

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK



Apex Care
YOUR WELLBEING SUPPORT TEAM



Tiaki Tihi
TO RŌPŪ TAUTOKO ORA

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NAU MAI HAERE MAI

Kia Ora and welcome to Apex Care, we are so pleased to have you as part of our team, and hope that you enjoy every minute of it. Apex Care is an agency providing mental health/health care support to a number of organisations throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

This Employee Handbook contains information on who we are, how we operate and the policies and procedures that we follow. It is important that you are familiar with these and comply with our policies at all times. Amendments to this handbook may be issued from time to time. We wish you well in your career with Apex Care.

Please note all **Health and Safety information and policies** are in a separate handbook. The Health and Safety handbook is also available on the staffroom website on the resource page.

Our Mission

We want to be New Zealand's favourite support service for youth mental health, disability and perinatal. We want to set the bar high for what a good support service should be. We do this by following best practice and applying evidence-based practices in our day-to-day work.

In the future we plan to expand our operation to be nationwide and provide additional services that change the face of youth and family mental health support. However, we are focused on being strategic and mindful of the way in which we do this in order to maintain our sustainability. Definitely exciting times to come!



1. Overview of company

Apex Care primarily supports organisations by providing trained support workers either to fill a gap in their team, or to provide that specialised one-on-one support to the tangata whaiora.

We support the health sectors, being:

- Youth mental health
- Intellectual and physical disability
- Perinatal care
- Youth mentoring
- Elderly care

We operate on an on-call basis often providing short-term and long-term support.

1.1 Our Story

Apex Care was started by Wendy Harding to fulfil a need in the industry for on-call quality care and support staff. After 28 years, working and supporting the health industry in several different positions and organisations, she took on the challenge of starting her own business in the Waikato. Wendy's passion for quality care has grown her business, building a strong reputation with organisations and families by supplying experienced, caring, and trusted care and support staff.

In 2019 the company's direction changed and we embraced a specialisation in youth mental health support. Providing mental health support services for the acute need in our communities.

"As a team we will and must make a difference. This is always the way we have worked at Apex Care - supporting each other and together making a difference."

Wendy Harding - Managing Director

1.2 Our Tikanga/Ethos

TAPATAHI
Integrity

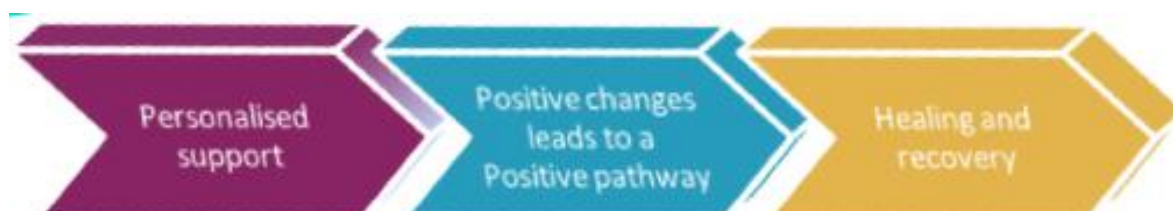
PONO
Honesty

KAWENGA TAKOHANGA
Accountability

Our interaction with every customer and tangata whai ora will be honest and above board. Our behaviours help define who we are, and we will behave in a way that defines us as the best.

1.3 Our Kaupapa/Principles

Our aim at Apex Care is to provide quality care that makes a positive difference to our tangata whaiora. We tailor our work to suit the individuals needs and health care goals, as we believe that the right person, right environment, and right attitude can help our tangata whaiora to reach their goals during their well-being journey.



1.4 Our Whanonga Pono/Values

Our values help form who we are. They stand for the key components of what we feel is important in our organisation and as individuals.

Doing what's right

We value those we support and our staff. We show this by employing quality staff and ensuring we are there to back them up.

Going above and beyond

Our passion and our drive are what makes us unique. We want to **Wow** people with all the little things we do that really make a difference so that we can continue to do what we love.

Being real and down to earth

We are all just people and we want to support everyone as such. No position in the company is too important to stop and lend a hand.

Being there when needed

Whether it is 3am or 4pm you can count on us to be there for you.

Being holistic

We believe that our holistic approach to support provides an overall health and well-being benefit to our tangata whaiora and staff, bringing a sense of belonging and self-worth that can have a positive influence in fostering healthy minds.

1.5 Our Rapunga Whakaaro/Philosophy

Apex Care's belief is that quality support is intrinsically linked to the concept of wellness, in body, mind and spirit. We understand that this concept will mean different things to each of the people that we work with and is based in their values, beliefs and their culture.

Our Philosophy in practice:

Respect / Whakataute

- Respecting experiences, differences and world view
- We respect and trust each other, the relationships and the service we provide

Care / Manaakitanga

- Assisting those we support to reach their goals
- We care for our staff and encourage positive self-care strategies for the safety of all

Sense of belonging / Whanaungatanga

- Establishing and maintaining connections
- We encourage our team to create and maintain healthy therapeutic relationships with the people we are supporting, Apex staff and other organisations

Empowerment / Whakamana

- We value the significance of individuality and support them to feel empowered to make choices about their own life
- We work with professionalism and integrity and are empowered to advocate for best practice.

1.6 Tools for working with us

We use several different programmes to provide you with information.

Please save our contact details in your phone:

- **0800 255 000** This is a 24-hour number and will always go through to the person on call. Do not call or texting any office staff direct on their mobile phones as they may be on leave or not on duty.
- admin@apexcare.co.nz If you have non-urgent queries, you can email if this is preferable. This email is monitored 8.30am - 5pm Mon - Friday.

Resources

www.apexcarenz.com - This is our "staffroom", as a workforce that doesn't have a physical workplace, we don't want you to miss out.

Here you will find:

- Forms
- Your Well-being information
- Employee and Health and Safety Handbook
- Youth specific information
- Policies and procedures
- Māori awareness information
- Information on Training and Support available and much more

Apps

We use a programme called "When I Work" (WIW) to roster and capture availability of support workers. All support workers will be emailed an invite to this app when they are loaded into the roster. We ask that you download it and familiarise yourself with the App. We are here to support you if you have any questions. Remember to:

1. Accept the invite
 - a. Look for an email or text message from your manager inviting you to join their workplace.
 - b. Accept the invite and set your password to get started
2. Set availability preferences
 - a. Set your availability preferences so your manager can see when you prefer to work and when you prefer not to work.
 - b. You can also set up alert preferences so you never miss a shift – highly recommended for those early morning starts
3. Check your schedule
 - a. View the schedule created and to find out when you work next.
 - b. You need to accept the shifts you've agreed to in WIW.
 - c. You can also use the app to request time off.
 - d. If you need to swap shifts, please contact 0800 255 000 and let the office team know.

Please watch this video on how to use WIW: [WIW YouTube instructions](#)

1.7 Office Team and Support Available

Our team is here to support you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call us for support whenever you are not sure. The team will ensure that you have all the tools to do and complete your job effectively.



Communication is one of the most important parts of our business. Without clear communication everything can fall apart and errors can occur. We ask that you communicate with us often and call 0800 255 000. If something is unclear seek further clarification. There are a number of staff that are online in the office, to ensure you get hold of the person on duty please always call the 0800 number.

We provide support to every employee to assist you in your development as a professional, but also to protect your mental health.

We offer:

24 Hour Phone Support if you need urgent support, it doesn't matter what time of day you can call and speak to a coordinator, we are here to support you.

Debriefs / Line supervision the office team provide regular opportunities for you to have confidential debriefs. We welcome you to call us at the end of a shift to discuss how your shift went. This is a good opportunity to reflect and learn.

External EAP services Apex Care provides access to an external organisation that offers counselling and support. You can book counselling sessions confidentially and we will just receive an account for us to pay with no information on it, not even your name. You can contact them to make an appointment by visiting [EAP Services](#) or calling 0800 327 669.

Peer Supervision We often run peer supervision with our Clinical Nurse Manager. These will be held via zoom in groups of five. The idea is that you bring concerns e.g. What do I do if a young person escalates while I am driving, or what do I do if I know someone is self-harming and they have locked themselves in the bathroom. Whatever has been troubling you while you have been on shift

Annual Appraisals We conduct appraisals with you on a yearly basis. These appraisals are an opportunity for us to review how things have gone, get your feedback, to say thank you for your hard work and recognise your skills.

1.8 Getting Paid

You will have already provided us with your bank account, Kiwisaver details and IRD number as part of your online induction. If you have not already completed these forms, please go to the online induction and fill out the forms on the "Getting Paid" section.

Your Wages

You must **not** discuss your salary and work hours or any other personal affairs with the tangata whai ora or facility or another employee within Apex Care besides the General Manager.

Your Timesheet

We suggest you save this link to your phone, so it is easy for you to find each week. Your timesheets are due in weekly by **9am Monday**. The timesheets are available at [TheStaffroom](#) or you could add this shortcut to your phone : <https://tinyurl.com/2mz5cr9r>. If you are going to be late with your timesheet, call the 0800 # and let us know. Being late with your timesheet may cause a delay in your pay run. See below re: travel on your timesheets.

Expenses

Apex Care will reimburse you for any reasonable expenses incurred – they must be **pre-approved** by the office and align with the approved budgets. * You **must provide a receipt** with your timesheet to receive reimbursement. Please note, receipts must be submitted at the same time as the shift as late claims may not be able to be billed to our customer.

Travel

Kilometres can be charged only if **prior approval** is given by the Apex Care office – not all customers will pay travel rates. It is discretionary by Apex Care as to whether we will pay kms despite this.

- Kms are calculated from the City Centre to the shift destination regardless of where you actually live or travel from and are only approved if over 40 km.
- Travel/km is paid at \$.40c per km (as at 2025). In some cases, with prior approval, you may travel while on shift in your car e.g., to run errands and those kms are calculated as whatever you travelled to complete the task.
- For some legislated customers, there is a requirement of payment of time for travel. This will be discussed with you as part of the shift before you accept.

Please see your contract for guidance on holiday, sick and bereavement pay.

Sick Leave clarification as to how this is calculated:

All employees (including part-time and casual employees) are entitled to 10 days sick leave per year if:

- 6 months current continuous employment has been completed with Apex, or
- You have worked with Apex for 6 months for:
 - an average of 10 hours per week, and
 - at least 1 hour in every week or 40 hours in every month.

If you meet the criteria:

- You are only able to have sick leave for the hours booked on shift and didn't work due to ill-health, rather than anything prorated, to a maximum of 8 hours per day.
- Your sick leave rolls over to the next year to a maximum of 20 days. However, if you don't meet the criteria in the subsequent year, there is no new sick leave to be given nor rolled over.

1.9 Public Holidays:

Employers across New Zealand are required to recognise the 11 public holidays provided for in the **Holidays Act 2003**.

Working on public holidays

For casual staff:

Statutory days will be paid at 1.5x the hourly rate (standard or sleepover) for any hours worked. In the case of casual/part time staff, determination will need to be made as to whether the day is deemed to be a “normal working day” by examining the prior 6 months work history. A pattern of working on this day more than 50% of the time over this period constitutes a normal working day. A day in lieu would then be applicable. The day in lieu is a maximum of 8 hours and can be taken with prior management approval in the next 12 months.

For permanent staff:

Statutory days will be paid at 1.5x the hourly rate (standard or sleepover) for any hours worked on a public holiday.

If you work any of these days you are also entitled to a day in lieu. The day in lieu is 8 hours and can be taken with prior management approval in the next 12 months.

If you do not work any of these days but it is a normal working day for you, you are entitled to 8 hours paid statutory leave at your usual rate of pay. You will not be entitled to time and a half or a day in lieu.

Public holidays on a weekend

Where public holidays are attached to specific dates, rather than days like the Queen’s birthday which is always on a Monday, there can be confusion about the correct way to observe the public holiday, especially when it comes to determining things like public holiday pay with public holidays on a Saturday or Sunday.

Observing a public holiday on a Monday occurs only when the employee does not work on the calendar date of the holiday. In other words, if an employee would ordinarily work on the actual day of the public holiday, whether a Saturday or Sunday, then there is no Mondayisation for this employee and the public holiday benefits only apply to the actual date. Ultimately, an employee will not get two public holidays for the same occasion.

Public holidays during leave

An important scenario can often present itself where a public holiday falls during a period of leave for an employee. In this scenario, both the type of leave and the type of holiday need to be taken into account.

During a business close-down period that includes public holidays, which is often the case over the Christmas and New Year period, employees are entitled to a paid public holiday only if they would ordinarily work on the day of the public holiday. This is also the case in instances of annual leave, as employees are only entitled to public holiday pay if they would normally work on the day of the public holiday, meaning they will not lose a day of annual leave.

However, where a public holiday falls and an employee is on parental leave they will not be entitled to public holiday pay as they would not have normally worked that day. Also, when on parental leave the payment amount and the number of weeks of leave are not impacted by a public holiday falling within this leave period.

Alternative holidays

Commonly referred to as a day off in lieu or a lieu day, alternative holidays are days off at another time given to employees if they work on a public holiday. To be eligible the employee has to work on a public holiday that would normally be a working day for them. Working on a public holiday, in

this case, extends to those on call, those working only part of a shift or being on call. There are some restrictions around alternative holidays, meaning an employee can take the alternative holiday:

- on a mutually agreeable date
- on another day on which they would normally be working
- the day cannot be a public holiday
- for a whole working day, regardless of how much of the public holiday they actually worked.

If an alternative day cannot be found the employer is entitled to choose a day, provided it is reasonable, and give the employee 14 days' notice. Also, provided no employment agreement is in place with any other stipulation around payment of alternative holidays, an employee is paid their relevant daily pay for the day taken as an alternative holiday.

An employee who ceases employment, or whose employment is terminated, is entitled to be paid out any alternative days they have not utilised by the time they conclude their employment. Alternative holidays can also be paid out if the employee doesn't take the day within 12 months of it being earned. In this instance the payment must be agreed by both the employer and the employee and the payment is to be made as soon as practicable after the agreement has been finalised.

Payslips

Pay slips are emailed weekly usually 24 hours prior to payment being made. Please check your pay slips and let us know if there appears to be an error. Your pay will be deposited into your bank on Wednesday, morning or afternoon dependent upon your bank.

1.10 Pregnancy

Apex Care wants to support all pregnant employees and acknowledges that some work environments may be more dangerous to an employee who is pregnant. As such, if you become pregnant Apex Care strongly encourages you to notify the General Manager as soon as possible. This is so that we can work with you to support you and make any necessary accommodations to your work environment without detriment to you.

1.11 Ongoing Education

Apex Care is committed to the ongoing training and upskilling of our team. We will support you with attaining National Certificate training and ongoing education sessions.

