



Submission by
Wesley Mission Victoria

Handling of Child Abuse in Religious
and other
Non-Government Organisations



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Executive Summary

Wesley Mission Victoria acknowledges the recommendations of the Cummins Report – Protecting Victoria’s Vulnerable Children and welcomes the opportunity to provide a Submission to the ‘Parliamentary Enquiry into the Handling of Child Sex Abuse within Religious and other Non-Government Organisations’.

Our submission will provide an overview of our quality framework, current practices, copies of policies and procedures and our handling of complaints, our complaints mechanism and procedures, our treatment of complainants, disciplinary procedures, support for victims, and also describe a preventative framework.

Wesley has chosen to participate in this Inquiry as a means to further advance the quality of care and to increase accountability and transparencies within our sector. We are open to further questions and appreciate the evidence based approach of those coordinating the Inquiry. Further, and subject to the Privacy Act, Wesley is happy to provide any further documentation, audit findings, frameworks and/or other material that may be of assistance.

Background and Context

Wesley Mission Victoria works within the ethos of the Uniting Church in Australia. Central to this ethos is our purpose which is the conviction that in working together we can creatively reduce disadvantage, so people live life to the full within inclusive communities. Our vision is an Australia where all belong; we achieve this through our values which are Hope, Compassion, and Justice.

To this end, Wesley provides a broad range of community services in Victoria which address disadvantage, whilst advocating on a state and national basis for a just society.

Wesley operates over numerous service delivery streams, including; Disability, Children Youth Family, Crisis and Homelessness, Employment, Aged Care, Social Enterprises, and Community Detention. Wesley employs over 900 staff with over 50 programs, located across 112 sites throughout Victoria.

History

Wesley Mission Victoria's heritage is founded on the response of Wesleyan Methodists in Victoria to the severe economic depression and associated inner city poverty of the early 1890s.



The Mission was established in 1893 on the same site it occupies today next to the Wesley Church in Lonsdale Street. At that time, the area was known as the 'back slums' of Melbourne and was notorious for opium dens, gambling houses and places of ill-repute.

The Mission's work was based on a concern for people in need, particularly those who were abused, addicted, homeless or impoverished; and a commitment to care for people by reaching out and supporting these groups.

From its establishment, the Mission became known for its outspoken advocacy for social reform as well as for the services it developed and delivered. Such advocacy was aimed at challenging the social systems that oppress and devalue those who are disadvantaged.

When the Uniting Church was formed in 1977, the Congregation of the Wesley Church and the Mission were formally designated as a parish mission and became known as the Wesley Central Parish Mission. The Mission became accountable to the Uniting Church through the Parish Council.

Over a history spanning 118 years, Wesley has been a force behind numerous initiatives to address the social ills of the day.

These have included support for women and children forced to work in sweatshop conditions in the clothing and furniture industries in the 1890s; support to the huge number of unemployed single men who found themselves drawn into Melbourne during the depression; and support for women's voting through many forums, including the influential Pleasant Sunday Afternoons (PSAs) which brought together a wide range of people in weekly social, political and evangelical discussion.

The Mission established a range of institutions which have supported single mothers, orphaned or abandoned children (most famously through the former Tally Ho Boys Home), helped victims of domestic violence, and provided support for alcoholics and work for unemployed people with special needs (under the motto: "Not charity, but a chance to work").

In more recent decades Wesley has taken a lead role in establishing new types of services such as Lifeline Melbourne, a 24-hour counselling line; Wesley Do Care, a home-visiting service for isolated frail aged people; and Wesley Kids Under Canvas, a camping and activities program for children with disabilities - all established since the 1970s.



As with most community service organisations, attitudes and values have shifted enormously over the past century or so, and Wesley has sought to move with the times and remain relevant to contemporary needs.

As part of the long-term trend toward greater professionalism, and a growing involvement in providing services funded by government, Wesley has undergone considerable reorganisation and restructure in recent years.

In October 2001, following a review of governance and structure by the Victorian Synod of the Uniting Church in 2000, Wesley Mission Melbourne was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee, pursuant to the provisions of the Corporations Act. A new board of directors was appointed and new governance structures and processes put into place.

In 2010, Wesley Mission Melbourne changed its name to Wesley Mission Victoria. A Uniting Church Minister to the Mission provides a continuing link between the Uniting Church, the Wesley Congregation in Lonsdale Street and Wesley Mission Victoria.

Much has changed in our history, but the need for our services continues to increase.

The words of the Rev. Edgar in 1911 remain apt: "Because human nature is not just a simple thing, and because society is just as complex as the human nature of which it is composed, we cannot exactly tell where the beginning or the end of our work is."

Although Wesley, is committed to providing safe services for staff and clients, it would be remiss not to acknowledge that despite our best endeavours, we are indeed human and to this end fallible. In this acknowledgement we understand our responsibility to provide, resource and implement a robust and rigorous framework designed and constructed to protect those within our duty of care and provide them an environment that is protective, safe and free from harm and neglect.

Wesley Mission Victoria Apology

Following the 2004 Enquiry, both Wesley Mission Victoria, and the Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania issued the following apologies. Further, a full review of Wesley's policy, procedures and practices was undertaken.

Apology to Australians who experienced harm as children while in care with Wesley Mission Victoria

Wesley Mission Victoria acknowledges that some Australians experienced significant trauma, sorrow and harm caused while in our care as children.



