the conflict; and
- c. Report all identified conflicts to:
 - I. The Board for recording in the Board minutes (for Directors conflicts only);
 - II. The Committee for recording in Committee minutes (for Board sub-committee members conflicts only)
 - III. The Conflicts of Interest register;
 - IV. The individual's personal file (where appropriate or required); and
- d. Deal firmly with breaches of this Policy

Definitions:

Conflicts of interest

A conflict of interest is defined as a clash or competing interests, where an employee, volunteer, contractor or Board member may have a private interest that gives, or may give or be perceived to give, advantage to that person or to others associated with that person. A conflict of interest exists where a reasonable and informed person would perceive you could be influenced by a personal relationship or private interest when carrying out your employment. Conflict of interest may be actual, potential or perceived.

There are two key types of conflict of interest:

Pecuniary – an interest that a person has which could result in financial gain or loss for that person. An interest is pecuniary if the interest could benefit:

- the person
- their spouses, de facto partner or relative (parent, grandparent, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, nephew, niece, child or the partner of any of these)
- a company or other body with which they have a significant connection

Non-pecuniary – an interest that does not have a financial component. They may occur in relation to personal relationship with people, clubs or cultural activities. They can arise in relation to the health care service providers you or your family members frequent.

Non-pecuniary interests become an issue if they result in a tendency to favour or have a prejudice against a person, health care provider or organisation because of your friendship, animosity or other personal experience or relationship.

Examples of conflicts of interest:

- a) Purchasing goods or services supplied by the family business of a worker, or family company, relative or close friend
- b) Participating in a tender for goods or service where a relative or friend will be submitting a bid
- c) Directly negotiating for a friend or relative for them to provide goods or services to PC ACT for payment
- d) Involvement in selection of a relative or friend as an employee or contactor
- e) Sale of an entity asset to a worker without an equitable process
- f) Worker voting on a decision which directly affects their private interests
- g) Knowing PC ACT confidential information that could impact private interests.

Managing a conflict of interest

Conflicts of interest can be properly managed without detriment to the integrity of the process or for those involved. Issues can arise when a conflict of interest is not openly acknowledged or managed appropriately.

The best way in which to handle a conflict of interest is to avoid it. Where it is not possible to avoid a conflict of interest, a risk management strategy should be adopted. Depending on the circumstance a range of risk management strategies can be implemented. These are outlined below.

There are four key components to management of a conflict of interest:

1. Identify
2. Report
3. Resolve; and
4. Register

1. Identifying a conflict of interest

Conflicts of interest are often obvious but where there is uncertainty on whether a conflict of interest exists, parties should:

- a) Consider whether the action or activity is consistent with PC ACT's values and Code of Conduct
- b) Seek opinions from managers
- c) Seek independent external advice where necessary
- d) Consider whether the action or activity is consistent with community values, standards and behaviours

- e) Consider how the action or activity might look to other people who care about the decision or outcome, or to other people who come to know about it
- f) Consider whether the relationship or interest might compromise an individual's ability to exercise judgment

At times a conflict of interest may not be recognised because it is a relatively minor matter. A minor matter that occurs frequently, however, may become substantial. Regardless of how minor a conflict of interest may seem, it is important to maintain an ethical approach in all circumstances.

2. Reporting a conflict of interest

When we become aware that we may have a conflict of interest we must report that fact to our supervisor. Reporting a conflict allows us to work with our supervisor to resolve it.

When Board members have a conflict of interest or conflict of duties, the conflict is reported to the meeting members.

3. Resolving a conflict of interest

The main ways resolution can be achieved are:

- i. Restrict
- ii. Recruit
- iii. Remove
- iv. Relinquish

Restricting the person with the conflict in the participation of decision-making is an appropriate method where the conflict is not likely to arise frequently. Restriction could include one or more of the following:

- Not participating in any critical criteria setting or decision making role in the process
- Refraining from debate about the plan or proposal
- Limiting access to information and/or denying access to sensitive documents or confidential information in the process
- Withdrawing from discussion of the plan or proposal
- Abstaining from voting on the decision

Recruiting an independent person to oversee all or part of the process is an appropriate method where the conflict is more significant and needs more proactive management but the person with the conflict has particular expertise and cannot be easily replaced. Recruiting strategies include:

- Arranging for an independent third party to make the decision
- Requiring another person in the organisation to obtain three written quotes to compare against any bid by a family member
- Engaging an independent third party or probity auditor to oversee or review the integrity of the decision making process – this is particularly appropriate where there is a reasonably perceived, but not actual, conflict of interest or the conflict of interest

is only identified at or near the conclusion of the process or after the making of the decision

- Increasing the number of people sitting on decision making committees to balance the influence of a single member who may have a conflict of interest but who has some special reason to remain on the committee
- Seeking the views of those likely to be concerned about a potential, actual or reasonably perceived conflict of interest about whether they object to the person with the conflict having any or any further involvement

Removing the person with the conflict from the process is appropriate where there is ongoing serious conflict of interest and restriction or recruitment is not practical or feasible.

- Removing the person with the conflict from any involvement
- Abstaining from any formal or informal discussion about the matter
- Separating the person with the conflict from the situation where there may be a perception of exerting a covert influence on decisions or actions
- Re-arranging duties and responsibilities to a non-conflicting function but not to a person who is supervised by the person with the conflict
- Transferring to another project or another area of the organisation

Relinquishing the private interest that gives rise to the conflict

- Liquidating the private interest in an arms-length transaction
- Divesting or withdrawing support for the private interest
- Assigning the conflicting interest to a genuinely 'blind trust' or 'blind management' arrangement for at least the duration of the conflict

4. Registering a conflict of interest

All conflicts of interest must be registered in the Conflicts of Interest Register. This Register is kept by the CEO and shows that the conflict of interest has been declared. It adds transparency to the situation.

The Board Secretary ensures that all conflicts of interest reported by Board members that are recorded in the meeting minutes are also registered in the Conflicts of Interest Register.

The Supervisor resolves the conflict and lodges the outcome with the CEO, including:

- a) Name of the person with the conflict of interest
- b) Name of the person the conflict was reported to
- c) What the conflict is
- d) When it occurred
- e) What is the risk exposure if not dealt with
- f) How it was resolved

Timing of a Declaration

As a general rule, staff should complete a conflict of interest form as part of their Annual Review and Planning process. This allows PC ACT to be aware of any potential conflicts of interest that staff may have. However, with many situations it is advisable to ask those engaged to review their conflict of interest declaration and update it so that it becomes a declaration for the particular activity.

Examples of situations when a declaration of conflicts of interest should be updated include but are not limited to:

- Commissioner/procuring health services
- Purchase of assets
- Recruitment panels/employment decisions
- Procurement of goods or services
- Engaging contractors to conduct training, review activities, evaluations etc

Other conflicts that are not immediately obvious or that emerge as a process develops should be declared at the earliest opportunity. A conflict can be managed once it is declared – an undeclared conflict can only cast doubt on the independence of the individual.

If in doubt staff should consult their manager.

Breach of policy

Failure to disclose a conflict of interest is a breach of the Code of Conduct and for Board members is also a breach of the Board Governance Charter. It may result in initiation of disciplinary action that could involve severance from the organisation if deemed to be an incident of misconduct, wrongdoing or an abuse of power of authority.

Grievances and Complaints Policy

Instructions on making, receiving and acting on grievances and complaints

This policy deals separately with:

- A. Complaints from consumers
- B. Grievances from staff member/ volunteer

Meanings

In this policy the following meanings apply:

- **Complaint** – this is a concern raised by a service user
- **Service user** – essentially anyone who is external to the organisation, and includes a service user, sponsor, customer, funding body, or member
- **Grievance** – this is a concern raised informally or formally by a staff member
- **Staff member/Volunteer** – may be paid or unpaid

A. Complaints (from service users)

We value the opinions of all service users. The CEO will ensure that staff members are familiar with the process to be undertaken in response to complaints, and that they are adequately resourced to have them dealt with promptly.

In general when dealing with complaints:

- All consumers have a right to make a complaint without fear of recrimination.
- The consumer is encouraged to raise the issue with the staff member involved.
- The consumer and staff member to consider the complaint fully and work towards a prompt and successful resolution.
- Where this cannot be resolved then the CEO or General Manager should be involved.
- Documentation pertaining to the resolution of complaints remains the property of the organisation.
- If no resolution achieved the complaint can be taken to the Board.