If you are wishing to, we will create a development plan in order to provide you with the training you need to up-skill. We will take your feedback and interest areas into account while designing it. This is a great time to reflect on your job description and consider what areas need a little upskilling e.g., is it managing conflict? therapeutic relationships, mental health strategies, people management etc.

1.12 Our Support Worker Team

Our Support workers are the essence of Apex Care - if we have poor staff then we are a poor service. The role of the office is to handpick, coach and upskill our support team to ensure the quality support and service we are delivering. This is an area of continuous improvement and learning as we develop our secret recipe to finding, onboarding, and keeping those team members that are observant, insightful, responsive, understanding and willing.

Apex Care believes in fair opportunity and understands that many applicants come from a range of diverse backgrounds, with varying levels of education, experience and technical expertise.

As Apex Care does not directly create the work, support workers are currently hired as casual employees and as such, there is **no guaranteed work or shifts**.

All support workers must:

- Be a NZ citizen, resident or hold a current work visa
- Have a full driver's licence (as driving youth is often required)
- Have a First Aid certificate
- Have experience with mental health or a relevant qualification
- Pass youth and police checks
- Have a minimum of 2 positive references from past employers
- Pass our screening, which checks the above as well as suitable availability
- Pass our interview process which includes weighting for attitude, creating relationships and rapport, communication skills and understanding of boundaries
- Hold the skills specified in the job description
- Have an "Apex Attitude"

Our recruitment process can be particularly long due to requirement to wait on police vetting results before you can be placed.

When an applicant makes it through this intensive process, they complete our online induction and attend an induction via zoom where we recap our policies, procedures and expectations. This process is finished off by reading the Employee Handbook and completing the induction questionnaire.

1.13 Co-ordinating and Matching

A good match is essential in creating a safe and therapeutic relationship between the person we support and the staff member. There will be times when for whatever reason the match does not work, you are not necessarily doing anything wrong but may be reassigned to a tangata that better matches your personality, approach or skills. It is the right of the person receiving support to request a change in staff member. The working relationship between the person we are supporting and staff member is very important, and this may change because the person receiving support is unhappy with the staff member simply because they 'do not get along'. Equally a staff member may seek reassignment for reasons of incompatibility or for serious concerns about their safety (Apex Care will investigate such concerns).

When we schedule shifts, we look at:

- Area - the area/ distance between the tangata and staff (as our customers want staff local to them)
- Personality/ approach match with the tangata
- Ability to fulfil the role, e.g., able to drive, work alone, maintain boundaries etc
- Skill - training, experience with this type of tangata
- Availability – from a list of staff that meet the above requirements we then need to know they can do the set schedule and start when required which in some situations is immediately
- Responsiveness – the first person to get back to us and confirm. The reason for this is that most customers want someone NOW, meaning when they call, if we don't fill the job quickly they will go to another agency.

Apex Care has established guidelines to ensure that we can safely navigate work requests for all involved. After consulting with other healthcare organisations including Oranga Tamariki and looking at best practice in other industries (truck driving for example), we have developed the below guidelines.

The following ratios are a baseline of staffing levels:

- When scheduling activities, the staff's ability to be able to participate safely is considered. Taking into consideration their level of experience in the task, abilities or any factors that may prevent the safe completion of the activity.
- Where possible, the person we are supporting is matched with someone of the same cultural background.

Guidelines for consecutively worked hours for safe working hours:

- If the support worker works 24 hours, have at least 12 hours off
- If the support worker works 48 hours, have at least 24 hours off
- If the support worker works 72 hours, have at least 48 hours off
- Working more than 72 hours in one stretch is prohibited unless a rationale is provided by the manager.

Shift work guidelines for safe practice:

- Avoid a permanent or non-rotating night shift
- Keep consecutive night shifts to a minimum of 2 - 4 consecutive nights
- Avoid quick shift changes. At least 24 hours is ideal when rotating
- Plan some free weekends
- In an ideal setting, two or three 12-hour shifts in a row should be followed by one or two rest days
- Where possible keep the schedule regular and predictable. Regularly scheduled work results in regularly scheduled rest.

Working for other companies:

If you wish to carry out other paid employment, contract work, or cash jobs away from Apex Care, you must promptly inform us by emailing or calling to discuss whether there are any conflicts of interest or associated health and safety risks. Apex Care needs to make sure you are safe to work, but also have a care of your personal well-being.

2 Models of Care

We believe that in order to achieve wellness, it is best practice to use approaches that focus on the individuals themselves, their strengths and positive reinforcement.

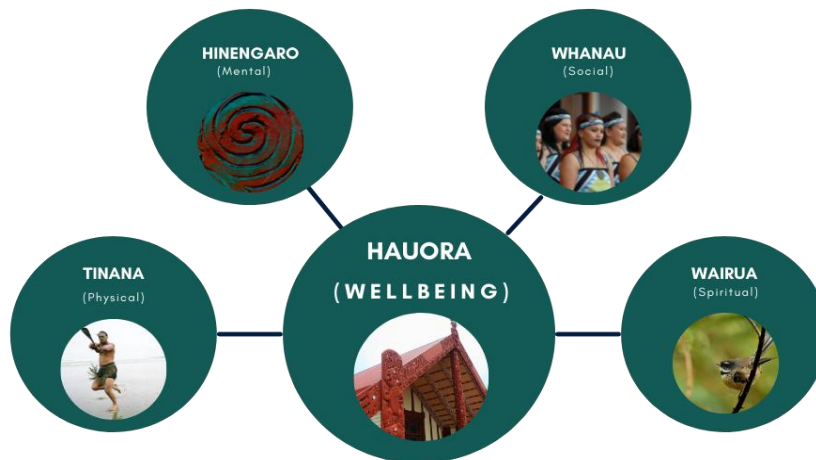
Apex Care uses evidence-based support and behavioural interventions that provide better outcomes for the wellbeing of the people we support.

We use a number of complementary models in order to achieve this with more information available on our intranet: www.apexcarenz.com/healthcaremodels.

- Te Whare Tapa Whā, Fonofale, Te Wheke (holistic practices)
- Person-centred
- Strengths-based approach
- Proactive environment strategy
- Positive behavioural support strategies

2.1 Taking a Te Whare Tapa Wha Approach

Primarily used as a leading healthcare holistic model, Te Whare Tapa Whā describes health and wellbeing as a wharenuī/meeting house with four walls. When all these things are in balance, we thrive. When one or more of these are out of balance our wellbeing is impacted.



Taha Tinana: Supporting and encouraging the person we are supporting to create and maintain healthy habits and routines. This includes sleep, hygiene, exercise, and healthy eating choices.

Taha Hinengaro: Ensuring that we create a safe environment for the person we are supporting to express themselves in an appropriate and healthy way to promote growth and development.

Taha Wairua: Respecting and acknowledging the spiritual and faith of the person we are supporting.

Taha Whānau: Building and maintaining therapeutic relationships with the person we are supporting to promote healthy relationships. Encouraging and supporting them to connect with their whānau in a safe and appropriate manner that best benefits their mental healthiness. *(Some situations may need prior permission).*

2.2 Taking a person-centred approach

- A values-based approach that aims to discover and act on what is important to the person
- Supports the process of continual listening and learning
- Recognises the importance of people's history, including previous trauma, and focuses on what is important now and, in the future
- Recognises that people have the right to self-determination and should be supported to make their own decisions as part of the learning process
- Relies on collaboration with the person and those who are able to provide support, including whānau, friends, social workers, clinical teams and the wider community.

2.3 Using Strengths-based practice

- We identify, nurture, celebrate, and help build capacity around the positive qualities and character strengths the tangata whaiora possess; beyond the symptoms, problems, and difficulties that may hinder their progress
- Assess strengths with strengths-based discovery questions
- Support tangata whaiora to focus on the successful strategies and skillset they already have
- Support tangata whaiora to set their own goals for personal and/or professional development
- Help every individual to be the best they can be and achieve something daily
- Be solution-focused – change is inevitable, but it must be led by the person in question.

2.4 A Proactive Environment Strategy includes

- Maintaining appropriate prosocial behaviour and positive relationships and interactions

- Provide structure, boundaries, consistency, and teachable moments
- Employees are to engage closely with any risk management plans available and/or provided
- Consider all likely scenarios and modify the environment accordingly (e.g., securing dangerous items or potential weapons)
- Consider health and safety, expectations, communication, instruction and support.

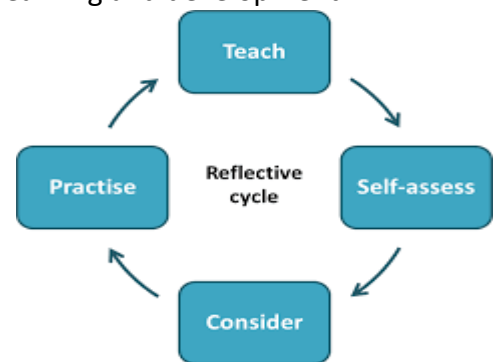
2.5 Reflective Practice and Learnings

Reflective practice is essential in our work and is encouraged. It allows you **to recognise your own strengths and weakness**, and then use this to guide on-going learning and development.

By reflection you will develop your skills in self-directed learning, improve motivation, and improve the quality of support you are able to provide.

Reflect now on what you have learned about our model of care and philosophy and how this might change your practice.

- What have you learned?
- How will it affect your job?
- How will it affect the way you interact?



2.6 Rongoā Māori Complementary & Alternative Medication (CAM) Administration:

The practice of Rongoā Māori is seen in two main forms. **Rongoā Rākau**, plant or tree based medicinal remedies, and **Te Oo Mei Reia**, spiritual healing. Healing can be through karakia (prayer), mirimiri (massage), and kōrmiri (deep massage). Types of healing and the names may vary from iwi to iwi.

Complementary Medicine:

This includes herbal medicines, homeopathy, nutritional therapy, aromatherapy, and health food supplements. Complementary medicine may be used together with conventional medicines to adjust discomfort.

Alternative Medicine:

Used in place of conventional medicine (example: a special diet for cancer therapy in place of surgery, conventional medical treatment).

Integrative Medicine:

Describes a combination of mainstream medicine and complementary therapies.

Work Instruction

We recognise the right of each tangata whaiora to choose alternative medicines and/or alternative therapy as a health care option.

Where the tangata elects to use alternative medicines and/or alternative therapy, it is essential that the social worker, Apex Care management, pharmacist and other health care professionals supporting this person are aware and approve of all medicines being used. In this way choices can be supported within the bounds of safety and the tangata rights and responsibilities.

A complete list of all current medicines must be a part of the initial admission process. This includes prescription medicines, non-prescription or over-the-counter medicines and complementary

medicines. All current medications will be recorded on the medication chart by the responding staff member.

All alternative or complementary medications are encouraged to be inclusive and prescribed in collaboration with the person's GP. If these are not prescribed by a doctor, administration becomes the responsibility of the tangata. Apex Care support workers are not permitted to administer or sign off the administration of any substance or medication that has not been prescribed by a doctor.

Rongoā Māori and CAMs must be kept in secure storage as with other medications, unless written approval is given by the doctor or overseeing agencies such as a social worker.

2.7 Māori Health Plan and Treaty of Waitangi

Apex Care is committed to respecting the cultural values and beliefs of our tangata whenua. The cultural values and beliefs of our Māori staff are respected, and this is demonstrated in our staff management practices. We understand that there is no one fit for all cultures and by having pono / honest korero with each other, we address our differences and find a way together respectfully.

The tangata whaiora their whānau and staff members will at all times be treated in a manner which promotes Māori culture, values and beliefs through recognition of the terms of the Treaty of Waitangi in day-to-day practices. Māori have a distinct set of customs and values, referred to as tikanga. Apex Care will liaise with the local iwi to understand the tikanga of the regions in which we provide our services.

Apex Care is committed to understanding and protecting the rights of the tangata whenua and they are culturally safe. This will be by understanding and applying the principles of The Treaty of Waitangi when providing services for Māori to ensure cultural safety for staff, customers and their tangata whaiora. Whilst we work in systems that are not always set up to offer the cultural safety for those who are receiving our services, we will always endeavour to find the right support to recognize the cultural needs.

This is not a quick fix to how the current system works for our tangata whaiora, but Apex Care are committed to having a full cultural awareness embedded in who we are as a company.

The 1840 Treaty of Waitangi is the key historical and constitutional document of Aotearoa New Zealand. It establishes clear principles in terms of the relationship between the Crown and Māori and sets the parameters of conduct for all organisations working with Māori communities.

Principles of Protection, Partnership and Participation are honoured in this policy

The New Zealand Health Strategy (2001) clearly states that Māori should be able to define and provide for their own priorities for health and be encouraged to develop the capacity for delivery of services to their communities.

Although programmes and services designed and delivered by Māori must be emphasized, Māori also require access to high quality appropriate and effective mainstream services. Improvements in Māori health status are critical, and the objectives of the Strategy are:

- Improving the quality and effectiveness of health promotion and education programmes targeted at Māori
- Enhancement of mainstream providers
- An increased number of Māori in the health workforce.

Protection

Apex Care will ensure equity of participation, access and outcomes for all Māori service users and their whānau in:

a) **Safeguarding the rites/rights of Māori by:**

- Ensuring The Treaty of Waitangi policy and principles are known and supported by all staff
- Providing education on Treaty of Waitangi principles and culturally safe practice for all staff
- Ensuring all staff respect the iwi and hapu of the locality in which they work
- Using Māori greetings as appropriate
- Promoting the use of Te Reo Māori
- Promoting use of karakia, mihi or powhiri for opening/closing formal meetings as appropriate.

b) **Respecting the tikanga of tangata whenua by:**

- Māori staff to have the opportunity to access Tikanga education
- Hui is sometimes the most appropriate for education and consultation
- Giving koha when services are obtained from Māori.

c) **Providing services that are responsive to the needs of Māori service users and their whānau by:**

- Ensuring that the health care provided to Māori service users promotes the Te Whare Tapa Whā model in accordance with the customer's parameters
- Employing Māori staff where available to work specifically with Māori service users in areas of high needs when requested by the customer
- Memorandum of Understanding to exist between local Apex Care office and the local iwi formalising the relationship (being worked towards).

Partnership

a. **Consultation**

Apex Care will ensure that Māori staff are fully informed and consulted should any project or programme relating to Māori is identified, developed and reviewed.

b. **Collaboration**

Apex Care aims to consult with Kaumatua services to develop an advocacy, support and advisory service in relation to cultural issues where there are complaints and conflicts reported by Māori using the service.

Participation

Apex Care will involve Māori in planning, development and delivery of services to Māori service users by:

- Providing flexibility when delivering services to Māori service users to allow Māori staff to move between areas and localities if possible
- Ensuring that all staff know of, and work with, Māori providers (from both the health sector and the disability sector) to ensure Māori service users receive services in a culturally safe manner.