Wesley apologises unreservedly for any physical, psychological, sexual or social harm that may have occurred. Moreover, Wesley apologises to the victims of abuse for the significant hurt and distress they have suffered. We also deeply regret any pain caused to the families of those who were abused.

The 2004 Senate Inquiry into children in Institutional Care (Forgotten Australians) revealed a number of cases where neglect and abuse was suffered at the hands of care givers. Wesley is committed to working with governments, other organisations and care leavers to carry out the recommendations contained in the Inquiry.

Wesley also acknowledges those care givers who provided safe, nurturing and loving environments. Nevertheless, any case of abuse or neglect in our care is one case too many and we commit ourselves to ensuring that every young person who accesses our services today, and in the future, receives the very best possible care'.

Apology from the Uniting Church within Victoria and Tasmania

Apology to the Australians who experienced harm in institutional our out of home care as children

On behalf of the Uniting Church and our agencies, we apologise unreservedly for any physical, psychological or social harm that might have occurred.

We deeply regret that some children were let down while in the care of the Uniting Church and former Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational Churches.

The recent Senate Inquiry into the children in Institutional Care highlighted a number of cases where children suffered at the hands of caregivers.

The inquiry painted a disturbing picture of life for many young people who lived in Institutional Care. The Uniting Church through its agencies managed a number of these facilities and we accept that sadly some did not provide the love, nurturing and care that the children in them so rightly deserved.

The Inquiry highlighted the flaws in institutional care models and to ensure they are never repeated.

The Uniting Church, through our family and community services networks, has developed new models for providing care and services to children. The Church is committed to ensuring that children and families receive the best facilities and care possible and we are constantly working to improve them.

We are committed to ensure that everybody involved in delivering service and care to children will work together so that the mistakes of the past are not repeated.

The Uniting Church welcomes the Inquiry and its recommendations that provide a basis on which Governments at all levels and care providers may move forward together by acknowledging past wrongs and addressing them appropriately. We are



committed to working with government to respond to the issues raised during the Inquiry.

Further to this apology from the Uniting Church in Victoria and Tasmania, Wesley Mission Victoria supports and endorses the recent statement released by Isobel Thomas Dobson, Moderator in response to the current Enquiry which states in part;

“We as a church and as a society are derelict in our duties when even one child is abused. Whilst we think our policies, practices and protocols for the handling of allegations of criminal abuse are transparent, we look to the Parliamentary Inquiry to put a further spotlight on what has been a blight on the record of religious organisations, not for profit organisations and government facilities in order to bring about necessary change and improvements”.

Current Framework

This apology was not a stand-alone nor isolated gesture, but formed part of an ongoing review into Wesley’s practices and preventative strategies aimed at protecting those most vulnerable within our care. This practice is ongoing and has resulted in the adoption of stringent internal policies and procedures, including police checks and Working With Children Checks for staff.

As Wesley moves forward, we continue to explore avenues of a preventative nature including strategies such as partnering with ChildWise to ensure that we approach issues in the most appropriate manner.

Wesley Mission Victoria has in place a quality, risk and compliance framework and has invested in resourcing this function more robustly.

Wesley Mission Victoria is currently ISO accredited and has checks and measures in place in the way of both internal and external auditing. We have also appointed Pitcher Partners as our new Internal Auditors to assist us with our risk management and to ensure our compliance and delivery of quality is continued.

Duty of care

Wesley is clear regarding its duty of care to clients and staff, and has in place clear policy and procedures reflecting this (see [Duty of Care policy and procedure](#)). Wesley articulates this duty of care being “the obligation of a person to take reasonable care to avoid injury to another person for whom they have responsibility, or to avoid damage to property, as a result of any action or inaction. There is a duty not to be careless or negligent”

Staff owe a duty of care to the clients whom they support, just as the organisation

owes a duty of care to staff and clients to provide a safe working and living environment.

Duty of care obligations relate to staff's responsibilities not to be negligent in the execution of their duties. In short staff should not place clients (or themselves) in a position, or take part in an activity, where there is a potential risk of injury, without first considering the duty of care implications.

If staff are concerned that a particular activity may be risky, and are unsure of what their duty of care is in such a situation, the following framework can be used to consider whether certain risks can be taken:

- Assess the likelihood of the foreseeable benefits. How will it be good for the client?
- Assess the likelihood and extent of the foreseeable harm. What risks may the client be exposed to or expose others to?
- Look for ways to minimise the risks without sacrificing the benefits. How do we build safeguards that protect the client but will still allow the opportunity for experience?
- Balance the foreseeable harm against the foreseeable benefit. On balance, can the risks be minimised and are the benefits worth it? (Dignity of Risk).

Accountability Mechanisms

Beyond accreditation Wesley also has departmental reporting requirements and internal mechanisms to facilitate any areas of concern or complaints and include but are not limited to a free confidential EAP (Employee Assistance Programme) service. Wesley also resources:

- EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) contact officers
- Minister to the Mission
- Confidential compliments and complaints system
- Code of conduct
- Duty of care policy

Wesley began offering employee's access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) in 2004. The introduction coincided with the introduction of the Care Assistance Response Emergency (CARE) team.