B. Grievances (from staff member/volunteer)

Informal grievance

In general by expressing an informal grievance the staff member/volunteer is exercising a right to be heard by their supervisor without prejudice and to express a genuine concern about a matter which affects their employment.

In general an informal grievance won't be acted-on unless warranted by the CEO according to the immediacy and gravity of the concern.

Formal grievance (other than for industrial or unlawful matters)

A formal grievance is a matter which will be treated more formally, and is usually instigated by a staff member/volunteer in writing. A formal grievance will involve a response from the CEO or their nominee.

The principles of natural justice will be observed throughout the resolution process. This means that before a decision is taken about them, staff members/volunteers have the right to be informed about the nature and content of the grievance, have the right to be heard and have the right to have an unbiased decision maker.

The CEO must ensure that the following steps are taken in managing a formal grievance with the aim of resolving the concerns within 10 working days:

1. The formal grievance must be documented.
2. Any other staff member/volunteer named in the formal grievance will be given the opportunity to respond.
3. The substance of the response will be relayed to the complainant.
4. If the complainant wishes to proceed further the CEO will negotiate a joint meeting of the parties if possible. Each party will be entitled to bring a support person and an independent mediator may be engaged.
5. Either party may veto the mediation stage but in so doing they understand that the CEO may then chose to disregard the complaint.
6. The CEO will respond in writing to the complainant when the management of the formal grievance is at an end.

The CEO will ensure that complaints about the CEO are referred to the President of the PC ACT Board.

In assessing the gravity with which the organisation should respond to a formal grievance, the CEO will take into account:

- the imperative that all complaints be treated seriously and sensitively;
- any likelihood that the complaint might be frivolous or malicious;
- the effluxion of time since the “event’ or “act” (giving rise to the complaint) occurred;
- the willingness and capacity of all parties to participate in good faith;
- the likelihood that the matter could rapidly escalate, or be publically damaging to the organisation’s reputation, or give rise to potential claims of victimisation by the complainant; and
- any risk to the complainant from the person about whom the complaint is lodged.

Unlawful acts

Where the CEO believes that the substance of a grievance, complaint, concern, observation or allegation refers to an act by a staff member which is reasonably likely to be unlawful then the CEO will relay that concern promptly to the police or relevant authority.

Industrial matters

Where a paid staff member raises an issue in relation to an industrial matter to which there is not a ready resolution in the workplace then the CEO will engage with the staff member and their advocate with an aim to negotiate an end to the matter.

In doing so the parties agreed that:

- the rules of natural justice will be extended to both parties
- each may be represented by an advocate
- where resolution cannot be reached then the ruling of an industrial tribunal will be regarded as final

Volunteer Discipline Policy

Description

To ensure that our business is conducted properly and efficiently, volunteers must conform to certain standards of attendance, conduct, work performance and other organisation rules and regulations.

Process

Where we have concerns about the volunteers conduct or performance then these concerns will be discussed with you at a meeting. You will be invited to bring a support person with you to this meeting.

The meeting will follow the following process;

- clearly outline the relevant performance or conduct issue
- give you the opportunity to respond to the issue raised
- clearly and specifically outline why the current performance level or conduct is not acceptable and how the performance or conduct needs to improve
- if appropriate, suggest reasonable supports available to support your improvement (eg further information and instruction and/or specific training)
- seek your agreement to improve performance or conduct
- advise you of the consequences if the performance or conduct doesn't improve within the specified time

By following the above process we hope to reach an agreement with you about appropriate conduct or performance, so as to ensure that similar concerns do not arise in the future.

We will document conversations held during meetings.

Investigation

At times it might not be obvious as to whether an offending action has been committed by you. In these cases we will investigate. The aim of the investigation is to clarify the evidence so that we can gauge whether an event has occurred based on the balance of evidence.

Suspension

A suspension is an action initiated by us, with no loss of benefits to you, which provides:

- an opportunity, following a formal discussion about your performance or conduct, for you to reflect and consider the appropriateness of your actions; or
- protection for you while we investigate a concern raised about your conduct, by removing you from what could be seen as an incriminating situation; or
- protection for another person, who might feel unsafe or harassed as a result of something that you have done and into which we need to investigate.

A suspension is in itself not a declaration of blame.