Ensuring the process of recruitment, retention, replacement, interviewing, orientation, performance appraisal and review of staff taking into account Māori beliefs, values and ways of operating. This also includes conflict resolution / complaints procedure and termination of employment processes.

2.8 Using Te Reo Māori at work

We promote the use of Te Reo Māori, encouraging its use in the service we provide. More information is available on our Intranet at <https://www.apexcarenz.com/naumai>.

All of us at Apex Care have a responsibility to learn Te Reo Māori and to strengthen and promote its use every day. As a company, we can use Te Reo Māori and each instance of this, even just a 'Kia Ora!', contributes to its revitalisation. This also is what makes Aotearoa diverse, unique and a great place to live.

Here are a few key words commonly used:

Tangata Whaiora	Service user		Tauwhiro	Social Worker
Manawapā	Anxiety, Anxious		Ngā Tuarā Tautoko	Support Worker
Kaiako	Teacher, Educator		Kaimahi	Staff
Waiaro	Attitude		Pāmamae	Trauma
Whanonga	Behaviour		Māharahara	Worry
Mahere Tautiaki	Care Plan		Mate	Illness
Pōkaikaha	Confused		Manatika	Justice
Ahurea	Culture		Rongoā	Medication
Turi	Deaf		Hui	Meeting
Hākerekere	Depressed		Hauora Hinengaro	Mental Health
Aurongo	Emotions		Tangata	People/ Person
Hakiri	Hearing Impaired		Manawaroa	Resilience

3 Policies

3.1 Professional Boundaries & Therapeutic Relationship Policy

Apex Care employees have an important role where there is a need for a certain level of trust from those they support and their families. Therefore, establishing a professional relationship with certain restrictions is essential. Key risk areas are documented below.

Communication with young people including the use of technology

All interactions with children and young people need to be carefully considered and planned to ensure these occur in ways that reduce potential risk to children. Apex Care staff should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate professional boundaries in their communication with children, and expectations around boundaries need to be firmly established to provide guidance to staff. These situations include communicating with children at work, at home, in public settings and through the use of mobile technology and social media. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites and blogs.

Children are at increased risk of sexual abuse and exploitation where adults have the opportunity to gain access to children and young people in a setting that is not open to casual observation by other adults. Staff should also be careful when it comes to their communications with children so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or any behaviour which could be construed as grooming.

All Apex Care staff are required to:

- Ensure that their communication with children takes place within the boundaries of a professional relationship and are open to scrutiny from other adults.
- Have no secret social contact with children or their parents
- Take care that their language or conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation
- Consider the appropriateness of the social contact according to their role and the nature of their work and always have any contact approved by senior colleagues
- Understand that some communications may be called into question and need to be justified
- Do not give their personal contact details to children, including their mobile telephone number

Gifts, Rewards, and Favouritism

All support workers should be aware of Apex Care's guidance on rewards including arrangements for the declaration of gifts received and given. All staff need to be aware however, that the giving of gifts can be misinterpreted by others as a gesture either to bribe or 'groom' a young person.

All Apex Care staff are required to:

- Act as a role model to those you are supporting and your colleagues, being especially conscious of your actions and words at times and in places where they can be observed by those requiring our support.
- Create a therapeutic and positive relationship with the person you are supporting and their family (if involved).

Apex Care requires staff to NOT:

- Lend or give rangatahi money or buy gifts, sweets, drinks, food, or cigarettes
- Moving beyond therapeutic self-disclosure and oversharing that is detrimental to the person and/or provides no therapeutic gain
- Believe that they have a 'special' relationship with the young person, and that only they understand the young person
- Become so caught up with someone they support that this interferes with their work/life balance and/or where the person being supported will only agree to speak with a particular member of staff
- Enable or foster dependency on the person supported and sabotages the recovery process.

Sexual Contact

All staff should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their contact with tangata whai ora. Intimate or sexual relationships between our staff and our tangata will be regarded as a grave breach of trust and illegal. Allowing or encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which might lead to a sexual relationship is also unacceptable. There are occasions when adults embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming' where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of a child and manipulate that relationship so sexual abuse can take place. Apex Care staff should be aware that consistently conferring inappropriate special attention and favour upon a tangata might be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process and as such will give rise to concerns about their behaviour.

Any sexual activity between Apex Care staff and the tangata with whom they work will be regarded as a criminal offence and reported to the Police. Such activity will always be a matter for disciplinary action.

Apex Care requires staff who:

- Respect people's right to privacy
- Take responsibility to set and maintain clear and consistent boundaries with those we support and their families
- Maintain only professional relationships with those we support and their families, acting transparently and unambiguously.

Apex Care requires staff to NOT:

- Change his or her dress style for work when working with a particular person
- Participate in flirtatious communication, sexual innuendo or offensive language with a person supported
- Breach the young person's personal space in a way that is not clinically indicated
- Touch the person more than is appropriate, if at all
- Includes sexual context or innuendo in interactions with the person supported or in relation to their partners, family/whanau and friends.

Staff Member's Home

No tangata should be in or invited into the home of any support worker, unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents and caregivers and an Apex Care manager. It is not appropriate for any organisation or service to expect, or request, that private living space be used for work.

Apex Care requires staff who are vigilant in maintaining their privacy and mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations.

Apex Care requires staff to NOT:

- Attempt to see the tangata (or vice versa) outside the work setting or outside normal working hours or after the professional relationship has ceased
- Receive gifts or continue contact with a former tangata after the care episode or therapeutic relationship has concluded
- Give or accept social invitations.

Supporting at Home or Motel

All Apex Care staff are required to:

- Ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times
- Never share beds with a tangata of any age
- DO NOT share bedrooms unless it involves a dormitory situation and the arrangements have been previously discussed with the social worker, Apex Care manager, parents and children.

Transporting Young People

It is inappropriate for support workers to offer lifts to a child or young person outside their normal working duties, unless this has been agreed to by the social worker, Apex Care manager, parents/guardians.

There may be occasions where the child or young person requires transport in an emergency situation or where not transporting the child may place the child at risk. Such circumstances must always be recorded and reported to a senior manager and parents/guardians.

What if I am concerned about a colleague?

If you are unable to speak to the colleague directly or if the colleague does not recognise the problem, the next step is for you to speak to your manager. Please put the concerns in writing and include:

- the date, time
- witnesses
- what was observed?
- how was the behaviour received?
- the impact on the health of the tangata

3.2 Code of Conduct

Apex Care expects high standards of staff behaviour in order to protect children from abuse and at-risk situations, and also to protect our staff. This ensures that all staff are working in ways which reduce any risk to children and minimises the opportunity for harmful behaviour to occur. Anyone who comes in contact with Apex Care staff should always have the right to expect professional behaviours. Employees must observe the following.

In the interest of efficient and safe operation, and to protect the well-being and rights of all employees, it is necessary to observe this Code of Conduct without exception. If any are not clear, consult with the Managing Director or General Manager of Apex Care.

Attitudes, Values and Beliefs

Apex Care Employees are expected to observe the highest standard of professionalism, integrity and ethical conduct. Apex Care Employees are to act with whakatue/respect, tiaki/care, tapatahi/integrity, pono/honesty and kawenga takohanga/accountability. We are there to help provide a safe, nurturing and tangata whaiora strength-based environment.

Principles

Improper performance is against the best interests of Apex Care and our customers and may be subject to disciplinary action. Employees must observe the following:

- Failure to abide by both the Employer's Health and Safety (H&S) policies and procedures and your general H&S responsibilities
- Actions which could threaten the H&S of yourself, your colleagues or others
- To maintain professional boundaries at all times
- To uphold confidentiality at all times
- Provide support in-line with the support plan
- Persistent absenteeism and/or lateness
- Unsatisfactory standards or output of work
- Undertaking work which you are not trained for e.g. giving medication, hoisting, etc
- Rudeness towards customers/tangata, members of the public or your colleagues, objectionable or insulting behaviour, harassment, bullying or bad language
- Failure to devote the whole of your time, attention and abilities to our business and its affairs during your normal working hours e.g. constantly on your phone, outside smoking, etc
- Unauthorised use of email, internet and/or social media
- Failure to carry out all reasonable instructions or follow our rules and procedures
- Unauthorised use or negligent damage or loss of property not belonging to you
- Failure to report immediately any damage to property or premises caused by you
- Use of the customer or employer's vehicles without approval or for private use
- Failure to report any incident whilst driving the employer or customer's vehicles, whether or not personal injury or vehicle damage occurs

- If your work involves driving, failure to report immediately any type of driving conviction, or any summons which may lead to your conviction
- Carrying unauthorised goods or passengers in the employer's commercial vehicles or the use of the employer's vehicles for personal gain
- Loss of driving licence where driving on public roads as this forms an essential part of the duties of the role.

This list is not exhaustive.

Expectation of conduct

- Employees are expected to work their scheduled hours
- If sick and unable to work employees should personally notify the office immediately, with reason for not being able to report for work
- Always wear your name badge, be appropriately dressed and well groomed. A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, adults should dress in ways which are appropriate to their role and this may need to be different to how they dress when not at work. Clothing needs to be:
 - Is appropriate to the role
 - Is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative
 - does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding
 - is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans.
 - wearing gang colours (knowingly) or emblems
- Be at place of work on time each scheduled workday
- No smoking during work time
- Reporting for work under the influence of drugs or alcohol can lead to immediate suspension or termination of employment
- No dangerous weapons or unauthorized possession of drugs is permitted
- Do not ask family or friends to visit during work hours – such visits can interfere with the care of tangata whaiora
- Wilful damage or unauthorized removal of property is not permitted
- Committing an improper, immoral or act of violence, such as fighting whilst at work is not permitted
- Repeated lateness or absenteeism will not be tolerated
- Refusal to perform work as directed, willful neglect of duty, malingering or shirking of duties will be subject to disciplinary action
- Wilful violation or disregard of safety, health, fire, security or employment regulations, signs or notices will not be tolerated
- Disobedience and insubordination will not be tolerated
- Permitting another person to substitute for work duties or falsely use ID badge is not permitted
- Whilst driving a vehicle on Apex Care business, staff must comply with traffic legislation, be conscious of road safety and demonstrate safe driving and other good road safety habits. Staff need to be fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine which is likely to impair their judgement or ability to drive.

Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest is where your personal goals are no longer aligned with your responsibilities towards Apex Care e.g. you work for a competitor of Apex Care or one of our customers on a permanent basis.

In other cases, you may be faced with an ethical issue. For example, a tangata gives you a gift where you may benefit financially, but it is against our business code of ethics. If we become aware of such behaviour, you will face a disciplinary process and may lose your job. Another example is that you know of, or related to, the tangata whaiora you've been asked to care for.

For this reason, conflicts of interest are a serious issue for all of us. We expect you to be vigilant to spot circumstances that create conflicts of interest, either to yourself or the company. Follow our policies and always act in our company's best interests. Whenever possible, do not let personal or financial interests get in the way of your job. If you are experiencing an ethical dilemma, talk to the General Manager to help you resolve it.

Disciplinary Action

Apex Care may take Disciplinary Action against staff who repeatedly or intentionally fail to uphold and follow our Code of Conduct. The Disciplinary action will be decided based on the severity and regularity of the violation.

Possible consequences include:

- **Mediation** is when a mediator or impartial person helps an employee and an employer resolve an employment relationship problem in a semi-formal and confidential environment.
- **Reprimand** is when an employee is given a severe and/or formal reproof. This is only to be done professionally and confidentially.
- **Suspension** is when an employer is not allowing an employee to work, this may be due to an ongoing or pending disciplinary investigation.
- **Termination** is when an employee's employment with Apex Care has come to an end.

Apex Care may take legal action in serious offences such as theft, corruption or other unlawful behavior.

Expectations for Staff to deliver care

- **Support plan:** Staff are to be given any relevant documents to support the level of care needed for each tangata whaiora, which may include:
 - Support plan
 - Behavioural support plan and any other relevant documents including medication where known
 - Job description details, location, duration of care
- **Routine:** Routines are created for tangata whaiora who are with Apex Care long term. Employees are welcomed to suggest activities to tangata whaiora under the circumstances that the activities are at no cost of the employee or Apex Care.
- **Medication:** Medication and medication records must always be kept in a safe or securely locked away unless there is written consent from Social Worker or Apex Care Manager. Medication sign-off sheets must always be available to staff while tangata whaiora are in care. Staff must inform Apex Care office if the medication sheets are incorrect or need replacing. Improper handling of medication is considered a serious misconduct and disciplinary action may be required. The following expectations are also to be upheld whilst administering medication:
 - Ensure that you follow the Medication administration guidelines. (The 5 R's of Medication)
 - Ensure that the tangata whaiora has taken the medication given. (Visual observation)
 - Ensure that the Medication blister pack is disposed of appropriately.
 - Medication given to be documented in the Daily Notes and in on-site documentation.
- **Rules:** these are set out in the introduction or within 24 hours of the tangata whaiora being in care which will outline the expectations of tangata whaiora which includes but is not limited to;

wake up/bedtimes, food orders, behaviours, phone hand-in's etc. The rules and guidelines are part of the tangata whaiora handbook.

- **Transport:** Staff are required to have reliable transportation. Apex Care is under no obligation to provide transportation. Under no circumstances are staff to drive tangata whaiora in their personal vehicle, unless express permission has been given by Apex Care management. Staff must have a Full Driver's License when driving tangata whaiora in any vehicle.
- **Personal Appearance:** It is expected that staff must follow our dress code guidelines outlined in the Dress Code and Personal Standards Policy.
- **Punctuality:** All staff must follow their agreed scheduled work hours. If you are late or have to leave early (only in the case of a family emergency), you must call the 0800 # and advise so the customer is kept informed.
- **Smoking:** Do not smoke on site or in eyesight of tangata whaiora whilst on duty. It is important to set an example and to remain professional.
- **Daily notes:** Notes are to be filled out by 9am the next day without fail for any shift you do.

Below is a risk evaluation table. This is a guideline for misconduct.