The EAP is a confidential external specialist counselling service for employees and their family members which is offered free of charge to employees by Wesley. Davidson Trahaire Corpsych (DTC) has been the Wesley provider of EAP since it began. EAP offers short-term, solution focused counselling that can be face to face or by phone with professionally trained counsellors. Each occasion EAP is accessed a maximum of 6 counselling sessions are provided.



Usage by Wesley employees has consistently tracked above the average (6.99%) for general organisations (3.71%) and other not for profit organisations (5.37%). Knowledge of EAP across the organisation is high.

In 2011 the service was extended to volunteers in our adolescent care programs (foster carers) as a need was identified that volunteers in this role required additional professional support. This extension was made at no extra cost by DTC. Requests can be made directly to DTC by Program managers for EAP services for other volunteers on an as needs basis.

Support for Victims

Wesley maintains a register of all calls from care leavers and maintains a database of records of those who were in our care from the 1890's onwards. This is managed by our Archivist and RecFind (records software). There is a Care Leavers policy and procedure.

Wesley also networks with Open Place and Find and Connect in providing this information for those seeking further information about their time in care or that of relatives who spent time in Wesley's services. In a lot of cases records cannot be found, this is especially true for early records of Tally Ho, where fire destroyed a vast amount of records in the early 1960's.

Wesley has recognised that preservation of our history and our responsibility to maintain sound record keeping systems is paramount in our ability to share our collective journey and has subsequently evolved.

Our current practice involves the recording of all data that flows in, and out of Wesley. All correspondence is currently received by one central source scanned and recorded, all electronic records, including emails are monitored, stored and retained. All records are managed by staff using RecFind.

Compensation and Reparation

Wesley has in place protocols for handling claims and support mechanisms that are offered for those seeking information and wishing to pursue a current claim. These are treated in confidence at Executive level and in consultation with legal guidance.

Quality Processes

The Board of Directors and staff are committed to developing a quality and safety culture which ensures that the services Wesley provides are: client centred, flexible, and culturally appropriate; effective and concentrated on delivering the best possible outcomes for clients; delivered by competent and skilled staff who have a focus on

reflective practice; compliant with legislation and are innovative and driven by best practice approaches.

Overview of the Quality Framework

The quality framework is a set of key elements essential to embedding an effective quality management system within Wesley. This framework is built on the Safety and Quality Improvement Framework for Victoria's Health Services. The key elements of the Framework align with quality standards across the various community programs Wesley provides. It defines the roles of the Board of Directors and staff in quality and safety, and describes the systems and practices for effective monitoring, management and improvement of our services (appendices 8,10,and 12 provides an overview of the risk, compliance and quality frameworks along with supporting documentation).

Implicit in a Quality Framework is the integration of risk management. This document sits alongside the Wesley Risk Framework which describes our approach to identifying and managing risks across the organisation. The data captured and processes implemented to identify and mitigate risks are integral to ensuring service and care quality is maintained and improved.

For the purposes of this framework, quality care is defined as "the extent to which a community service program or product produces the desired outcome".

The Key Elements of the Quality Framework

Governance & Leadership

Consumer Participation

Competence & Education

Information Management

Safety & Compliance

Best Practice Approaches

Prevention

In reviewing our history, past policies and procedures and further analysing our effectiveness we have learnt a great deal. In these learnings, Wesley has gained an understanding that prevention is crucial to identifying and controlling as far as possible, sources of risk in terms of protecting those within our care.

Further to the establishment and ongoing resourcing of our quality, risk and compliance departments is the early identification of emerging trends that pose a hazard to those in our care.

An ongoing and growing concern is that of Internet access to children in our care and the acknowledgement by staff and management that persons intent on harming those within our care often target organisations such as ours.

In identifying these two external hazards, Wesley is working in conjunction with Child Wise to mitigate these risks as far as possible whilst still providing internet access responsibly to those in our care. Wesley also screens potential employees, in particular agency staff to ensure that all staff have undergone rigorous and ongoing checks prior to undertaking any work on our sites or with our clients.

Wesley's risk management approach acknowledges that there will continue to be new and emerging trends, for instance, those generated by social media and that our response needs to be diligent, mindful, thoughtful and appropriate in its response.

Working with Children Checks

Wesley is committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people accessing services. Wesley supports the United Nations International Charter of The Rights of The Child. Staff and volunteers are actively encouraged to provide a safe and secure environment for all service users.

Application if Procedure

Children in the care of their parents or carers to homelessness assistance services and homeless young people aged 18 years and under, are considered to be among the most vulnerable of the homeless population. Children and young people often need specific care to ensure that their social, physical and emotional needs are identified and met within the context of their family situation.

Principles which underpin working with children and young people include:

- Acknowledging the rights of children and young people to have their own individual needs assessed and met;
- Adopting appropriate and respectful approaches to working with children and young people;
- Ensuring physical spaces for children that are safe and secure and meet appropriate standards;
- Established systems for dealing with the reporting of abuse;

- Established systems for dealing with self-harm and suicidality in young people;
- Practices that reflect a focus on both children's needs and parents' role in supporting their children;
- Parents and children's participation in case planning;
- Supporting parents and enhancing their parenting skills;
- Employing staff with appropriate skills and knowledge in child centred practice;
- Collaborating and networking with appropriate external agencies, programs and services.