Disciplinary measures

In order to protect our interests it might be necessary to implement changes to your volunteer role. These might include:

- a change in the program you volunteer in
- a change in the day or time of your volunteering

Ending the volunteer relationship

Depending on the gravity of the situation we may at any time decide to end your volunteer relationship with our organisation.

Any decisions in regards to ending your volunteer relationship with us will be provided to you in writing. Our obligations in regards to your confidentiality and privacy and the reasons for your relationship ending will be maintained.

Information Collection and Confidentiality Policy

Instructions on how sensitive information will be collected, stored and shared

Information collection and storage

The CEO will:

- Ensure that any personal information collected from workers is necessary for recruitment, and relevant to organisational functions;
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that the information collected about workers is accurate, complete, up-to-date and relevant, and safeguarded against misuse, loss, unauthorised access and modification;
- Ensure that workers are notified about what information is collected, why it is collected and how it is administered;
- Ensure workers know they have a right to access their file and make corrections if they feel the information is inaccurate; and
- Ensure workers are aware of this Privacy Policy and Procedures and its purposes.

Personal information

Personal information is any information held by us about a worker and could include:

- name, address, email and phone number
- tax file number
- health status
- other employment activities
- hobbies, clubs or other activities
- image/s
- likes and opinions.

Sensitive Information

We will not collect sensitive information unless it:

- has the individual's consent; and/or
- is required by law.

Sensitive information includes but is not limited to:

- racial or ethnic origin
- political opinions
- membership of a political association
- religious belief or affiliation
- philosophical beliefs
- membership of a professional or trade association
- membership of a trade union
- sexual preference or practice

- health information. (Note: all of this information is necessarily collected)

Sharing confidential information about contacts and stakeholders

Workers will ensure that the information given in confidence is shared only with those who are authorised to receive it (the ‘confidentiality bubble’).

In gauging if information on an individual should be shared the CEO should consider whether:

- the individual has expressly consented to the sharing of the information; or
- sharing of the information would benefit the individual, and do them no harm; or
- the individual would likely give consent to the sharing of the information.

Examples of those who may be authorised to receive information includes law enforcement agencies, child protection agencies, border control and anti-terrorism agencies, health complaints and anti-discrimination commissions.

In general terms a staff member should avoid any undertaking to ‘keep information confidential’ as the person might mistake this for meaning that the information so given will not be shared.

A worker who is required by law to divulge information and does not do so is committing a serious breach of this policy.

Sharing information about workers

We will not use a worker’s information for a secondary purpose without the express permission of the person unless:

- obliged by Australian Law or a court/tribunal order;
- a health situation arises (see below); or
- we reasonably believe that the information is reasonably necessary for one or more enforcement related activities conducted by, or on behalf of, an enforcement body (if so then a written note will be made of such use or disclosure).

A health situation is a situation in which medical assistance is required for a worker whilst reasonably under the employer’s duty of care which requires the sharing of personal information with a third party. This might include for example a situation in which the worker may not be conscious, or have capacity to share information with the treatment personnel.

In gauging whether or not to share personal information if a health situation arises the CEO should consider whether:

- the individual has expressly consented to the sharing of the information; or
- sharing of the information would benefit the individual, and do them no harm; or
- the individual would likely give consent to the sharing of the information.

If one of these three conditions applies then the CEO may reasonably assume the tacit consent of the worker to share their information.

Reimbursement Policy

Description

Staff, board members and volunteers may on occasion be required to pay expenses out of their own pockets, consequent to their employment or volunteer contract. Under certain circumstances, as outlined in this policy, these may be reimbursed by Palliative Care ACT (PC ACT).

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the circumstances under which reimbursement of expenses may occur on behalf of PC ACT, and the process for doing so. This policy relates to staff, Board members and volunteers acting on authorised PC ACT business.

Policy

PC ACT will reimburse expenses incurred on behalf of PC ACT or in the course of PC ACT business so long as expenses are reasonable and authorised prior to the expenditure being incurred. Reimbursement of reasonable but unauthorised expenses may be made on an *ex gratia* basis at the discretion of the CEO in exceptional circumstances only.