Risk Evaluation	Low	Medium	High
Workplace conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gossip • Late to work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff bullying. • Discrimination. • Failure to follow process and/or protocol. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying/Harassment. • Discrimination. • Tangata whaiora bullying. • Disregard for rules. • Failure to follow Apex Care policy and behaviour expectations. • Contacting staff outside of work assignment. • Unfair work conditions (caused by staff members).
Work punctuality	Arriving late to an assignment/s	Arriving 30+ minutes late to multiple assignments.	Absent from an agreed assignment without notice or being late without notice
Health and Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoking on site • Not following H&S recommendations i.e hand hygiene, mask wearing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending work within the 24-hour period of overcoming a sickness. • Smoking on site. • Smoking with tangata whaiora. • Offering medical advice to tangata whaiora. 	Attending work when you are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sick/unwell • unsafe for yourself and tangata whaiora • under the influence. • Encouraging tangata whaiora to follow inappropriate health and well-being remedies.
Staff safety (staff)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaving the workplace on a double shift without informing Apex or the colleague on shift. • Not informing staff of incidents during handover. • Providing an improper/ inaccurate handover. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not following proper protocol or procedure . • Burnout. • Under the influence or purchasing alcohol while on duty.
Tangata whaiora safety	Failure to follow Apex Care procedure and protocol during an	Failure to follow Apex protocol and procedure during an emergency. This	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating confidential information of tangata

	escalated or potentially escalated situation.	includes, but is not limited to, a tangata whaiora absconding, expressing suicidal ideation, verbal and non-verbal threats.	whaiora with other unrelated parties. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arriving to work under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. • Allowing tangata whaiora to obtain a weapon or purchase unapproved items such as sharp objects, unapproved medication e.g. paracetamol. • Giving smokes/vapes without approval.
Fraud	Unapproved extension of break time to complete outside tasks.	Engaging in non-work-related activities during break time without prior approval or notice.	Engaging in non-work-related activities with no approval or notice during work hours.
Property Damage	Indirectly causing property damage.	Tangata whaiora damaging property due to staff escalating the situation.	Staff damaging property or smoking in unprohibited areas.
Inappropriate behaviour		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing others to engage or not reporting inappropriate activities or conversations with tangata whaiora, this may be other staff member or other tangata whaiora/persons. This includes but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversations about sex, alcohol, drugs, violence etc. • Activities that include inappropriate use of phone and/or devices, e.g. include, porn, sexual content, violent content, potentially escalating content. 	<p>Engaging in inappropriate conversation or activities with Tangata whaiora including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversations about sex, boyfriends/girlfriends, gangs, violence, alcohol, drugs, private and personal experiences that put both parties at risk. • Inappropriate activities include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Taking photos (on staff phone). Photos on tangata whaiora devices are allowed with staff permission if deemed appropriate. ○ Engaging in violent or inappropriate games ○ Wrestling, cuddling or any touching activity. ○ Inappropriate use of phone and/or devices, examples include, porn, sexual content, violent content.

3.3 Child Paramourncy Principle and Abuse Policy

Apex Care is committed to ensuring that our services are delivered in a way that protects children receiving support services from us. The wellbeing, welfare, safety and security of the tamariki we support is paramount and the first thing that we consider when developing services. We recognise

that tamariki are vulnerable to being abused and we take all possible steps to ensure that tamariki who access and use our service are able to do so free from any discrimination, coercion, harassment, exploitation and safe from physical, sexual, psychological, financial abuse or other exploitation.

We take steps at all levels of the organisation to ensure the prevention, identification and reporting of abuse allegations. All allegations are treated seriously and given to the correct parties e.g. Police or Oranga Tamariki to investigate these claims.

Scope

The objective of this policy is to ensure that all Apex Care staff operate in ways which ensure that those in our care are protected from harm. This involves being able to recognise and identify signs of abuse and to know how to respond appropriately. This policy applies to all tangata, and to those with whom personnel come into contact in the course of their work with Apex Care.

Overview

a) Child Protection Principles

- We ensure that the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children is always our primary concern, of all decision-making when responding to suspected abuse or neglect is centred around the child.
- We believe in constructively challenging poor practice and have systems in place to ensure continuous improvement.
- We promote a culture where staff feel confident to challenge poor practice and raise issues of concern.
- We promote and recognise the importance of participation in decision-making from the person we support and family/whānau. (Unless this would result in an increased risk to the child.)
- Apex Care will report suspected child abuse and neglect to Oranga Tamariki and/or the Police.
- Apex has a duty of care to ensure all tamariki are kept safe whilst in our care. Exposure to any use of drugs or illegal substances by whānau or tamariki will be reported immediately to Oranga Tamariki and/or the police. In some instances, this may mean removing a child from a visit with whānau should this pose any risk to the child and/or Apex staff.

b) Our commitments

To help us act in a way that reflects our principles we make the following commitments:

- To work together to produce the best possible outcomes for the child.
- All policies and initiatives are designed to promote (and be inclusive of) a child protection culture and to work towards continuous improvement in child protection practices.
- To liaise with iwi, Pasifika and other cultural and community groups to ensure that important cultural concepts are integrated, as appropriate, into practice. These would include, whakamanawa / encouragement, whakapapa / lineage, Te Reo Māori, tikanga / protocol, kaitiakitanga / guardianship, wairuatanga / spirituality.
- To have open and transparent relationships with customers and tangata whaiora, including sharing concerns about child safety issues with the family/whānau or appropriate guardian unless this would result in an increased risk to the child.
- To support all staff to work in accordance with the policy, to work with partner agencies and community organisations to ensure child protection policies are consistent and of high quality and to always comply with relevant legislative responsibilities.
- To share information relevant to the child's safety and well-being in a timely way and to discuss any concerns about an individual child with colleagues, the manager/supervisor or the designated person for child protection.

- A commitment to meet all existing statutory and contractual obligations, including matters relating to employment.

Recruitment

All staff working with tangata whaiora must go through an intensive screening process before joining the Apex Care team. This is to ensure they are an appropriate and safe to support a tamariki in their activities of daily living and work to reaching their goals.

a) This involves:

- Application process: collection of previous employment history
- Screening process: including personal attitudes towards child safety
- Police and youth checks: no criminal history, or offences against children can be employed or placed to work with a youth
- Reference check process: Minimum of two verbal references from past managers. Must be recent and outcome must be positive.

b) Training

Staff attend induction prior to commencing work this involves going through our policies and procedures and providing training on our philosophy and values. Induction also covers Identifying abuse, tamariki rights, and paramountcy.

c) Supervision and Quality Assurance

Employees receive oversight on daily basis by the Apex office as notes are submitted daily and are read and analysed for:

- Tamariki progress towards goals
- Behaviour management
- Concerns that may need to be addressed
- Engagement of the tamariki with the support staff
- Possible improvements.

d) Support Planning

Apex Care coordinates with the referring agency to create/follow a support plan for the tamariki. During this process consent is sort for transportation, medication oversight, information management and release and finally agreement to participate in services.

e) Restraint

Apex Care has a no-restraint policy. Please refer to Restraint Policy.

f) Child Supervision

Each child is different and requires different supervision requirements. These requirements are to be set out in the support plan and adhered to at all times. No child under 14 is ever to remain unsupervised.

g) Behavioural incidents

Where behavioural incidents are occurring a goal-orientated Behavioural support plan will be implemented. In light of this, our kaimahi will also use their skill set to develop and maintain a good level of trust and rapport with the tangata whaiora. Establishing an authentic relationship of this nature may facilitate and encourage the short- and long-term success for the individual. Being familiar with, and having an awareness of, the individual needs of the tangata whaiora, the kaimahi

may be able to predict and plan for potential escalations, and proactively meet those needs accordingly.

h) Professional Boundaries

Apex Care recognises that employees are in a privileged position with the person they are supporting, requiring them to be worthy of their trust.

Support workers are responsible for ensuring that they safeguard the interests of person we are supporting at all times.

This policy defines the standards of conduct within the staff-tangata whaiora relationship which are required at all times from employees.

The only appropriate relationship between a tangata whaiora and staff is one which focuses exclusively on their needs, and all employees should be aware of the potential imbalance of power in the relationship. It is the responsibility of staff to continually maintain appropriate boundaries within the relationship; this includes but is not limited to:

- working within the agreed tangata whaiora support plan
- observing confidentiality
- keeping appropriate records
- observing roles and responsibilities
- being aware of any possible conflict of interest
- complying with legal requirements
- being conversant with the complaints, discipline and grievance procedures

Prevention of abuse of tangata by staff is paramount and such abuse will not be tolerated by Apex Care. If there is uncertainty about one's own practice or that of another staff member who may be abusive, then this must be discussed with Apex Care management straight away.

i) Confidentiality and Information Sharing:

Apex Care recognises that all staff must act within the legal requirements of the Privacy Act, Oranga Tamariki Act, Health Information Act and all other relevant legislation. There are provisions within these Acts for sharing information needed to protect children and enable other people to carry out their legitimate functions.

Under the Privacy Act 2020, the giving of information to protect children is not a breach of confidentiality. Principle 11 of the Privacy Act, 2020, states sharing of personal information is allowed if "disclosure of the information is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious threat".

Under the Oranga Tamariki Act 1989, if a member of staff raises a legitimate concern in good faith about suspected child abuse, which proves to be unfounded on investigation, no civil, criminal or disciplinary proceedings may be brought against that staff member.

When a member of staff is contacted for information, that staff member must first refer to Apex Care management for clearance before providing the information. In the case of a Counsel for Child wishing to interview a child while in the care of Apex Care, the staff member must consult Apex Care management to be certain that such an interview will be undertaken legally and in the best interests of the child.

j) Keeping the Child's Family and Whānau Involved:

Although the parent or caregiver of the child will usually be informed of concerns, there may be times when those with parental responsibility may not be initially informed. This is not Apex Care's decision, but the relevant authority's decision. This may happen in circumstances when:

- the parent or caregiver is the alleged perpetrator.
- it is possible that the child may be intimidated into silence.
- there is a strong likelihood that evidence will be destroyed.
- the child does not want their parent or caregiver involved and they are of an age when they are competent to make that decision.

k) Relationships with External Agencies:

Apex Care will maintain a good working relationship with Oranga Tamariki and with Police. We will consult with Oranga Tamariki, the Police and other appropriate agencies that have specialist knowledge to help protect children from abuse.

l) Managing Allegations about Staff:

- All staff have a responsibility to understand what constitutes appropriate behaviour in relation to child and to maintain this behaviour.
- Allegations, suspicions or complaints of abuse against staff will be taken seriously and reported to the Operations Manager who will deal with them immediately, sensitively and expediently within the procedures outlined in this policy.
- When there are suspicions of inappropriate behaviour by a staff member, both staff and children's rights are to be attended to. This means that the safety of the child is of first concern, and that the staff member must have access to legal and professional advice, in accordance with the Employment Relations Act.
- The General Manager must immediately assess risk before allowing contact with the person making the allegation. A risk assessment must be undertaken to determine what level of access that person should have, if any, to members of the public in their capacity as a member of staff of Apex Care
- In all child protection cases, Apex Care will cooperate fully with both Oranga Tamariki and the Police in their investigations and assessments.
- If the Police decide to undertake a criminal investigation, then the member of staff may be suspended. It is important that no internal investigation is undertaken, and no evidence is gathered that might prejudice the criminal, or Oranga Tamariki, investigation.
- If there is insufficient evidence to pursue a criminal prosecution, then an internal disciplinary investigation may still be undertaken subject to internal disciplinary procedures.

m) Safe Working Practices:

This section outlines the expected behaviour of staff in their day-to-day work. Apex Care believes that, as far as possible:

- Staff working with children and families should keep their personal and professional lives separate and does not encourage close personal relationships or care-taking activities outside the work environment.
- All staff are to have a clear understanding of, and agree to Apex Care's Code of Conduct.
- Staff are to inform Apex Care management of any existing relationships with members, students, tangata or their families which could constitute a conflict of interest or place the staff member in a position of compromise.
- Staff are to inform management of any potential situations of possible compromise or conflict of interest that arise as part of their work.

In all organisations there is a need for high standards of staff behaviour in order to protect children from abuse and at-risk situations, and to protect staff from unwarranted suspicion.

After taking the necessary immediate action to deal with any threat you must follow the additional steps for "no immediate threat".

3.4 Restraint Policy

Apex Care has a No Restraint Policy. Restraint is a last resort and may only be used in preventing serious and immediate self-harm or harming others. Restraint is not a de-escalation strategy or a punishment and can only be used to establish safety.

However, restraint can only be commenced after:

- Consultation with the customer in charge of the tangata whaiora to ensure if restraint is required, they are in agreement. This would include what is understood as restraint e.g. holding wrists to stop aggressive attacks to the support worker or other staff.
- All other available alternatives have been tried and found to be unsuccessful.
- There are significant safety concerns for the tangata whaiora if a restraint is not used.
- The experience of the support worker in the use of appropriate restraint.
- Intended outcome following the use of a restraint.
- Damage to property is not considered reasonable grounds for restraint.

Methods of restraint permitted

- Physical force or personal restraint could be used but only if required until section 48 and 41 of the Crimes Act 1961.
- Force and personal restraint must be as minimal as possible and last for a short amount of time to ensure the tangata whaiora safety.
- The tangata whaiora must be given the opportunity continually to regain their own control.

Unacceptable restraints

Unacceptable restraints include but are not limited to kicking, hitting, pushing, shaking, use of physical restraints (unless required by law e.g. seatbelts). Administration of non-charted medications, excessively squeezing or sitting/kneeling on someone.

Restraint Episode Evaluation

The use of a restraint must be reported as a critical incident and reported to Apex Care and any overseeing social worker. The use of restraint in the individual situation should be reviewed along with identifying the cause of escalation. This should be done with the Apex Care Clinical Registered Nurse during a documented supervision session.

3.5 Alcohol and Prohibited Drugs Policy

In the interest of employee and tangata safety, alcohol and non-prescription drugs are not prohibited in the workplace. There are no exceptions. Random alcohol and/or drug testing may be undertaken with any Apex Care staff. If an employee is on prescribed medication of a serious nature, it is requested that you advise Apex Care for both yours and Apex's safety. This information will be held in confidence. All personal medication must be kept locked away from any tangata access.

Non-adherence to this policy is serious misconduct and will be treated accordingly. Testing will be

done in such a way as to respect the Employee privacy and confidentiality and consent will be required. Test results will be treated as highly confidential. If an employee returns a non-negative result, the employee will not be placed with a tangata, and this may include the period of time waiting for the result.

If an employee tests positive for drugs, and Apex Care proposes to refer them to an appropriate service for rehabilitation treatment, or pursue disciplinary action/terminate the Employee's engagement, then the employee is entitled to challenge the results and obtain an independent analysis of the sample (at the employee's own expense).

This includes if an employee consumes alcohol at a social event in such a way that it raises health and safety issues in the workplace, contributes to unacceptable job performance or the employee exhibits unusual job behaviour.

If this Policy is breached, and the employee returns a positive drug and/or alcohol test, Apex Care (and/or its insurer) may, at its sole discretion, require the employee to indemnify Apex Care any and all costs arising out of or in connection with such test.

From time to time those we support may introduce alcohol or drugs to the work environment, this is also not acceptable. If they are underage, they should be asked to hand this over, and this must be reported to Apex Care. If they refuse, please contact Apex Care for further direction. If they are over 18, please call the office on 0800 255 000 to find a safe way forward.

