

WHS2.2 Infection Control

Purpose

1. The purpose of this policy is to minimise the risk of infection and maintain a safe environment that will enhance service delivery and improve outcomes for all participants, and contribute to a safer working environment and reduce infection risk for employees, participants, volunteers and visitors to SAVVY

Alignment with Practice Standards

1. Module 2: Provider Governance and Operational Management

Legislative Alignment

1. Work Health and Safety Act 2011
2. NSW Public Health Act
3. Privacy Act 1988
4. Anti-Discrimination Act of NSW 1977

Key Responsible Executive

Chief Executive Officer

For More Support

Your People Manager

Policy Statement

1. SAVVY complies with all relevant legislation in maintaining practices that minimise the risk of infection to all employees, volunteers, participants, carers, visitors and participants.
2. Systems are in place to ensure prompt identification, notification and management of infection risks within the workplace and identification of health associated infection and cross infection.
3. SAVVY takes all steps to ensure that no staff member is discriminated against on the basis of actual or assumed infection.
 - a. No employee is denied employment, promotion, transfer, training opportunities or other benefits due to actual or assumed infection.
 - b. SAVVY employees are not obliged to disclose their health status.
 - c. Employees, carers and volunteers are expected to follow medical advice in relation to informing their employer, if required, and to exercise judgement in deciding if their own

health status requires special conditions to protect themselves or to protect the health and safety of others.

4. If employees disclose their status to any staff this information is treated with strict confidentiality and respect.

Procedures

1. Prevention of Exposure to Infection
 - a. All employees and volunteers have access to the Universal Infection Control Procedures available at all SAVVY premises for the benefit of all staff, volunteers and visitors, as well as refresher training throughout their employment.
 - b. During the employee induction program, all employees and volunteers are trained in infection control procedures.
 - c. The Chief Executive Officer, and participant Engagement Managers for each region, ensures that adequate, safe, and effective facilities (including PPE) to aid the prevention of infection is available.
 - i. SAVVY staff use relevant personal protective equipment where indicated.
 - ii. SAVVY staff involved in regular participant contact with identified “at risk” groups are advised to obtain relevant immunisations.
 - d. SAVVY reserves the right to withdraw or refuse services in situations where others may be exposed to unacceptable risks from someone who has been identified as having an infectious condition.
 - e. Employees are encouraged to maintain healthy skin integrity as micro-organisms may enter the body via breaks in the skin. Healthy, intact skin on hands is a natural barrier to the invasion of infectious agents, even when the hands become contaminated with blood and body fluids.
 - f. All SAVVY employees, particularly those who work with participants in domestic activities, try to maintain the integrity of the skin on their hands and take precautionary measures if they have broken skin. This includes:
 - i. inspecting hands daily prior to commencement of work;
 - ii. wearing gloves for all personal care with participants and domestic activities;
 - iii. covering cuts and abrasions on the hands with an occlusive dressing;
 - iv. avoiding scrub/nail brushes as they can break the skin and may be a source of infection;
 - v. seeking advice regarding treatment of weeping lesions or dermatitis; and/or
 - vi. applying hand moisturiser whenever possible to nourish dry skin
2. Exposure to Infection
 - a. All employees and volunteers complete SAVVY Hazard and Incident Report Forms after exposure to an infection control hazard either real or perceived.
 - b. Staff whose work carries the risk of exposure to needle stick injuries, body substances or infectious conditions must practise standard precautions, wear personal protective equipment (PPE) and implement safe work processes.
 - c. If an employee or volunteer is exposed to body/wound fluid or sustains a needlestick injury they must clean/decontaminate skin by washing with soap and water or rinsing mouth/nose/eyes well with water or saline.
 - i. Further information on steps to follow after an injury is available from the National Needlestick Hotline 1800 804 823.
 - d. Employees or volunteers who have been exposed to any of the above situations must inform their People Manager, or Service Manager immediately.
 - i. The exposed staff member or volunteer is given immediate and free access to confidential testing and/or counselling or they may choose to notify their GP and seek for preventative treatment and counselling.

- ii. To avoid the risk of further infection the appropriate People Manager advises all relevant staff of their potential exposure to an infectious disease.
3. Confidentiality
 - a. People Managers ensure that access to private and confidential information related to the existence of infectious diseases amongst employees, volunteers and participants remains on a strictly “need to know basis” and limited to appropriate employees.
4. Discrimination
 - a. If employees consider they are being harassed due to actual or assumed status they may use SAVVY grievance procedure (see WS Policy 1.3 Grievance Resolution) and, if necessary, contact the Anti-Discrimination Board.
5. Communication to Employees
 - a. SAVVY consults with employees in determining the most appropriate arrangement in each program for consultation, supervision and direction on infection control.

References to other SAVVY policies and external sources

1. HR4.4 Grievance Resolution
2. Org2.8 Disaster and Emergency Management
3. WHS 2.1 Working Safely with Participants
4. NHMRC, Australian Guidelines for the prevention of Infection Control in Healthcare

Summary of attachments

1. World Health Organisation - Infection Control Standard precautions in Healthcare
2. World health Organisation Hand Hygiene - When, Why and How

Version Control

1. 1 April 2023 - New Policy Creation