Internal Handling of Complaints

Wesley Mission Victoria acknowledges the right of clients, staff, volunteers and other stakeholders to express a complaint, compliment or suggestion for improvement he or she may have regarding the organisation or one of its services.

This procedure outlines the roles and responsibilities in effectively receiving, registering, actioning, evaluating and reporting complaints, compliments and suggestions that Wesley receives

Mandatory Reporting

Wesley abides by all mandatory reporting requirements as required by Government agencies (DHS, DIAC, FaHCSIA) as well as all other legislative requirements. Staff receive regular training on how and what requires reporting. Wesley has comprehensive policy and procedures around these requirements. Wesley has also purchased RiskMan, a software package that will assist with identifying, managing and reporting of risks. This is currently in design stage of the implementation plan, piloting is due to commence across 100 users, in three portfolios in late September 2012.

Response to Offenders

Wesley's internal disciplinary policy and procedures are used to manage staffing issues once identified. Any staff member or volunteer found to have committed an offense will be summarily dismissed in accordance with Wesley's policies and procedures and in accordance with Fairwork Australia Guidelines. All mandatory reporting is completed for both internal and external parties and full documentation maintained in accordance with the Privacy Act.

If the offender is not a staff member or volunteer, legal advice is sought and proceedings are followed in accordance with the relevant reporting and legislative guidelines.

Our EAP and Lifeline services are available for those wishing to access these services confidentially.

Wesley adopts a risk-based approach to the implementation of the Legal Compliance Framework. Statutory obligations representing the greatest degree of risk to Wesley are given priority in the implementation schedule.

- An effective Legislative Compliance Framework requires active commitment from senior managers, Chief Executive Officer and Board of Directors. This includes conveying a clear message to staff and volunteers that Wesley is expected to comply with all requirements and obligations to which it is subject.
- Wesley will communicate the organisation's expectation to employees and those issues that need to be escalated and to whom.
- All Wesley volunteers and employees including management will:
 - Adhere to the legal compliance obligations relevant to their position.
 - Perform their duties in an ethical, lawful and safe manner.
 - Report and escalate compliance concerns, issues and failures.

Notification of Compliance Responsibilities

Wesley maintains a Compliance Register and Register of Reporting Obligations that summarizes obligations arising from legislation and regulations.

- The Legislative Compliance Register is operated through Riskman an integrated web based program which allows registration of both corporate and site specific risks and compliance obligations. Lawlex is used to provide regular updates providing information on new legislation and amendments. This information is promulgated to and actioned by the staff responsible for ensuring compliance in their area.
- The Register of Reporting Obligations identifies reporting requirements and provides an alert system for staff accountable for reporting to funding bodies and authorities. Compliance obligations and the assurance processes associated with these obligations are assigned to managers to ensure obligations are actively monitored and appropriate, ongoing assurance activities are undertaken.
- The Risk & Compliance Manager is responsible for reviewing and maintaining the Register of Compliance Obligations.
- The Funded Agency Chanel also provides reporting requirements relating to our funded programmes.

Training

Wesley will provide continuous training to ensure that employees and volunteers are competent to fulfil their roles and responsibilities. Training will be:

- Ongoing from the time of induction



- Based on an assessment of gaps in employee knowledge and competence. This is identified through the annual performance appraisal system
- Relevant to the employees and volunteers area of service

Monitoring and Measuring

Systems and procedures are required to monitor compliance, identify and analyse non-conformances or breaches and implement appropriate controls. The Compliance monitoring and measuring program consists of a range of planned assurance, assessment and evaluation activities.

All compliance assurance work is coordinated by the Risk & Compliance Manager to avoid any duplication of effort. The assurance activities include the examination of documented evidence that the supervisory controls are operating and that the certification process is operating effectively.

Legal Framework

Wesley Mission Victoria is committed to delivering its strategic and operational objectives in accordance with the law and principles of good governance, and with efficiency, fairness, impartiality, integrity, honesty and compassion. To do this, Wesley intends to comply with a diverse range of legislation, statutory and regulatory requirements, and reporting obligations.

The Legal Compliance Framework assists Wesley meet these legal and statutory obligations. The benefit of having this framework is to:

- Reduce the risks of non-compliance.
- Promote the importance of managing non-compliant issues in a proactive and transparent manner.
- Assist Wesley to address systemic and recurring problems.
- Promote the culture of compliance within Wesley.
- Assist the organisation to remain a good corporate citizen.

It also serves as a tool to ensure responsibilities and requirements of each relevant Act are successfully completed, empowering management to identify areas of under and over performing. The Framework aims to provide Wesley management and the Board with on-going assurance that all major areas of the individual Acts are being complied with. As such, the Framework will be amended on an on-going basis as required for legislative changes, staff changes, updates made to policies and procedures and any training undertaken relevant to each legal compliance obligation.

Compliance with this Framework is the responsibility of each employee. Each Wesley employee is responsible to systematically identify, analyse, treat, monitor

and communicate compliance associated with any activity, function or process, in such a way that enables Wesley to:

- Maximise quality, safety and efficiency.
- Minimise negative publicity, complaints, penalties and fines, injuries and loss of productive time.

Legal compliance risks that are rated as medium, high or very high must be managed under the supervision of an Executive Committee member. Matters which are non-compliant must be remedied in a timely manner, corresponding with the nature of the risk involved.