3.6 Confidentiality Policy

In the course of their work with Apex Care, employees will have access to confidential information regarding Apex Care, the people they support, and the services provided. It is one of the employees' prime responsibilities to ensure that they in no way divulge or reveal any such information, and that it is used only in the performance of their duties.

- The information collected by Apex Care must be solely what is necessary and be for a clear and lawful purpose.
- Employees, except within the scope of their employment, cannot remove, or make, any copies of reports or correspondence relating to Apex Care.
- Employees cannot use for their own gain, except within the scope of their employment, any confidential information, data or knowledge relating to Apex Care.
- Employees must surrender all documents and information upon termination of employment or at any time upon the request of the management.
- Sometimes even the most innocent act or request can result in disclosure of confidential information being disclosed and employees should always think before discussing information with a third party. If an employee believes that information should be discussed with a third-party they should consult with the management.

There is NO excuse for disclosure of confidential information. If information is released, this may result in the employer seeking legal redress by way of damages from employee due to the loss of income and costs.

3.7 Conflict of Interest Policy

Conflicts of interest are a serious issue for all of us. We expect vigilance to spot circumstances that create conflicts of interest, either to yourself or the company. If you are experiencing an ethical dilemma, talk to the General Manager to help you resolve it.

All staff have a responsibility to advise senior management where a conflict of interest is perceived. This situation may take many different forms that include, but are not limited to:

- Needs of the tangata differ to the care provided and this needs to be addressed.
- Where a staff member is related to or known to the tangata and this has the potential for conflict.
- Use of position with the company to their personal advantage.
- Under-the-table approach made by a competitor.
- A customer asks for special treatment.
- Engaging in activities that will bring direct or indirect profit to a competitor.
- Behaving in such a way that knowingly brings Apex Care into disrepute to disadvantage the company e.g. gossiping, theft.
- Using connections or materials obtained through the company for own private purposes.
- Using company equipment or means to support an external business.
- Acting in ways that may compromise the company's legality (e.g. taking bribes or bribing representatives of legal authorities).

There is a possibility that a conflict of interest may occur and can be addressed and resolved before any actual damage is done. Therefore, when any member of staff understands or suspects that a conflict of interest exists, they should bring this matter to the attention of the Managing Director or General Manager so corrective actions may be taken. They can use also the online forms at [TheStaffroom](#) to lodge this as a concern.

3.8 Culturally Safe Support Policy

New Zealand is culturally diverse. Your working environment is culturally diverse as well. Apex Care strives to deliver services in a sensitive and culturally safe manner to ensure the individual and their family/ whānau feels supported and protected. We understand that those we support need to feel safe and secure in the knowledge that their individual values, beliefs and cultural wishes are acknowledged and respected.

Because persons of the same ethnicity can have very different beliefs and practices, it is important to understand the particular circumstances of the individual or whānau by obtaining information on place of origin, social background, and personal expectations concerning their support. In order to assess and plan culturally safe care the following assessment data should be obtained.

- Ascertain the person's first language and any other languages which they may speak and determine which interpreter services may be required. If interpreting services are required contact the office for further support in accessing interpreting services.
- Ask the person you are supporting about dietary requirements such as usual diet, and any religious or ethnic beliefs or events that may impact on diet.
- Information should be sought on any special beliefs, practices or consideration regarding circumstances around death and dying, or any other aspect of life.
- Explore differences with regards to health care delivery in New Zealand, as opposed to country of origin (if appropriate).
- Enquire as to the use of any traditional therapies or remedies (see Traditional Healing and

Complimentary Therapies Policy and Procedure).

- Apex office will ensure that the guardian/ family/ whanau or other support persons to be involved in their support planning.
- Enquire as to any other cultural considerations that need to be taken into account in order to facilitate healthcare delivery.
- Refer to the Māori Health plan for additional information and direction on the assessment and Support planning needs of Māori and their whānau.
- Following the assessment of cultural requirements, identified needs will be incorporated into the support plan and delivery of care will be evaluated on an on-going regular basis.

Attitudes of the culturally competent clinician

- **Understanding:** Acknowledging that there can be differences between cultures' healthcare values and practices.
- **Empathy:** Being sensitive to the feelings of others.
- **Patience:** Understanding the potential differences between cultures' concept of time and immediacy. **Respect:**
 - The importance of culture as a determiner of health
 - The existence of other world views regarding health/ illness
 - The adaptability and survival skills
 - The influence of religious beliefs on health
 - The role of bilingual/bicultural staff
- **Trust:** Invest in building a relationship which conveys a commitment to safeguard their well-being.

Cultural safety

Irihapeti Ramsden developed an approach called “Te Kawa Whakaruruhau / Cultural Safety” – a safe place made from principles. The goal is to recognise your own cultural preferences and biases in order to respectfully acknowledge and appreciate that others will also have their own cultural preferences and biases.

3.9 Accessibility and Interpreters

Apex Care will ensure we are identifying and removing barriers to access for people with disabilities by:

- Ensuring the accommodation they reside in is appropriate and accessible and notifying the customer immediately if there are barriers to appropriate support.
- Encouraging people with disabilities to use their own personal assistive devices to improve access to support and activities.
- Ensuring those we support have access to information on activities they can engage in that are appropriate.
- Communicating with those we support in a manner and language that they understand and providing important information in writing or in other forms.
- Allowing people with disabilities to bring their guide dog or service animal with them to areas that allow this.
- Providing a facility for our staff to learn New Zealand Sign Language.
- Training staff about key principles and accessibility strategies and tools.

Interpreter services

A competent interpreter, as organised by the customer, should be used for reasons of clinical safety. These include but are not limited to:

- Determining a referred individual's medical history or asking them to describe symptoms they are experiencing, including mental health issues.
- Explaining rights particularly when obtaining informed consent.
- Assessment and the development of individual support plans.
- Procedures and referrals including providing information about medication.

3.10 Rights Policy

Regardless of our role at Apex Care we must ensure that the rights of those are always upheld. If you feel the tangata you are supporting has had their rights broken, you must inform the Apex Office immediately on 0800 225 000.

There are two sets of rights we need to be aware of, the Health and Disability Commission Code of Rights and the Youth Rights (UNCROC)

10 Health and Disability Code of Rights:

1. Right to be treated with respect
2. Right to freedom from discrimination, coercion, harassment and exploitation
3. Right to dignity and independence
4. Right to services of an appropriate standard
5. Right to effective communication
6. Right to be fully informed
7. Right to make an informed choice and give informed consent
8. Right to support
9. Right in respect of teaching and research
10. Right to complain

Youth Rights (UNCROC)

UNCROC is made up of 54 articles (sections). These set out the standards for the treatment of children and young people. The four main articles underpinning the Convention are:

- all children have the right to protection from discrimination on any grounds
- the best interests of the child should be the primary consideration in all matters affecting the child
- children have the right to life, survival and development
- all children have the right to an opinion and for that opinion to be heard.

More information is available at <https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/monitoring/uncroc/>

Specific rights to be aware of:

- life, survival and development.
- the Government making sure that the best interests of the child are taken into account when making decisions about the child.
- access to education and health care.
- grow up in an environment of happiness, love and understanding.
- protection from discrimination of any sort.
- develop their personalities, abilities and talents.
- protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and economic exploitation.
- special measures to protect those that are in conflict with the law.
- an opinion and for that opinion to be heard.
- be informed about and participate in achieving their rights.

- special measures to protect those belonging to minority groups.

3.11 Gifts Policy

Employees are not permitted to give, sell, lend or receive any items. If you are put in a situation where a tangata is trying to give you a gift, please contact Apex Care.

Gifts are also classified as buying things such as food or other "treat" items for the tangata you're supporting. This can become an expectation and sets up an unfair standard within the team. This change in reward and expectation from the person you support can be dangerous and we may result in disciplinary action.

3.12 Personal Property and Phones Policy

Apex Care cannot guarantee the safety of any item you bring into the workplace. We encourage you not to bring expensive items to work e.g. laptops, tablets, expensive clothes an expensive watch or jewellery. We remind you that what you bring to work is done so at your own risk.

Phone use

There should be no use of personal devices in front of a person we are supporting with the exception of emergency situations. Your phones can only be used at work to complete work tasks, such as required communication and documentation required of you or on an allocated break. Have a password on your phone in case an authorised person tries to access the contents.

Personal property

- The items we take to work can at times be at risk.
- It is your responsibility to take care of your property.
- Do not leave your items to be easily accessed by tangata whaiora.
- Do not lend devices to tangata.
- Lock them in the boot of your car rather than take them on site.

Apex Care takes no responsibility for personal items that have been left where a person we support can access them. We strongly encourage all support workers to have all of their items that they take to work with them to be fully insured - this can include personal items like your car/car keys, cell phones and/or jewellery.

3.13 Compliments

- Compliments inform Apex Care of what is being done well and what can be done to further improve the service.
- Compliments that are received are forwarded onto the relevant employee(s).

3.14 Complaints Policy

Apex care is committed to responding to anyone who provides feedback, be it a compliment or a complaint. Complaints are viewed as an opportunity to improve the service we provide and are managed and monitored via our monthly governance in order to assess patterns.

Apex Care encourages feedback from the organisations we support and the people we support in order to:

- Identify and improve where possible, systems or processes which lead to tangata whaiora dissatisfaction.
- Identify instances of excellence in service.

- Provide an easy avenue for the customer or tangata whaiora to raise any problems that they may be experiencing with the services provided by Apex Care.

If you receive a complaint, remember:

- Keep an open mind.
- Do not become reactive or defensive.
- View the complaint as an opportunity for improvement.
- Listen and do not interrupt.
- If possible find a solution and focus on outcomes rather than who is right or wrong.
- Advise of their right to have an advocate supporting them.
- Report to the office immediately on 0800 255 000.

If you want to make a complaint yourself or have concerns about the support you have seen please document on a reporting form (www.apexcarenz.com/information) or report to the office immediately on 0800 255 000. If you would like to provide a statement of something you have witnessed, please do so by accessing the personal grievance form.

3.15 Disciplinary Action Policy

It is the Employer's aim that the rules and procedures should emphasise and encourage improvement in the conduct of individuals where they are failing to meet the required standards, and not be seen merely as a means of punishment.

Apex Care reserves the right to amend these rules and procedures where appropriate.

Every effort will be made to ensure that any action taken under this procedure is fair, with the employee being given the opportunity to state their case.

The following rules and procedures should ensure that:

- The correct procedure is used when requiring an employee to attend a disciplinary hearing.
- The employee is fully aware of the standards of performance, action and behaviour required of an employee.
- Disciplinary action, where necessary, is taken speedily and in a fair, uniform and consistent manner.
- The employee will only be disciplined after careful investigation of the facts and the opportunity to present their side of the case.
- At all investigation or disciplinary hearings, the employee has the right to be accompanied by a support person.
- An employee will not normally be dismissed for a first breach of the regulations, except in the case of serious misconduct.
- If an employee is disciplined, they will receive an explanation of the penalty imposed.
- For permanent employees only, on some occasions temporary suspension on contractual pay may be necessary in order that an uninterrupted investigation can take place. This should not be regarded as disciplinary action or a penalty of any kind.

Disciplinary Rules

It is not practicable to specify all disciplinary rules or offences that may result in disciplinary action, as they may vary depending on the nature of the work. In addition to the specific examples of unsatisfactory conduct, misconduct and serious misconduct shown in this policy, a breach of other specific conditions, procedures and practices are set out elsewhere in the Employee Handbook, Code of Conduct policy, Independent Employment Agreement, or that have otherwise been made

known to the employee - these will also result in this procedure being used to deal with such matters.

The employee will be liable to disciplinary action if they are found to have acted in any of the following ways:

- failure to abide by the Employer's health and safety policies and procedures and general health and safety responsibilities.
- actions which could threaten the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues or others.
- persistent absenteeism and/or lateness.
- unsatisfactory standards or output of work.
- rudeness towards customers/tangata, members of the public or their colleagues, objectionable or insulting behaviour, harassment, bullying or bad language.
- failure to devote the whole of their time, attention and abilities to our business and its affairs during their normal working hours.
- unauthorised use of email, internet and/or social media.
- failure to carry out all reasonable instructions or follow our rules and procedures.
- unauthorised use or negligent damage or loss of our property.
- failure to report immediately any damage to property or premises caused by an employee.
- use of the Employer's vehicles without approval or the private use of our commercial vehicles without authorization.
- failure to report any incident whilst driving the Employer's vehicles, whether or not personal injury or vehicle damage occurs.
- if their work involves driving, failure to report immediately any type of driving conviction, or any summons which may lead to their conviction.
- carrying unauthorised goods or passengers in the customers or Apex Care's vehicles or the use of said vehicles for personal gain.
- loss of driving licence where driving on public roads forms an essential part of the duties of the role.
- Boundary crossing with those they support or their family.

This list is not exhaustive.

Occurrences of serious misconduct are significant because the penalty may be termination without notice, even without any previous warning being issued. It is not possible to provide an exhaustive list of examples of serious misconduct. However, any behaviour or negligence resulting in a fundamental breach of their contractual terms that irrevocably destroys the trust and confidence necessary to continue the employment relationship will constitute serious misconduct. Examples of offences that will normally be considered to be serious misconduct include serious instances of:

- theft or fraud
- physical violence or bullying
- deliberate damage to property
- deliberate acts of unlawful discrimination or harassment
- possession, or being under the influence, of illegal drugs at work
- breach of the Employer's health and safety policies and procedures and their general health and safety responsibilities or any actions that endangers the lives of, or may cause serious injury to, employees or any other person.

Disciplinary Procedure

Disciplinary action taken against an employee may be based on the following procedure:

Offence	1 st occasion	2 nd occasion	3 rd occasion	4 th occasion
Unsatisfactory conduct	Formal verbal warning	Written warning	Final written warning	Termination
Misconduct	Final written warning	Termination		
Serious misconduct	Termination			

Apex Care retains discretion in respect of the disciplinary procedures to take into account an employee's length of service and the severity of the misconduct to vary the procedures accordingly.

If an employee has a short amount of service, they may not be in receipt of any warnings before termination, but an employee will retain the right to a disciplinary hearing. If a disciplinary penalty is imposed it will be in line with the procedure outlined above, which may encompass a formal verbal warning, written warning, final written warning, or termination, and full details will be given to an employee.

There may be occasions where the performance or conduct of an employee is serious enough to bypass one of the above steps and move immediately to a first and final written warning but not a summary termination. This option might be used in circumstances where our policy is breached but it is not so serious as to warrant instant termination.

In all cases, warnings will be issued for misconduct, irrespective of the precise matters concerned and any further breach of the rules in relation to similar or entirely independent matters of misconduct will be treated as further disciplinary matters and allow the continuation of the disciplinary process through to termination if the warnings do not change behaviour.