Staff, Board members and volunteers incurring expenditure must receive, retain and produce receipts, invoices, vouchers, tickets, or other evidence of such expenditure.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of Management to ensure that:

- staff and volunteers are aware of this policy; and
- any breaches of this policy coming to the attention of management are dealt with appropriately.

It is the responsibility of all employees and volunteers to ensure that their applications for reimbursement conform to this policy.

Procedures

PC ACT will not reimburse:

- unauthorised expenses, unless in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the CEO;
- expenses claimed by an employee as a tax deduction;
- expenses normally recoverable from a third party;
- claims for purchases that are required to be made under a PC ACT purchase order;
- expenses that are not incurred for business purposes;
- late payment interest on credit cards;
- parking, traffic or other fines and penalties; or
- incomplete and unauthorised forms (see appendix A and appendix B).

Work Health and Safety Policy

Instructions about taking responsibility for, reporting and acting on health and safety issues in the workplace

Safety commitment

We are committed to the safety and health of all employees and recognises the need to comply with regulations governing injury and accident prevention and employee safety. Maintaining a safe work environment, however, requires the continuous cooperation of all employees.

We will support safety and health practices consistent with the needs of our industry. If you are ever in doubt about how to safely perform a job, it is your responsibility to ask your supervisor for assistance.

Any suspected unsafe conditions and all injuries that occur on the job must be reported immediately. Compliance with these safety rules is considered a condition of employment.

It is the responsibility of each employee to accept and follow established safety regulations and procedures. All employees are encouraged to communicate with your supervisor regarding safety issues.

Removal from workplace

The CEO may immediately remove a person from the workplace if they are not willing or able to take responsibility for their own safety, such as if they are intoxicated or under the influence of alcohol, drugs, enraged or violent.

Reporting hazards

If you find a hazard then try and clean it or fix it. If this cannot be done then warn others and report it to someone with the authority to have it fixed. Report the hazard to your supervisor so we can minimize the risk of it occurring again.

Injuries and accidents

All accidents and injuries must be reported immediately to the CEO or their nominee. If the injury requires first aid then see the first aid officer in the building.

In the case of an injury requiring medical assistance contact the emergency services or your general practitioner. Keep receipts of any costs for later reimbursement. Notify the CEO when possible or ask someone to make contact for you.

Injuries involving **time away from work longer than seven days in duration** must be reported to **Workcover** by the CEO and a workers compensation form must be completed. For more information see the Workers Compensation Policy

Injuries take many forms. For example if you have witnessed a traumatic event you may require assistance with the emotional and psychological impact.

First aid kits

Each designated workplace should have a first aid kit. The CEO will ensure that First Aid Kits are checked for out of date stock on an annual basis.

Drug-Free Workplace

We prohibit the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by employees on our premises and/or client premises or as a part of our activities. We will impose disciplinary sanctions on employees ranging from educational and rehabilitation efforts up to and including expulsion or termination of employment and referral for prosecution for violations of the standards of conduct. Each situation will be looked at on a case-by-case basis.

Manual handling

Lifting

No employee is to lift a single load weighing 15kg or more. Ask for assistance when lifting heavy objects or moving heavy furniture. Bend your knees, get a firm grip on the object, hold it close to your body and space your feet for good balance. Lift using your stronger leg muscles, not your weaker back muscles.

Materials Handling

Do not throw objects. Always carry or pass them. Use flammable items, such as cleaning fluids, with caution. Also, stack materials only to safe heights.

Rubbish Disposal

Keep sharp objects and dangerous substances out of the rubbish bin. Items that require special handling should be disposed of in approved containers.

Cleaning Up

To prevent slips and tripping, clean up spills and pick up debris immediately.

Preventing Falls

Keep aisles, work places and stairways clean, clear and well lighted. Walk, don't run. Watch your step.

Handling Tools

Exercise caution when handling objects and tools. Do not use broken, defective or greasy tools. Use tools for their intended purpose only. Wear safety glasses or goggles whenever using a power tool.

Falling Objects

Store objects and tools where they won't fall. Do not store heavy objects or glass on high shelves.

Work Areas

Keep cabinet doors and file and desk drawers closed when not in use. Remove or pad torn, sharp corners and edges. Keep drawers closed. Open only one drawer at a time.

Using Ladders

Place ladders securely. Do not stand on boxes, chairs or other devices not intended to be used as ladders.