Care Leavers

For persons who were once in our care a detailed procedure is followed, in summary it covers the following:

- To outline the process for receiving and processing requests from former residents, or third parties enquiring about a former resident, for access to records pertaining to their period as a client in one of Wesley's now closed residential care programs.
 1. To ensure that Wesley's former residents receive supported release of information (e.g. that if necessary, the client receives counselling support and/or referral to other support services as required)
 2. To ensure that information is released as per State and Federal privacy legislation.

Care Leavers are linked up with support agencies such as Find and Connect and Open Place where further support is identified or requested. For those wishing to pursue compensation information is provided on the process to follow.

External Relationships

Given the complexities and diversity in Wesley's service delivery, there exists a lengthy list of external bodies and organisations that Wesley has close relationships with, the following are just a few. A full register of agencies is available upon request; alternatively the Funded Agency Channel provides a more comprehensive list of funded programmes and provides a thorough overview of those programmes that have children within their care.

1. Department of Human Services
2. Department of Health and Aging
3. Department of Immigration and Citizenship
4. Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
5. Victoria Police
6. Department of Justice

7. Chid Wise
8. Centre for Excellence
9. NDS

Documentation

Evidence of documentation relating to Wesley's policies and procedures that relate to this submission and statements made within are tabled below. This is by no means exhaustive, nor is it programme specific. It is simply to provide a synopsis of some of the guiding policies and procedures that have been referred to.

Document Name
Accreditation Audit Schedule 2012
Audit Schedule External 2012-2015
Approved Accreditation Bodies DHS
Client incident report DHS
Client incident report
Code of Conduct
Complaints, compliments and suggestions procedure and form
Compliance Framework
Compliance Legal Framework
Compliance reporting template
DHS staff and carer file audit template
Duty of Care Policy and Procedure
EAP service for volunteers and managers
Easy English complaints poster
Employee assistance program policy and procedure
Freedom from abuse and neglect procedure
Management Responsibility Procedure
Managing Concerns or issues guidelines
Open Place booklet
Policy and procedure for records access
Police Check policy and procedure
Privacy statement
Quality Framework
Legal compliance
Whistleblower Guide
Framework for managing risk
Working with children check procedure
Working with young people

Wesley currently has the following Board approved organisational wide policies that are living documents; these are monitored and reviewed regularly. These documents are all provided in the Appendices.

1. [Health and Safety](#)
2. [Our Clients](#)

3. [Our Volunteers](#)
4. [Our Commitment to Employees](#)
5. [A Fair Go – Respecting Diversity](#)
6. [Solving of Staff Complaints](#)
7. [Communication and Integrity](#)
8. [Compliance](#)
9. [Quality](#)
10. [Social Inclusion](#)
11. [Risk Management](#)
12. [Environmental](#)

Summary

Wesley is committed to continuous improvement. In a large and diverse organisation this is an ongoing task requiring the commitment of all staff to our regulatory requirements and our internal frameworks around governance, probity, risk and compliance, the accreditation (internal and external) and our auditing processes (internal and external) provide accountability and to some degree assurance in managing our organisational risk. This is underpinned by a robust quality framework, and stems from our commitment to provide the very best care to our clients. We believe in our values of compassion, justice and hope, we value our history and we embrace the challenges our future holds.

Appendix 1

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY 1



Wesley Mission Victoria values people and actively cares for their safety, health and well being.

Every person who comes in contact with our organisation should expect to do so safely.

Wesley has a duty of care for and is fully committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for our employees, volunteers, contractors, clients and visitors.

This commitment includes the local community. Our activities should not put the general public at risk of injury or illness.

At Wesley we understand that we are all responsible for our safety and the safety of others in the workplace. We ensure that all tasks are undertaken in a safe manner and without harm to ourselves or others.

Wesley will:

- Work together to prevent accidents and to achieve an injury free workplace.
- Develop a culture of safety consciousness.
- Continually improve health and safety performance.
- Develop clear accountabilities that measure safety performance at all levels.
- Maintain an effective OH&S Management System that, in consultation with employees, identifies workplace hazards, controls risks and prevents injuries.
- Comply with OH&S legislation and regulations.
- Train and empower each other to work safely.
- Adhere to all OH&S requirements contained within legislation, regulations and policies that govern the organisation's activities.

"Safety is Everyone's Responsibility"

This policy is endorsed by all members of the Leadership Team and authorised by the Chief Executive Officer on behalf of the Board of Directors



CEO Signature

10th August 2010

Date

Appendix 2

OUR CLIENTS POLICY 2



Wesley Mission Victoria provides services that assist clients in meeting their individual needs and personal goals in the least restrictive way, commensurate with the resources that are available. Wesley respects each client's right to choose to experience a broad range of opportunities and to take appropriate risks in an environment that provides relevant information, support and care.

Wesley ensures that each person, who meets the eligibility criteria and is seeking a service, has access to services on the basis of relative need, available resources and is free from discrimination of any kind. If services are unable to meet an individual's needs, Wesley shall encourage and support the person to gain access to a more appropriate service/s.

Wesley shall always fully and clearly inform its service users about the nature and choice of available services and any conditions that may apply.

Wesley shall offer clients the opportunity and support to enable them to participate as fully as possible in making decisions about the services that they receive. Each client has the right to either consent to or refuse a service. Clients may choose to involve an advocate in making decisions about the services that they receive.

