

Prevention of abuse, assault and neglect

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

What is abuse, assault and neglect?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

How do you report abuse, assault or neglect?

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

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

You can:

- Report your concerns directly to a Support Worker, your Facilitator, the Chief Service Officer, or the Chief Executive Officer.
- Fill in a Complaint (Stage 2) form and return this to ALARA.

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

Other contacts

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

The Regional Complaints Officer at Disability Services Queensland

Phone: (07) 3381 7370

Disability and Communities Complaint Unit

Write to: GPO Box 806, Brisbane Qld 4001

Phone: (07) 3224 7179

Email: complaints@disability.qld.gov.au

Aged Care Complaints Scheme

Department of Health & Aging

Write to: GPO Box 9848, Brisbane Qld 4001

Phone: 1800 550 552

Australian National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline

Freecall: 1800 880 052

TTY: 1800 301 130

Adult Guardian

Phone: (07) 3234 0870

Toll Free: 1300 653 187

The Commission for Children and Young People

Phone: (07) 3247 5525

Free Call: 1800 688 275

Department of Child Safety

Phone: (07) 3280 1744

A/Hr Crisis Care: (07) 3235 9999

Free call: 1800 177 135

Your local Police Station

Phone: 131 444 (non-urgent incidents)

Remember:

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