Personal Protective Equipment

Always wear or use appropriate safety equipment as required in your work. Wear appropriate personal protective equipment, like gowns, gloves and closed in shoes.

Use of equipment

Do not attempt to use any machine or equipment you do not know how to operate, or if you have not completed training on the proper use of the machine or equipment.

Electrical Hazards

Do not stand on a wet floor while using any electrical apparatus. Keep extension cords in good repair. Don't make unauthorised connections or repairs. Do not overload outlets.

Fire Extinguishers

Know where fire extinguishers are and how to use them.

Fire Prevention

Know the location of the fire extinguisher(s) in your area and make sure they are kept clear at all times. Notify your supervisor if an extinguisher is used or if the seal is broken. Keep in mind that extinguishers that are rated ABC can be used for paper, wood, or electrical fires. Make sure all flammable liquids, such as alcohol, are stored in approved and appropriately labelled safety cans and are not exposed to any ignition source.

Emergency Evacuation

In case of emergency, personal threat, fire or if you are advised to evacuate the building then:

- Stop all work
- Alert your colleagues if possible
- Evacuate the building taking a mobile phone if possible
- Notify emergency services once clear of the building
- Do not re-enter the building until instructed to do so or until you are certain that the danger has passed

Housekeeping

You are expected to keep your work area neat and orderly at all times.

If you spill a liquid, clean it up immediately. Do not leave tools, materials, or other objects on the floor which may cause others to trip or fall. Keep aisles, stairways, exits, electrical

panels, fire extinguishers, and doorways clear at all times.

Easily accessible trash receptacles and recycling containers are located throughout the building. Please put all litter and recyclable materials in the appropriate receptacles and containers. Always be aware of good health and safety standards, including fire and loss prevention. Please report anything that needs repairing or replacing to your supervisor immediately.

Security

Maintaining the security of our premises and vehicles is every employee's responsibility. Develop habits that insure security as a matter of course:

- Always keep cash properly secured. If you are aware that cash is insecurely stored, immediately inform the person responsible.
- Know the location of all alarms and fire extinguishers, and familiarize yourself with the proper procedure for using them, should the need arise.
- When you leave our premises make sure that all entrances are properly locked and secured.

Smoking

Smoking is not allowed except as expressly designated. Smoking breaks are permitted as long as they are not excessive or disadvantage other staff.

Self-care

Please take proper rest breaks to ensure you are alert at work. Recreational leave, time in lieu, lunch breaks and sick leave are all intended with the purpose to provide a break from work for legitimate reasons. When you are driving you should not exceed two hours at a stretch without a rest break of at least 15 minutes.

Infection Control Policy

Policy

Palliative Care ACT will comply with all legislation and best practice guidelines in maintaining practices that minimise the risk of infections to clients, customers, workers and visitors.

Definition

Worker	Refers to a person who carries out any work for an organisation whether paid or otherwise and includes employees, volunteers, contractors, subcontractors, students gaining work experience, trainees, intern and outworkers.
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Services are provided to those with a life limiting illness who due to their current situation are particularly vulnerable to infection. This includes people living at home, PC ACT non-clinical respite centre, in residential aged care facilities, patients in Clare Holland House (ACT hospice) and Canberra Hospital

Procedure

Workers will ensure that:

- they follow all infection control guidelines and protocols
- an Accident/Incident/Hazard form is completed after exposure to an infection control hazard, either real or perceived
- they complete initial and yearly updates of infection control training

Legislation

The CEO will ensure that:

- workers comply with
 - National Health Act 1953
 - Public Health Act 1997
 - relevant guidelines - ACT Health Department Guidelines
 - Commonwealth Department of Health Guidelines;

Prevention and Risk Management

The CEO will ensure that:

- infection control practices are followed as outlined and documented in training and the Palliative Care ACT Volunteer and Operations Manual
- exclusion periods for infectious illnesses are utilised to prevent/minimise outbreaks and cross-infections. Workers to advise PC ACT office upon diagnosis of an infectious disease to confirm exclusion period.