At all times Wesley recognises and respects each client's right to privacy, dignity and confidentiality in all aspects of his or her life.

We ensure that all individuals enjoy:

- freedom from intrusion and public attention,
- being treated with honour, respect and dignity thereby reflecting their culture and community, and providing a positive influence on their self esteem,
- an assurance that written and spoken information about them is protected from access and use by unauthorised persons.

Wesley encourages its clients to participate in community life and provides the appropriate support, within resource limitations to allow this to occur in the most appropriate ways possible.

Wesley works with clients to create the opportunity to develop and maintain skills and lifestyles and to participate in activities that enable them to achieve valued roles in the community.

Wesley requires all staff, volunteers and clients to respect and be sensitive to the diverse backgrounds of clients and each other and to enjoy a workplace and/or service site that is free from physical, sexual, emotional and verbal abuse, harassment and assault.

Where appropriate each client's family and social relationships are to be supported. Family members and significant others shall be encouraged to be involved in all aspects of the services provided.

Within available resources, Wesley shall make its facilities comfortable and where possible meet individual needs. Residential and activity settings are to be similar to those enjoyed by others in the community.

Appendix 3

OUR VOLUNTEERS POLICY 3



Wesley Mission Victoria values volunteers as a key resource in achieving our mission to support disadvantaged people to be valued members of our community.

Wesley shall provide an opportunity for interested community members to support its activities on a voluntary basis.

Volunteers are people who undertake activities that are:

- Of benefit to the community and the volunteer
- Of their own free will and without coercion
- Without monetary reward
- In designated volunteer positions only

Wesley:

- Values and recognises the ongoing commitment and contribution of our volunteers to the community.
- Manages and provides ongoing support to all volunteers in accordance with the relevant procedures.
- Works in partnership with community organisations, corporations, educational institutions and business, and other relevant stakeholders to develop volunteering opportunities, raise the profile of volunteering, and to facilitate the access of volunteer opportunities.

Wesley will ensure that volunteer services:

- Are of consistent quality and availability and are adequately resourced.
- Provide induction, training and on-going support to volunteers who satisfy the selection criteria. The selection criteria shall be based on individual program / department needs and client requirements.
- Apply strict controls to the use and supervision of volunteers to minimise Wesley's exposure to risk.
- Use volunteers to complement the work of paid staff and not to replace paid positions.
- Provide volunteer opportunities which are consistent with their expectations, interests, availability, skills and experiences.

All Volunteers will be protected by, and shall adhere to the 'Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities Statement'. At all times, volunteers shall respect each client's right to privacy, dignity and confidentiality in all aspects of his or her life.

All volunteers performing authorised voluntary work will be protected by Insurance held by Wesley.

This policy is endorsed by all members of the Leadership Team and authorised by the Chief Executive Officer on behalf of the Board of Directors



CEO Signature

10th August 2010

Date

Appendix 4

COMMITMENT TO EMPLOYEES

POLICY 4



Wesley Mission Victoria is committed to creating a mutually beneficial working environment in which staff are skilled, motivated, valued, supported and appropriately rewarded for their contribution.

Wesley Mission Victoria aspires to be an employer of choice.

Recruitment and Selection

Wesley shall recruit and select the best person to fill each vacancy on the basis of their ability to meet the key selection criteria identified for that position.

The selection criteria will be free from discrimination of any kind. Assessment shall be based on evidence which is as objective and thorough as possible.

Induction training shall be provided to all new employees by Human Resources and complemented by on-the-job induction by individual programs/businesses/departments.

Performance, Development and Competency

Wesley Mission Victoria is committed to achieving an effective learning environment that encourages and supports staff to increase their skills and knowledge on an ongoing basis.

Wesley encourages career development within the organisation commensurate with organisational needs and resources. Wesley encourages staff to acquire and extend the skills relevant to their employment.

All staff shall participate in annual Staff Performance and Development Reviews which are supported with an ongoing process of performance monitoring, evaluation and feedback. Each staff members' competencies will be assessed against those required for the position the staff member holds.

Commitment to Employees

Wesley is committed to providing support and counsel to staff during periods of work and/or personal pressure and has established employee assistance programs that can be called upon as required.

Entitlements

All staff shall receive their due entitlements and are expected to adhere to the conditions specified in the appropriate Act, Industrial Award, Individual Agreement, Enterprise Agreement or Employment Contract.

Wesley shall provide fair recompense for work done, within its financial and legal constraints. Where staff are not subject to an award, they shall be remunerated via a system which provides a range of salaries with a predetermined relationship to the market place, a defined and equitable relationship to each other, and a set of criteria.

Appendix 5

A FAIR GO—RESPECTING DIVERSITY POLICY 5



Wesley Mission Victoria (Wesley) is committed to providing a supportive and productive workplace that values diversity and equal opportunity, and one that is free from discrimination, harassment and bullying. Wesley will take proactive, reasonable and proportionate measures to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying.

Wesley will:

Ensure that its policies, procedures and practices do not discriminate against individuals, and that they protect them from any form of harassment and bullying in the workplace.

Ensure that management is accountable for the implementation of this policy, and its enforcement.

Provide a process for the resolution of grievances in the workplace.

Ensure that all staff and volunteers have an awareness of the principles of equal opportunity and diversity through on going training and education.