In exceptional circumstances, suspension from work without pay for up to five days as an alternative to termination (except termination for serious misconduct) may be considered by the person authorised to dismiss. Serious misconduct offences will result in termination without notice.

Grievance Process

The aim of this policy is to provide employees with a procedure in which to raise personal grievances, including those about harassment or discrimination, with a view to resolving those issues.

A personal grievance is a serious concern or dispute in relation to:

- dismissal
- action taken by the Employer against an employee
- alleged discrimination
- alleged sexual harassment
- alleged racial harassment
- alleged duress an employee has been subject to in relation to membership or non-membership of a union or employee association.

Employees may, however, have less serious complaints which should be referred to management at first instance. The Employer expressly reserves the right to deal with any complaints as it sees fit

on a case-by-case basis. Management may also, at its sole discretion, decide that a matter raised by an employee is more properly categorised as a complaint and deal with it as such. This policy explains what to do if you have a personal grievance. Any personal grievance raised will be treated in confidence and can be made without fear of reprisal.

Employee entitlements and responsibilities

Where you have a grievance, you are entitled to have this matter addressed in accordance with the procedure set out below.

There are two ways in which you may try to resolve your grievance:

- Through an informal resolution procedure, aimed at trying to resolve the grievance rather than proving whether or not the conduct complained of occurred
- Through a formal personal grievance resolution procedure, aimed at determining whether the matter complained of did in fact occur and taking appropriate action to resolve the issue. Although the Employer encourages you to attempt to resolve any grievances informally at first instance, it is recognised that this may not always be possible or appropriate in the circumstances. You may elect at any time to commence the formal resolution process outlined below.

Where you have a grievance that you would like to raise, you are required to do so promptly and in accordance with procedure outlined below. You are required to maintain confidentiality, disclosing details of the grievance only to those directly involved in the complaint or grievance and its resolution. Further, you are required to cooperate with any management investigation into your grievance, and attend meetings as directed by management.

Procedure

The specific procedures for raising and addressing grievances include:

- **Informal resolution procedure** If you can, and you feel comfortable doing so, try to resolve your grievance yourself with the person or people involved by approaching them directly. You are encouraged to talk with management if at any time you are not sure how to handle the problem yourself, or you just want to talk confidentially for further information and guidance. You can also ask your manager to informally approach the person complained of. This will involve a manager confidentially discussing the matter, reminding the particular employee about our workplace policies and instructing them not to repeat the behaviour again. Please note that this will not involve any investigation into the complaint as such action is aimed at resolving the grievance quickly and efficiently. If you would like an investigation conducted, you will need to proceed to the formal resolution procedure.
- **Formal resolution procedure** If you would like to lodge a formal personal grievance that will be investigated, you will need to submit to management the details of your grievance in writing, along with any evidence you may have in respect of your grievance. The grievance must be raised with management within 90 days of when the matter occurred. Grievances raised after this time will not be considered by management. Grievances related to bullying and/or harassment will be dealt with in accordance with the Employer's bullying and harassment policy. If your grievance is against your manager, or you are uncomfortable lodging this with your manager, you should submit this to the Managing Director. A meeting will be convened with you to obtain further details relating to your grievance, including the nature and full particulars of the grievance. After this meeting, the Managing Director will investigate your grievance as appropriate. All the facts available will be considered prior to making a decision upon your grievance. All reasonable efforts will be made to deal with formal grievances in a fair and

consistent manner. You will be advised in writing once a decision has been made upon your grievance. All decisions will be final.

Any grievances which are considered as vexatious are viewed by Apex Care as serious misconduct in of itself and will result in disciplinary proceedings and may result in the termination of your employment without notice.

3.16 Bullying and Harassment Policy

Definition: Workplace bullying is the repeated unfair treatment of a person by another or others in the workplace who use strength or power to coerce; this is deemed unreasonable and inappropriate workplace practice. It includes behavior that intimidates, offends, degrades or humiliates a worker, possibly in front of co-workers or the person we support.

Policy principle elements

Apex Care is committed to providing a work environment free from bullying. In order to achieve this we will:

- Encourage employees to report workplace bullying to the Manager immediately
- Develop and maintain a supportive environment that values diversity and individual strengths
- Have open discussions with all staff about workplace bullying at the health and safety meetings
- Have a strength-based approach by aiming to repair the workplace relationships
- Ensure all complaints are taken seriously and that appropriate steps are taken to investigate and manage the complaint
- Provide a complaint form that is easily accessible to all staff
- Ensure that staff are well informed with the risks and affects that workplace bullying has on an individuals' quality of life
- Actively and diligently identify factors that contribute to workplace bullying
- Ensure that effective implementation of control measures are in place to prevent workplace bullying
- Provide identified victims of workplace bullying with tools and resources to resolve an issue
- Review and evaluate the progress of this policy and amend or update as needed.

Apex Care values the health and well-being of all staff members. Workplace bullying can cause the loss of experienced staff, affect morale and create legal risks; and it is considered to be a workplace Health and Safety issue. It is important to note that there will be no victimization of those who report workplace bullying.

Staff responsibilities

- Report any experience or identified bullying to the General Manager or Managing Director. If the General Manager is the bully, then the appropriate person is the Managing Director
- Attempt to resolve the issue by talking to the person before involving a Manager
- Keep records of the events
- Follow our informal and formal complaints processes
- Support other staff who are or may be experiencing bullying
- Attend the health and safety meetings

Manager responsibilities

- Ensure that all staff are well informed and aware of their roles and responsibilities
- Intervene as early as possible to deal and manage any suspected inappropriate behaviour to prevent it from escalating

- Accurately record and appropriately investigate reported bullying or inappropriate behaviour in accordance to our policies and processes
- Support all parties/witnesses involved
- Protect the privacy and health and well-being of staff during an investigation
- When it is appropriate, ensure that all or any informal steps or methods have been applied before taking the complaint to a higher level of management.

Method

The Apex Care Grievance procedure will be used to deal with workplace bullying. Any reports will be treated seriously and investigated promptly, confidentially, and impartially.

Disciplinary Action will be taken against anyone who bullies a co-worker. Discipline may involve a warning, counselling or dismissal, depending on the circumstances. False reports will not be tolerated, and the appropriate consequence will be taken.

Investigating the Complaint

- Adopt a no-blame approach
- Investigate promptly
- Keep all details of the investigation confidential
- Carefully document all steps taken
- Be fair
- Be thorough
- Ask what, where, who, why, what
- Obtain any witness statements; ensure that the witness understands that they will be free from retaliation.

Resolving the Complaint

- Listen to what both the alleged bully and the victim have to say
- Encourage discussion of each other’s viewpoints with a view to better understand each other
- Identify any training or development needs
- Come to mutual agreement on ways of resolving the problem
- Date and sign agreement with all parties. Mutually decide on a review date at this time
- Provide ongoing monitoring and support for both parties
- Evaluate and document the effectiveness of the agreed strategies at the review
- Document any disciplinary action imposed and remedial steps taken.

In certain serious situations Worksafe can intervene to ensure safety in the workplace under the provisions of the Health and Safety in Employment Act.

Difference between harassment and bullying

Harassment	Bullying
Tends to focus on individual because of what they are e.g. gender, race etc	Anyone will do, especially if the bully feels threatened in some way
Harassment is usually linked to sex, race, prejudice and discrimination	These things play little part
The person being harassed can usually identify it, especially if having had awareness training	The person being bullied may not recognize it for weeks or even months
Most people can recognize harassment	Few people recognize bullying

Harassment will often reveal itself through the use of recognized offensive language	Bullying tends to fixate on trivial criticism & false allegations of under-performance (swearing is done in private)
The harasser will often perceive the complainant as vulnerable to harassment or as a challenge	The complainant is seen as a threat that must be controlled & subjugated, & if that fails, eliminated
Often harassment is for peer approval, bravado etc	Tends to be secret, behind closed doors, no witnesses
Harassment takes place in & out of work	Bullying takes place largely at work
Harassment is often domination for superiority	Bullying is for control of threat of exposure of inadequacy
The harasser often lacks self-discipline	The bully is driven by envy of abilities & jealousy of relationship.

3.17 Rights and Responsibility

Kaimahi have the right to:

- Respect for their individual human worth and dignity
- Respect for their privacy and confidentiality
- Information, education, training and support to facilitate their care and support roles
- Receive services that assist them to provide care and support
- Contribute to and participate in the wrap around the tangata whaiora
- Access mechanisms of complaint if they are dissatisfied with the treatment or support provided to the tangata whaiora
- Receive support for their own difficulties that may be generated through the process of supporting, caring for or acting as an advocate for the tangata whaiora
- Provide information concerning family relationships and any matters relating to the mental state of the tangata whaiora to Apex Care.

Kaimahi have the responsibility to:

- Respect the humanity and dignity of the tangata whaiora
- Realise the opinions and skills of professional and other staff who provide assessment, individualised care planning, support, care, treatment, recovery and rehabilitation services
- Cooperate, as far as is possible, with reasonable programmes of assessment, individualised care planning, support, care, treatment, recovery and rehabilitation
- Ensure they monitor their mental health and happiness and take leave when required
- Observe all Health and Safety requirements so as to protect their well-being
- Comply with the governance as outlined by Apex Care in the contract and Employee Handbook which they agree to upon employment.

The effective reporting and management of incidents, or near-misses, is essential for the delivery of high quality, and safe service delivery. This also ensures the wellbeing and health and safety of staff and visitors.

3.18 Dress Code Policy

Consistent with the culture of Apex Care you will be expected to present yourself in a professional manner and maintain excellent personal hygiene. Apex Care does not require Employees to wear a uniform, however, all staff must present a professional image at work.

Dress, grooming and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the morale of all employees and have an impact on the company's image.

During a shift all support workers and office staff are expected to present a clean, neat and tasteful appearance. You should dress and groom yourself according to the requirements of your position and accepted social standards.

- The employee is to ensure that the clothing worn is clean for each shift and of a tidy nature. Tidy casual attire is a dress code that combines **well-fitting, clean clothes that meet tidy casual expectations**—think basic t-shirts, polo shirts, button-downs, chinos, dress pants, dark-wash jeans, and practical footwear.
- There must not be any explicit writing or images on your clothing, footwear, and accessories.
- You will be provided with an approved name badge, which is to be worn on every shift. This must be returned on resignation. Registered staff are to wear their registration badge.
- Footwear is to be non-slip type with toes covered and of a type suitable for standing, walking and providing day to day support.
- Hair is to be tidy.
- If providing personal care rings or other items that may scratch should be removed.
- All staff should be aware of their personal hygiene at all times while representing Apex Care, showering regularly and using hygiene products such as deodorant.

As a guide, the following would be considered inappropriate attire at all times:

- Jandals
- Singlets or midriff tops
- Low cut tops
- Trackpants
- Ripped, dirty, faded or old clothing
- Gang insignia or colours

3.19 Transportation and Safe Driving Policy

Apex Care provides support to many different organisations which have varying rules on what is acceptable. Some organisations do not allow the use of private vehicles and others do as long as certain criteria are met. We work with these organisations to meet their internal rules/guidelines and to safely transport those we are supporting.

Apex Care's Code of Conduct Policy states that while driving at work employees must comply with traffic legislation, be conscious of road safety and demonstrate safe driving and other good driving habits whilst driving on Apex Care business.

The following actions will be viewed as serious breach of conduct and will be treated accordingly:

- Driving whilst disqualified or not holding the correct licence for the class of vehicle being driven
- Carrying passengers whilst on a Learners or Restricted licence
- Reckless or dangerous driving causing injury or death
- Failing to stop after a crash
- Demerit points suspension
- Any actions which warrant suspension of licence
- Under the influence of alcohol or drugs while driving
- Ignoring known road rules e.g. using your cell phone whilst driving

Where transport is provided the following procedures are to be followed:

- Document details of transport management (how, who, when) in the support plan or \ additional documentation
- Ensure support workers will not incur any personal cost for transporting service users in the course of their duties
- Manage legislative requirements by (a) ensuring that staff members are reimbursed for the running costs of their vehicles only at the agreed current rate and (b) ensuring that service users are not billed for the transport unless agreed.

Employees providing transport shall:

- Have a full current Drivers Licence for the class of vehicle being driven
- The Driver's Licence must be on their person or in the vehicle whilst travelling with the tangata
- Ensure the vehicle being driven has current Registration and Warrant of Fitness and insured
- Provide proof of such Licence to the office to be verified and documented
- Advise the Manager immediately if their licence has been suspended, cancelled, or has limitations placed on it
- Advise their Insurance Company of the need to provide incidental transport in the course of their work as a support worker. Failure to be adequately insured will forfeit Apex Care's responsible to any claims
- Document mileage detailed on a timesheet, and report these to the office on a weekly basis. Any falsely reported claims may lead to dismissal
- Do not do unnecessary travel without permission e.g. travelling to another region
- Not provide transport to any person other than the service user in the course of their duties, this includes spouses, family members, and friends of the service user
- Adhere to Apex Care Safe Driving guidelines
- If there is ever a situation where a vehicle belonging to the person receiving support is used, permission must be signed off
- Have prior approval from the Manager to drive company, rental, fleet vehicles
- Be responsible and accountable for their actions when driving company vehicles
- Be physically and mentally able to drive safely
- Drive within legal speed limits including driving for the conditions
- Always wear a Safety Belt
- Report any vehicle defects to the Manager before using the vehicle again
- Comply with traffic laws when driving the vehicle
- Regularly check oil, radiator, battery levels and tyre pressures of vehicle if regularly used
- Report any near hits, crashes and scrapes to the Manager, including those that do not result in injury
- Adhere to the No Smoking Policy whilst in a company vehicle.
- Report any parking or traffic infringement fines to management immediately, and take responsibility for the payment of such fines.

Safe Driving

The need for safe driving practices is part of the duty of Apex Care to provide a safe and healthy workplace.

Hazards driving and transporting include:

- Poor weather conditions
- Poor road conditions
- Speed
- Fatigue

- Distractions within the vehicle
- Assisting the person, you are supporting in and out of the vehicle
- Loading and unloading shopping or awkward loads such as equipment (e.g. wheelchairs)
- Unsecured loads.

If the tangata you are supporting is being a “hazard” by turning up the radio too loud, yelling, touching things in the vehicle that may jeopardise safe travel, please stop the vehicle and ask the tangata to exit the car until they can travel safely. But only if the tangata is able to do so safely.

Accident Procedures

Immediately stop your vehicle at the scene or as close as possible, making sure that you are not obstructing traffic.

- Ensure your own safety first
- Help any injured people and call or assist if required.

Obtain the following information:

- Details of the other vehicle and registration number
- Name, address and phone number of the other vehicle(s) owner(s) and driver(s)
- Name, address and phone number of any witness
- Name of insurer
- Photos of damage.

Give the following information:

- Your name, address and company details
- If you damage an unattended vehicle, leave a note on the windscreen with your contact details.