Workers will observe infection control practices in all aspects of their interactions on behalf of the organisation especially in relation to:

- cough etiquette;
- hand washing;
- not attending work or volunteer shifts if unwell or potentially contagious due to contact with infected persons
- considering taking part in worker immunisation program when offered

Training and Assessment

The CEO will ensure that:

- all new workers have an introduction to infection control as part of their initial training program
- all new workers are trained and assessed in hand hygiene at initial training

Personal Protective Equipment

The CEO will ensure that

- PPE equipment is available for use where required.

Vaccination and Worker Health

The CEO will ensure that

- A register of immunisation status for workers is maintained by the organisation
- workers are advised of the availability of immunisation programs and manage bookings for attendance by workers
- respect workers wishes for non-immunisation while limiting exposure for non-vaccinated workers

Epidemic - Pandemic Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the strategies and actions that Palliative Care ACT intends to take to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases that are epidemics or pandemics, and control the transmission of infectious diseases when a case/s is identified.

For the purpose of this policy, infectious diseases mean diseases caused by pathogenic microorganisms, such as bacteria, viruses, parasites or fungi; the diseases can be spread, directly or indirectly, from one person to another. This policy is focused on infectious diseases that are declared to be an epidemic or pandemic.

Definition

Worker	Refers to a person who carries out any work for an organisation whether paid or otherwise and includes employees, volunteers, contractors, subcontractors, students gaining work experience, trainees, intern and outworkers.
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Procedure

Palliative Care ACT will **as far as possible** plan for and make advance preparations for the possibility that its operations will be affected by an epidemic or pandemic.

The CEO will:

- follow the advice of Commonwealth and ACT health authorities.
- assist its clients, staff, volunteers and others, as relevant, to minimise their exposure to the illness concerned.
- support workers and clients to take reasonable precautions to prevent infection or contagion.
- Where advised it is safe to do so, maintain its services and operations throughout the period of concern.

In the event of an infectious disease being declared an epidemic or pandemic

The CEO requires people covered by this Policy to take the following precautions:

- regularly and thoroughly wash clean your hands with soap and water or clean them with an alcohol-based hand rub
- maintain at least 1.5 metre distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.
- avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, or shaking hands with others.
- make sure you follow good hygiene, and encourage others to do the same. This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze, and disposing of used tissues immediately.

- stay at home if you feel unwell. If you are well enough to work but would like to minimise the risk of infecting others, ask your manager whether you can temporarily work from home.
- self-isolate if you have returned from overseas travel
- If you are or are likely to be contagious, notify your manager as soon as possible. It may be possible or necessary for you to self-isolate by staying at home until you recover.
- Seek medical advice promptly and follow the directions of your local health authority.

Leave and Flexibility

Palliative Care ACT recognises:

- workers may request or require paid or unpaid leave when they are unwell, at risk of or vulnerable to infection, and at risk of infecting others.
- workers may make use of leave consistent with PC ACT leave policy, relevant industrial instruments and the National Employment Standards (including access to unpaid leave).
- PC ACT may, at its discretion, direct those affected or reasonably at risk of being affected by the pandemic or epidemic, to remain away from the workplace or work remotely.

Responsibilities

CEO is responsible for:

- ensuring that the organisation's Leave and Workplace Health and Safety policies are consistent with the intention of the Epidemic Policy
- assessing the organisation's vulnerabilities, in the light of the epidemic or pandemic
- in the event of an epidemic or pandemic,
 - giving notice to workers, clients, and any persons likely to be affected that epidemic or pandemic procedures are in effect
 - consider on a continuing basis whether any events involving the attendance of workers or members of the public should be changed, rescheduled or cancelled to minimise the risk of infection.
 - consider on a continuing basis whether it is appropriate for nominated workers to work from home
 - consider on a continuing basis whether worker travel or other activities which cause them to come into contact with people be modified or terminated
 - consider on a continuing basis whether arrangements for workers who work with clients or the public should be modified to minimise risks for all parties.
 - may require any member of staff to not attend the workplace, and/or to work from home, or, if this is not feasible or appropriate, to take leave

- may require a worker to provide satisfactory evidence that they are fit to return to work.
- instituting any administrative measures necessary to reduce the impact of the vulnerabilities detailed above

Supervisors/managers are responsible for:

- ensuring that workers are aware of the epidemic procedures in effect at any time.

Workers are responsible for:

- abiding by the epidemic procedures, when informed by authorised staff that epidemic or pandemic procedures are in effect.