Make available Contact Officers to provide information and support on equal opportunity related matters.

Ensure systems are in place that reflect diversity and allow for all staff, volunteers and contractors to be heard regarding any suggestions they may have about how to improve our systems and practice.

Access to employment opportunities

Each staff member and volunteer has the right to access opportunities or services that will help them achieve their full potential in employment as well as other aspects of their lives.

It is unlawful to discriminate against a person with a disability in all aspects of employment, where the individual can perform the requirements of the job. Wesley will provide reasonable adjustments to support those with disabilities in the workplace.

Equity in the Workplace

All employees and potential employees are entitled to access employment, promotion, training, transfers and the benefits of employment on the basis of merit.

Assessment of employees and volunteers shall be on the basis of their qualifications, experience, ability, performance and potential, and shall be undertaken without favouritism and unlawful discrimination.

Wesley provides an inclusive workplace that abides by Federal and State antidiscrimination legislation and does not discriminate in employment or volunteering on the basis of:

- Age
- Breastfeeding
- Employment Activity
- Gender identity
- Impairment (including physical and cognitive impairment and mental illness)
- Industrial Activity
- Lawful sexual activity
- Marital Status

Appendix 6

SOLVING OF STAFF, VOLUNTEER, CLIENT COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTES

POLICY 6

Wesley Mission Victoria acknowledges the right of staff, volunteers and clients to express a complaint, grievance and/or issue he or she may have regarding the organisation or one of its services.


All complaints are treated as confidential, investigated impartially, recorded in writing and processed in accordance with a structured procedure. Wesley is committed to the timely resolution of all issues that arise.

Wesley shall comply with Grievance procedures contained in any Employment Award or agreement relevant to its staff. In addition, Wesley has a Grievance Procedure that applies to clients, staff members and volunteers.

Satisfaction surveys provide clients, volunteers and employees with an additional means of reporting concerns.

This policy is endorsed by all members of the Leadership Team and authorised by the Chief Executive Officer on behalf of the Board of Directors





CEO Signature

10th August 2010

Date

COMMUNICATION AND INTEGRITY POLICY 7



Wesley is committed to Wesley Mission Victoria is committed to ensuring that the sharing of information is timely, accurate, clear and concise and that encourages collaborative and consultative ways of working.

Wesley recognises the importance of effective communication in developing a positive organisational culture.

Wesley will plan structures and processes to facilitate the long-term growth and development of the organisation. An integral part of this process will be planned change management processes that identify and assist those who are affected by such change.

Communication with Clients

Wesley shall always fully and clearly inform its clients about the nature and choice of services available. Clients will be informed about their rights and responsibilities together with those of the organisation.

Staff shall consult with clients and their advocates, where appropriate, about their needs and desires before services are delivered and activities are conducted.

Privacy

Wesley recognises and respects each client's right to privacy, dignity and confidentiality in all aspects of his or her life.

We only collect information that is directly relevant to effective service delivery. All information is treated as private and confidential and any limitation to confidentiality is clearly communicated to clients if appropriate.

External Communication

Wesley shall raise its profile by promoting positive representation in all forms of media and advertising.

Wesley shall review, approve and control the release of advertising and media coverage.

Intellectual Property

The disclosure of Wesley's Intellectual Property shall be controlled to ensure the security and integrity of its operations. All legal steps will be taken to protect Wesley's intellectual property.

It is the responsibility of all employees and volunteers to ensure that all of Wesley's copyrighted intellectual property is not disclosed without proper authorisation and that confidentiality of intellectual property is maintained in accordance with Wesley's Code of Conduct.

Disclosure of this information to all non WMV parties must only occur through express written permission by the CEO.

Research

Wesley shall facilitate innovative research projects and promote forums for identifying, understanding and addressing ethical issues which arise in the context of human research.

All proposals shall be reviewed, considered and when appropriate approved by designated personnel.

Approved projects shall be undertaken in a manner that safeguards the welfare and rights of all participants and stakeholders.

Appendix 8

COMPLIANCE POLICY 8



Wesley Mission Victoria has a commitment to comply with all its obligations to ensure the best possible outcomes for stakeholders.

Accountability to stakeholders is the hallmark of Wesley's Management System

Wesley shall comply in all respects with all applicable legislative requirements, relevant standards and all funding agreements.

Wesley respects the **privacy** of individuals and their rights under the law.

Wesley may seek **legal advice**, interpretation or opinion of compliance standards and legislation as appropriate according to its requirements.

Wesley Mission Victoria shall ensure that the organisation's finances are managed in a responsible, effective, efficient and accountable manner in line with good governance practices. Wesley is committed to ensuring the long term financial stability and viability of the organisation.

This policy is endorsed by all members of the Leadership Team and authorised by the Chief Executive Officer on behalf of the Board of Directors



CEO Signature

10th August 2010

Date

Appendix 9

QUALITY POLICY 10



Wesley Mission Victoria is committed to providing high quality service delivery and to continuously evaluating and improving our services. Wesley's Management System has been developed and implemented to meet this commitment, and to meet all relevant statutory requirements and standards.

Wesley is committed to quality improvement principles and practices, and to continuous improvement via:

- Maintaining its AS/NZS ISO 9001:2008 certification
- Providing ongoing quality support and development;
- Encouraging active participation in continual improvement;
- Maintaining an independent internal audit function, monitoring and measuring Wesley's performance;
- Providing appropriate infrastructure to achieve service delivery outcomes;
- Achieving the goals and objectives of Wesley's Strategic Plan and Business Plans;
- Facilitating innovation and learning through evaluation and research.