Contact Police:

- If there are any injuries
- If there is any disagreement over the cause of the accident
- If you damage others property
- If damage appears to be more than \$2,500 report the accident to the nearest Police station

Report the crash to Apex Care team as soon as possible.

3.20 Adverse Events Policy

Adverse Events reporting is the responsibility of all employees and is therefore part of every employee’s job description. We understand that mistakes and untoward occurrences can occur and that it is important for these to be quickly identified and acted upon in a positive and constructive manner. Adverse events are investigated with a view of learning from our mistakes and are therefore shared with key stakeholders with open disclosure. Incident reporting is key to the Apex Care Risk Management Strategy.

Employees are required to complete incident report using the Apex Care’s Adverse Events Reporting Form. These forms are provided electronically to ensure that they can be received and investigated as soon as possible.

The following events are to be reported via the adverse events reporting form:

- **Safety Incidents and Hazards:** any unintended or unexpected incident that could have or did lead to harm

- **Accidents and dangerous occurrences:** any accident, no matter how minor, which did, or could, have adversely affected any person
- **Violence, abuse and harassment incidents:** any incident involving verbal abuse, unsociable behaviour, racial or sexual harassment, physical assault or self-harm, whether or not injury results
- **Fire Incidents:** any incident, no matter how small, involving fire
- **Absconding:** whilst this could be a behaviour issue, we need to see when these events occur as an incident
- **Security Incidents:** any untoward incident involving theft, loss or other damage to company or personal property, intrusions, false alarms, car crime, fraud, burglary and vandalism
- **Vehicle Incidents:** any incident involving a vehicle e.g., motor vehicle accident
- **Near Misses:** an incident, which if it did not cause injury or damage this time, could do so if it happened again
- **Ill Health Incidents:** any case of known or suspected work or environment related ill health e.g., infection, dermatitis, latex allergy
- **Other Incidents:** this type of incident which may include accidental property damage or loss, environmental incidents e.g. food safety/ hygiene incidents, death, food poisoning.

Procedure

- a) The person completing the Adverse Events Reporting Form should be the individual who witnessed, first discovered, or is the most familiar with the incident. Each section of the form must be completed.
- b) The description of the incident should be an objective description of the facts. It should not include the writer's opinion as to the cause of the event.
- c) The Adverse Events Reporting Form should be completed no later than the end of the work assignment/day during which the incident occurred or was discovered to have occurred and forwarded to the Manager.
- d) The Incident will be reviewed within 24 hours of submission by the General Manager or the RN.
- e) The Adverse Events Reporting Form is an administrative document and is stored in the Incident and Adverse Event Investigation folder.
- f) The Manager will be responsible for the collation, identification of any trends and ensuring confidentiality of incidents.
- g) Any serious incidents and near-misses will be investigated by the Manager to see what can be learned with recommendations being put in place to reduce risk and improve systems.
- h) Risk management will be reviewed through setting objectives to ensure continuous improvement
- i) Feedback on key issues should be made available to staff concerned, and general feedback should be made available for all staff using email, newsletters, and circulars.

For further step by step information on incident reporting, hazard identification and incident investigation refer to Apex Care's Health and Safety Manual and Handbook.

3.21 Monitoring and Surveillance Policy

The purpose of this Monitoring and Surveillance Policy is to describe the circumstances in which Apex Care will conduct surveillance of all of its employees. Apex may use search, and use surveillance cameras:

- for security and safety reasons
- as a deterrent to crime
- to investigate losses
- ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees, visitors

- to monitor compliance of policies and procedures
- access, use or disclose information or records obtained in the course of monitoring for surveillance in relation to individual employee. Apex Care will be bound by the Privacy Act 2020 when considering such access and/or disclosure.

For the purpose of this policy, surveillance means:

- camera surveillance which is surveillance by means of a camera that monitors or records visual images of activities on premises of operation
- computer surveillance which is surveillance by means of software or other equipment that monitors or records the information input or output, or other use, of a computer (including, but not limited to, the sending and receipt of emails and the accessing of internet websites)
- tracking surveillance on company vehicles, which is surveillance by means of an electronic device the primary purpose of which is to monitor or record geographical location or movement (such as a global positioning system tracking device);

Apex Care may:

- monitor computer use, including the use of company internet and email addresses (content and addressees) on a device
- review any information stored on, or issued to, a device.

For the avoidance of doubt, by bringing personal property onto premises, any employee or contractor is deemed to have consented to his or her property being searched or inspected in accordance with this Policy.

By signing the IEA, the Employee agrees to the collection of information about him or her in the way detailed in this Policy. Should an employee wish to complain and/or gain further information around this Policy they should contact the General Manager. Any contravention of this Policy may constitute misconduct or serious misconduct depending on the seriousness of the behaviour/actions/omissions of the employee and shall lead to disciplinary action being taken against the employee.

3.22 Double-Tangata Shifts

This is where Apex Care has two tangata whaiora in the same premises, where one is primary (Client A) and the other is secondary (Client B). Our policy is to ensure that we do not charge our customer twice, nor pay our staff twice for the same shift, even if its two different tangata.

- Client A:
 - generally staffed 06:00 – 22:00 and 22:00 – 06:00 hrs being 24-hour care
 - generally at school i.e. not in the house between 09:00 – 15:00 hrs
- Client B requires care during those times that Client A is at school.

Whilst the kaimahi is still on standby in case Client A needs to come back from school, this time is seen by the customer as “down time”. To maximise the time, and their payment for this time, Client B is placed there for all/some of those hours. In scheduling this, it is important to note that no kaimahi should ever be double-booked.

As the hours of care required for both Clients A and B frequently change, this can cause multiple issues in correct scheduling and subsequently correct invoicing and payroll. We do not want to “double dip” on invoicing our customer nor double-paying our kaimahi for the same hours worked.

To handle this, the following process will be followed:

- The scheduling of the 24-hour care of Client A remains just that.
- The kaimahi will be advised verbally of this arrangement.
- WIW will have a note made in the Shift Notes that Client B is placed there for the hours required so as not to lose track of this event.
- If Client B is placed there and Apex Office were not advised ahead of time, WIW must be retrospectively updated.
- On the kaimahi timesheet, they will note next to these scheduled hours if Client B was in the house for any given period of time.
- Upon invoicing Accounts will adjust the invoice to suit, reflecting the hours worked for each tangata so as to allow the customer to allocate their budgets accordingly.
- Daily Notes are to be completed for each tangata separately.

This is the clearest way to schedule kaimahi hours.

This is the simplest way to ensure we are invoicing for each respective customer correctly.

This also captures the correct hours to pay the kaimahi regardless of which tangata the kaimahi was with.

4 On the Job

4.1 Support Worker Role

Each "job" we do is different and often what is expected can change, as such amendments may be made to the job description from time to time. Your skills, trainings and abilities will be matched to the type of work we offer you, at times this could affect the amount of work available to you.

As a support worker, you can make a difference and be supportive by:

- Focusing on **strengths not limitations**
- Maintaining **professional boundaries**
- **Listen** and **communicate** openly
- Providing **encouragement**
- Provide **validation**
- Allow them to make their **own decisions** (Where possible)
- **Avoid the urge to care for, rescue or mother**
- **Get prior approval** for travel – while supporting someone
- Engage in **meaningful activities**
- **Note what is worn**
- Secure any Medication
- **Keys** kept separate and secured
- Read and follow **support plan and other documentation**
- **Monitor** based on support plan
- If young person absconds **call Apex Care, Oranga Tamariki (if necessary) & police**
- **Report and record**

4.2 Being Assigned a shift

- We will call you and give you an overview of the shift, this usually includes the age, gender, location and the support required e.g. one on one, double staffed support or watch.
- If the times suit you and you accept you will be allocated the shift in WhenIWork.

- In WIW Documents, read the document called “New Tamariki Checks” to ensure you understand what’s required of you with the tamariki and the site safety.
- Via the WhenIWork App you will have access to the support plan provided to us by the referrer, any notes by Apex Care workers (if you are not the first person on shift) and any other information available. Always read before starting.
- On arrival introduce yourself to other apex workers, and when appropriate get a handover, be mindful that this can be hard for those we are supporting as they feel talked about.
- After handover you should then complete a walk through in order to complete a site safety check. The link is available in the WhenIWork, attached to your shift.
- From here provide the support communicated via our induction and handbook.
- Remember call us if you have any questions.

4.3 Support Plans or “All About Me Plans”

The support plan is a document that communicates the wishes, goals, values and beliefs of the person you’re supporting. It describes what is important to them, what their aims are and how they would like to be cared for. It is **important** to review the support plan information yourself before starting work. This can be found on WhenIWork, when you click into your shift. See video on using WhenIWork (found in the staffroom) for more info. The support plans often contain crucial information about triggers, common behaviours and management plans if certain things happen. Following the support plan ensures that you and the team you are working with are being consistent in your approach.

Support Workers are required to follow the support plan, risk management plans and other documents guiding support at all times. If there needs to be a change to the plan, the Support Worker must advise the office as soon as possible.

Deviance from the plan may result in dangerous or inconsistent care and will become a disciplinary issue.

If you feel the plan does not give you enough information or you are seeing new unrecorded behaviours, please advise the office as soon as possible.

4.4 On Shift

It is the Support Worker’s role to follow the support plan in order to correctly support the person in activities of daily living and ensure that all of their needs are met.

One of the major roles in supporting someone is to ensure you empower them to be as independent as possible. It is very easy to complete a task yourself, but you should be encouraging the person you are supporting to do as much for themselves as possible.

As a Support Worker, you can make a difference by:

- Having a daily routine
- Planning grocery shopping and meal planning with them
- Focusing on their strengths, not just their limitations
- Listening to them
- Communicating openly, but being mindful of what you share
- Providing encouragement
- Allowing a person to be involved in decisions
- Setting small achievable goals

- Breaking up activities into small steps
- Being observant and mindful of changes in behaviour

4.5 Handovers

Apex Care employees have an important role where there is a need for a certain level of trust from those they support and their families. Therefore, establishing a professional relationship with certain restrictions is essential. Key risk areas are documented below.

The standardisation of handover contents and processes can improve tangata safety by ensuring consistency in the exchange of information critical to safe and effective care. This can lead to increased service satisfaction for the tangata as every member of staff working with the person can begin where the last left off, aiding the recovery process.

Handover of care is one of the most important procedures in healthcare. If carried out improperly it can be a major contributory factor to subsequent error and harm to the person being supported. Lapses in information during handover can lead to mistakes being made, including delayed decisions relating to care, risk incidents, incorrect approaches to support and manage emotions, and incorrect treatment. How the information is transferred in the handover process has a major impact on the way it is retained and therefore acted on subsequently by others.

Process

Prior to commencing every shift:

- Staff must commit to reading the Daily Notes over the last few days, or since they were last on site, to ascertain how the tangata whaiora has been, and how staff have been responding to their needs
- Staff to review any recovery or management plans to build their awareness and/or see if any changes have occurred.
- **Please note:** Reading the case notes before staff start their shift is an integral part of the role. This can lead to significant incidents and potentially lead to harm. It is an expectation that staff are responsible for reading the case notes before they start the shift. Please advise office staff if you are aware when this is not occurring.

The How of the Handover:

There are several accepted means of which handovers can take place which depend on the needs of the person at that time. If there are any staff needs which make handover not able to take place, this needs to be communicated.

- Written:
 - Any written communication should be clear, concise, without abbreviations or jargon, and use easily understood words. It must be written using respectful language. Written documentation will be supported by verbal handover where possible, to reduce communication errors and improve continuity of care.
 - Ensure all Daily Notes, onsite communication books and other relevant personnel are updated.
 - Other relevant documentation might include incident reports and any other forms, charts or plans.
- Verbal:
 - Staff can offer for the person supported to be present if they so wish, if appropriate to do so depending upon the tangata involved. People's needs are variable with some people not

wanting to be a part of handover at all, to those who wish to be present. In the instances where the person supported wants to be present, staff need to be mindful of keeping the handover in a professional and therapeutic framework, reinforcing positive moments, and an absence of judgement and criticism.

- Any matters that needs follow-up yet could not be included in the handover needs to be emailed to the oncoming staff within 30 minutes of the outgoing staff leaving the premises.
- Where there is space available, handovers are ideally completed in a seperate room and out of earshot of the person supported so sensitive issues can be relayed to the oncoming staff. Where there is no room available, consider your verbal and non verbal communication with each other, as this can be upsetting for the person you are supporting.

Content of Handover:

When handing over responsibility and accountability, support workers must communicate only the relevant information required to ensure continuity of care and the safety of the person, as well as the safety of others around the tangata whaiora. Irrelevant or unnecessary information can lead to communication overload, and critical information may be missed. Handover requires preparation to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the process.

At the end of handover, the incoming support worker should have a clear understanding of:

- the current location of the person requiring support and their planned movements
- any urgent matter alerts, for example, changes in support plans or medication, or notification about people who might require focussed support or immediate attention due to illness
- any immediate, imminent or outstanding actions required
- other important factors that may have an impact work on the following shift
- Some referrers may require support with implementing strategies and skills that the person is working on. For example, a person is working with ICAMHS there may be a specific focus on mindfulness, or other wellbeing tools. If this information is not shared, the likelihood of that persons recovery slows down.

S.H.A.R.E.D

Effective verbal handover can only occur if all support workers hold a similar understanding and 'mental model' of the process and expectations of them. The suggested model with Apex Care is S.H.A.R.E.D.:

- Situation
- History
- Appointments
- Risk
- Expectations
- Documentation

Situation Discuss the situation at time of handover - the situation section is to be treated like the front page of a tabloid newspaper! Examples:

- Staff being assaulted
- Self harm/risk incident
- Person has been put on bail
- Had a meeting that didn't go well and are isolating
- Challenges with neighbouring motel units

(If there is no headline, then say that.)

History Discuss what has occurred during the shift, including:

- A brief overview of people's movements, e.g. play, baking, clothing shopping, haircuts throughout the shift
- Any recent changes in a person's health status requiring attention or monitoring
- Recent incidents including absconding
- Descriptions of attempts to manage an issue and whether they have worked e.g. box breathing, getting on the person's level, how to phrase certain sentences
- If the person supported is wanting to be involved, asking them (and their whānau if this is an option) for feedback and including this
- Equality diversity and human rights considerations (including effective communication needs, cultural sensitivities)
- If a residential house, advise of new admissions/ discharge/ referrals

Appointments Discuss any appointments attended during the previous shift or to be attended during the current shift including:

- Outcomes of any appointments, medical tests and results (received or pending)
- Any tasks to be completed, e.g. picking up medication or making appointments
- If the Apex Care Clinical Nurse Manager has advised a doctor's visit is required, this is to be achieved
- Collection of food/petrol vouchers
- Any changes as required by the customer e.g. Oranga Tamariki, ICAHMS.