The Senior Management and Board of Wesley Mission Victoria are committed to embedding quality improvement principles and practices. This commitment acknowledges the importance of teaching, learning, intellectual inquiry, innovation and relationships with the business and community in which these activities take place.

This policy is endorsed by all members of the Leadership Team and authorised by the Chief Executive Officer on behalf of the Board of Directors



CEO Signature

10th August 2010

Date

SOCIAL INCLUSION AND BELONGING POLICY 11



Wesley Mission Victoria is committed to a socially inclusive approach in the services it delivers and in its advocacy for social development. This approach applies to all Wesley's activities, and guides the work of staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors who undertake work for Wesley. It encompasses activities with individuals, families, communities and at the level of Australian society. It refers to activities that Wesley manages alone and those where it collaborates with other organisations.

This policy defines the approach Wesley will take in its work, and outlines an organisational framework for its response.

Definitions

A socially inclusive approach focuses simultaneously on development at different levels from the individual to the societal levels. On the one hand, it works to assist people to participate in the things that Australian society has to offer and which matter to them. On the other hand, it works to develop social systems and structures which mean that people feel connected to, and a part of, Australian society.

A socially inclusive approach emphasises the importance of each individual having choice about, and control over, how they live their life. By working to build people's capabilities and material resources, it aims to ensure that all people can participate in community and social life.

Because it is based on the idea that each individual has the right to determine the life they want to lead, it means working with people to give voice to their views and to challenge the norms, systems and structures that limit their autonomy and participation within their families, communities and society as a whole. It recognises that this right extends to all people, and thus individuals have a responsibility to others in shaping a future in which all have a place.

A socially inclusive approach works with communities to build their capabilities and resources so that they are able to shape their own development and sustain themselves into the future.

In the context of Wesley's work, disadvantage is understood in terms of the deprivation, marginalisation and exclusion that some individuals, families and communities experience relative to what most Australians regard as reasonable. Disadvantage is associated with inequality, including differences in the material and social status between individuals and communities. A socially inclusive approach recognises that inequality exists in families, communities and in society and thus seeks greater equality of outcome for people in all these contexts.

A socially inclusive society is one to which people feel they belong and in which they have a reasonable quality of life (such as would be accepted by the majority of people in society). Wesley's approach seeks to understand the outcomes of our activities in terms of the well-being of the people we work with in relation to their personal contexts, their social networks (including family, friends, carers and others they count important to them), their communities and at the level of society.

Organisational framework

To the ends outlined above, Wesley's activities will:

- build individuals', families' and communities' capabilities and access to resources in order that they have greater control and choice in how they live their lives;

Appendix 11

RISK MANAGEMENT

POLICY 12



Wesley Mission Victoria values people and will actively work on managing risk effectively. We are committed to establishing organisational culture, processes, resources and structures that ensure risk management is achieved within the organisation's strategic directions and operational objectives.

Every individual who comes in contact with our organisation, the communities in which we operate and the partners of the organisation can have confidence that the entire organisation is committed to identifying and managing risk.

At Wesley Mission Victoria, we understand that we are all responsible for managing risk, in accordance with Wesley Mission Victoria Risk Management framework.

Wesley will:

- Formalise and communicate a process for risk identification
- Assess and manage identified risks by providing consistent risk assessment criteria
- Encourage participation by all stakeholders in identifying risks
- Establish suitable control measures that are cost effective and efficient in reducing risk to an acceptable level
- Identify business and process improvement opportunities within the organisation through the mechanism of risk management
- Work to ensure that all tasks are undertaken in a safe manner and without harm to ourselves or others.

This policy is endorsed by all members of the Leadership Team and authorised by the Chief Executive Officer on behalf of the Board of Directors



CEO Signature

10th August 2010

Date

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

POLICY 13



Wesley Mission Victoria (Wesley) acknowledges the impact of climate change and the adverse impacts that human activity can impose on the degradation of our natural systems.

Operating in a sustainable manner means acknowledging that there are absolute physical limits on our world's natural resources. Wesley supports the belief that we must work towards meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Wesley recognises its responsibility to practice and promote behaviours that support activities which contribute to environmental sustainability within the local, national and international community. Wesley is committed to operating in an effective and accountable manner to deliver services that meet the needs of the most disadvantaged in our community both now and into the future whilst ensuring wise stewardship of environmental resources.

Wesley is committed to supporting the needs of our community and our environment in the following ways:

- Secure operational funding that supports sustainable service delivery.
- Advocate for and support the marginalised and disadvantaged in our society so that their voice and needs are included and respected in response to policy decisions for a sustainable future.
- Educate, train and motivate staff and volunteers to work in an environmentally responsible manner that benefits their own health and wellbeing and those of our clients.
- Continuously improve the manner in which we pursue sustainable practices in response to current knowledge and evolving ideas.
- Comply with environmental legislation and regulations.
- Set and achieve targets to minimise environmental impact at all levels.

This policy is endorsed by all members of the Leadership Team and authorised by the Chief Executive Officer on behalf of the Board of Directors



CEO Signature

10th August 2010

Date