Risk Discuss information needed to keep everyone safe, including:

- Urgent matters – such as changes to risk management, support plans, and medication changes
- Any potential risk incidents that have the potential to arise, eg whānau conflict, relationship break up, emerging bad news that needs to be delivered.
- Any harm incidents that have occurred
- Any hazard reports lodged during the shift.

Expectations Outline any additional expectations of the next shift, for example:

- Outstanding tasks not yet completed that need to be followed up by incoming staff
- What worked or helped to manage the person's distress or de escalate the situation.

Documentation:

- Document completion of email/verbal handovers in the Daily Notes at each shift change
- Ensure all relevant documentation is on-hand at the commencement of handover
- Refer to relevant documentation as required throughout the handover.

Handover when staffing ratio is 2:1 or more:

It is recommended that handover be led by the person who is staying on shift (if this is the case), whilst the person finishing can quietly leave. The people we support have often experienced traumatic events and having a number of people in the room they are staying in can present as overwhelming and potentially triggering for them.

4.6 Introduction to a New Tangata

The first time you meet a new tangata can cause anxiety or be triggering for them. When meeting them for the first time, introduce yourself as a Support Worker from Apex Care. We advise only to disclose your first name. Talk with them about the plan for the day and give them space. **Interactions are led by them.** Let them talk and share what is comfortable for them and keep within your professional boundaries.

Let conversation flow naturally. Ask questions about their interests, likes/ dislikes and what they like to do. Be careful to read their body language, this will indicate whether they feel comfortable.

4.7 Daily Notes

Our support workers are required to complete notes each working day, these **must be submitted by 9am** the following day. They are part of a completed shift and are not optional.

These Notes are viewed by the customer who is directly responsible for the tangata whaiora to other bodies e.g. courts, whānau. The Notes are also used by Apex Care to identify concerns and to take action where required. The Notes are to be about the tangata, the shift, activities, medication, meals, any concerns, etc. Please do not make personal comments about anything else in the main Notes area. Use the section at the end called “Info for other Support staff or office” for this.

Each Apex Care kaimahi on shift **MUST** complete these Notes and submit by 9am the following day without exception as these form part of the shift being paid for. Continued non-deliverance of these Notes may result in disciplinary action.

Please use the online form: found on the staffroom site www.apexcarenz.com/resources. You could add this shortcut to your phone: <https://tinyurl.com/bdzensv7>

You need to include:

- Medications given
- How time was spent
- Any behavioural concerns and strategies used in response
- Meals
- Activities
- Key events
- Phone calls
- Site Safety checks and any issues
- Any follow-up required by Apex Care staff, manager, or Social Worker.

4.8 Tangata Awareness

You are required to be able to describe the appearance of the person you are supporting encase of an emergency. You do this by taking note of their clothing and accessories. We suggest noting this down in your phone e.g. red shirt, blue jeans, white hat, sneakers. This is important for cases of absconding and the police need to be able to identify them.

4.9 Teamwork

When teams work together and support each other, they decrease the level of stress on the person being supported which enables positive outcomes. In addition, teamwork may **reduce the number of issues related** to burnout and the general enjoyment of the shift. If you disagree with how your colleague is approaching something, have a quiet word with them. But always present a united front and not leave all the rule setting to one person.

4.10 Gossiping

Apex Care has a zero tolerance for gossip. Gossip is an activity that can drain, corrupt, and distract us from our core purpose to provide quality support. Gossip has the potential to destroy teams or an individual person. Most people involved in gossip may not intend to do harm, but gossip can

have such a negative impact as it has the potential to destroy a person's life, and ruin Apex Care's credibility. Any member of Apex Care who is proven to participate in or instigate gossip may result in disciplinary action. Remember he mana tō te kupu / words have great power. Use this power wisely and remember the impact on the person whom you're gossiping about.

4.11 Meal Planning

Meal plans are not only a useful budgeting tool, or even a learning activity, but also can prevent you coming home with 6 tubs of ice-cream and 27 chocolate bars in fear of an escalation. There is information available at [the staffroom/healthyeating](#) to help guide you with a healthy diet for the tangata.

Often in hotel-based Oranga Tamariki care there are vouchers provided to their weekly budget. You are able to eat with them when you prepare a meal, but **you are required to contribute by buying milk or other necessities**. There is a daily limit which you will be notified of by staff, usually \$30. Some of the youth have voracious appetites so the food needs to be eeked out as best as possible to accommodate the appetites. You are required to take your own food, as you may not feel like an ongoing diet of chicken nuggets and hot dogs, which may be all the person might eat. We of course encourage you to introduce healthy eating options but be reasonable within this. Oranga Tamariki allow one treat to be bought in the grocery shopping per trip e.g. biscuits, chocolate, ice cream. It can be helpful to explain this to the person you are supporting prior to shopping.

4.12 Site Safety Check

To ensure the safety of our staff and the people we support we ensure a member of our team completes a site safety checklist on the first shift. An online form is available to enable this under Resources at [TheStaffroom.com](#), as well as in WIW Documents.

If a safety checklist highlights that there are dangers to any person that may be on site, controls must be put in place to manage these prior to the continuation of the shift. All concerns should be communicated to the agency in charge of the accommodation as well as Apex Care office.

The following is checked:

- At risk items removed and put away e.g. knives, grater, peeler
- Cleaning chemicals locked away (if necessary)
- Medications locked away
- Trips items such as cords, mats are secured or are non-slip
- Smoke alarm working
- No overloaded electrical outlets or frayed wires
- All appliances in working order
- All windows open easily for emergency exit
- Safe steps and secure railings
- Well-lit at night
- Ability to see visitors prior to opening door
- All door locks work
- Uncluttered walkways
- Running water
- Fridge and freezer working well
- Awareness of exits
- Awareness of fire and evacuation procedure and assembly point
- Access to an appropriately stocked first aid kit

- Disabled access if required

All incidents or injuries will be investigated in line with our incident investigation policies and communicated to the relevant organisations.

4.13 Cleaning and Upkeep

We ask that you keep the work environment (apartment, room, residence) in a tidy condition. Cleaning products are often provided to maintain the environment. Rubbish should be emptied at the end of each shift. In a motel situation, you may need to ask where this should be taken to. Please communicate where things are located when handing over to other staff, please also include what leftovers might be in the fridge. Occasionally when we work with families in a home setting, they can expect that we will “spring clean” for them, this is not our role, we are able to keep a clean home clean, but we don’t do in-depth cleaning such as cleaning windows or ovens etc.

4.14 Petrol, Grocery and Activity Money

Vouchers are provided as required but usually on a weekly basis for groceries and petrol. We ask that you keep all receipts in case these are requested. Please send a photo of the receipt to admin@apexcare.co.nz for our records. Where you require reimbursement for a pre-approved activity, please email through and clearly state you need reimbursement. At times activities are planned by the social worker and vouchers to activities are given, other times you may need to ask for these. All requests should be made via Apex Care through our 0800 number and not directly to the social worker.

4.15 Social Worker or Family Contact

Social workers or the family of the person you are supporting may at times ask for your phone number or ask you to contact them in certain situations. Apex staff are asked not to give out their phone numbers but instead to give out our 0800 number. The reason for this is that we want our support staff to maintain boundaries and maintain their own privacy. If required we can transfer a call to you, but we will try and minimise the frequency that this occurs.

4.16 Routine and Consistency Across the Team

- Routines can create positive habits that keep us focused and may avoid some of the stress that can be experienced from change.
- The routines you create must be handed over when changing shifts with another staff member.
- Split up the time around different activities where possible, this will change depending on the tangata whaiora.
- If possible, try to go for a walk or some other outdoor activity with the tangata at least once per day.

4.17 Types of shifts

All Roles

In all roles we perform there are some essentials that support workers must always follow, these include:

- Follow the Support plan/ risk management plan
- Complete a site safety check
- Ensure medication and keys are secured
- Follow procedures in an emergency, absconding, or escalation
- Complete daily notes and incident reporting
- Create meaningful activities

- Get approval for travel
- Maintain boundaries and always stay in your role
- Monitor the tangata in line with the requirements of the support plan
- You **MUST** contact Apex Care and receive approval to leave the premises for your own needs

Double Staffed

If a person we are supporting is double staffed there is usually a reason for it, it is usually about risk. Either risk to staff members or risk to the person. To ensure safety:

- Two eyes on the young person at all times
- Be aware of violence and aggression warning signs
- Be mindful of your positioning in the room
- Work as a team and don't allow split and divide... (remember your role)

Sleepover

- You are able to sleep between **10pm and 6am** in a room
- A sleepover requires that you be **responsive if needed** e.g. *you hear noises in the apartment, or the young person is up and awake etc*
- Ensure **premises is secure**
- Advise the office if you are required to be awake more often, as this can be a safety risk

Awake Night shifts/ Watch's/ Specials

- Must **remain awake** and vigilant
- Must **conduct checks as per plan** usually this is line of sight, you must be able to see them at all times
- Ask for someone to take over if you need to use bathroom, do not leave the person unattended
- Ensure **premises is secure**

24-hour Shifts

Prior to shift support workers will familiarise themselves with support plans and other documentation to make themselves aware of risks. The goal is to **create a safe and calm environment**. When you first arrive ensure a **site safety check** has been completed for potential hazards.

Prepare before going to shift as leaving the premise may not be possible

- Take food
- Change of clothing
- Take Bedding (if a sleepover) e.g. sleeping bag, just in case
- Hygiene products etc

Leaving accommodation provided by the customer

If you are staying over at any accommodation, you must leave it in a state of cleanliness with all your personal items removed including food, hygiene products. If you have used their bed linen, then all linen must be washed. This is a professional courtesy we give to our customers by always leaving the sites clean and ready for the next occupant.

4.18 Breaks

Your contract takes precedence, but in general you are entitled to the following. Please note that if you don't take your allocated 30-minute breaks, you cannot use these to leave early, especially without letting the office know. Your breaks are unpaid and by leaving early you are then paid for

work you haven't done. An anomaly to this is if you do take your break and remain on site, you are paid.

Length of employee's work period	Minimum number of rest and/or meal breaks	If the employer and employee cannot agree to the timing of breaks, an employer must provide breaks at the following times, so far as is reasonable and practicable. ¹
2.00 - 4.00 hours	1 x 10 minute paid rest break	In the middle of the work period
4.01 - 6.00 hours	1 x 10 minute paid rest break	One-third of the way through the work period
	1 x 30 minute unpaid meal break	Two-thirds of the way through the work period
6.01 - 10.00 hours	1 x 10 minute paid rest break	Halfway between the start of work and the meal break
	1 x 30 minute unpaid meal break	In the middle of the work period
	1 x 10 minute paid rest break	Halfway between the meal break and the finish of the work period
10.01 – 12 hours	1 x 10 minute paid rest break	Halfway between the start of work and the meal break
	1 x 30 minute unpaid meal break	In the middle of the first 8 hours of work
	1 x 10 minute paid rest break	Halfway between the meal break and the end of the first 8 hours of work
	1 x 10 minute paid rest break	Halfway between the end of the first 8 hours of work and the end of the work period

4.19 Shift Changes and Cancellations

Pulling out

If a support worker is unable to work a shift they have agreed to, they **MUST** give Apex Care at least 24 hours' notice.

Not showing up to Shift

Failure to show up to a shift may result in no further shifts being offered.

Not needed on Arrival

- Support worker is to call the office for further instructions
- The office will clarify this with the site
- If it turns out you are not needed, you will get paid for half of the shift – see Cancellations below.
- The Support worker **MUST** remain on site until the situation is clarified
- We will try to find you other work, you must stay available the duration of your original shift.

Shift Changes

Any changes that occur to your shift such as swapping, finishing your shift early, or extended finish time, must be discussed and approved by Apex Care.

The employer may send you home when there is no work for you to do.

Stand-down

- The tangata whaiora is sent to **hospital** and your presence is no longer required.
- A change in required support is instructed by the customer e.g. support is adjusted from double to **single staffed**.

Natural disaster

- Generally, you will be paid for half of your shift if notice cannot be given but no more than 12 hours will be paid.

- We will try to find you other work, you must stay available the duration of your original shift.

Cancellations

Cancellations can be a bit tricky as we have varying arrangements with different organisations.

There are a few different scenarios so we will explain all we have identified and the conditions around this:

- If you arrive for a shift and are not needed on arrival, we will pay you for half of the shift, but not more than 12 hours as applies only to a 24-hour period. If no other work is found e.g. if a 3-11pm shift was cancelled on arrival, we will pay you from 3-7pm if no other work is found. If we find longer work for you, you will be paid for whichever is the greater but not both.
- If you are on a shift and the shift is ended early for some reason, then the rest of the shift is paid but no more than 24 hours and applies only to a 24-hour period, **IF** no other work is found.
- If a shift is cancelled 6 hours before your start time, then half of the shift will be paid if shift is less than 1 day. If greater than 1 day, 24 hours will be paid unless other work is found.
- In order to be paid for the cancellation, **staff must remain available and contactable**. During that period a new shift may be assigned. If your new shift is shorter than your cancellation period, then you will be paid for whichever is the longer.
- If you become unavailable or decline an appropriate shift, then the cancellation payment is void.
- Any mileage associated with the shift if we have been cancelled on arrival will be paid/charged if mileage is usually paid for this shift.

4.20 Assignment and Shift Availability

All assignments are made through the office, without exception, if a customer attempts to assign you to a shift contact the office immediately. Any request for a change of scheduled hours and/or days to be worked must be submitted to the office for approval. All support workers are required to update their availability each week by using the WhenIWork App. If your availability is not up to date you may not be contacted for work. Due to the nature of the work being carried out, Apex Care cannot guarantee the number of work assignments for each support worker and there may be times when no work is available.

4.21 Employment offers from Customers

As an employee of Apex Care, your contract prevents you from accepting any direct employment offers from our customers, without a 6 month stand down. If you were to accept a role with them, the customer would be invoiced for a percentage of your anticipated yearly wage as an introduction fee.

4.22 Dual Agency Shifts

Apex Care may sometimes be required to work shifts where kaimahi from another agency are also on site. In every instance, the expectation is that our kaimahi will act with professionalism and not engage in any negative behaviours. Our policies take precedence and if there is any dispute as to what needs to happen, Apex Care 0800 # shall be called in the first instance.

If there is any provocation, please walk away from the instigator and call our 0800 # to ensure that you retain your mana and keep Apex Care's professional brand intact. The care of the tangata is first and foremost and tension between kaimahi may unsettle the tangata whaiora which is not acceptable.

4.23 Activity Ideas

Firstly try to tap into their interests, what kind of things could you engage the person your supporting. Have a look in the Taiohi Handbook - you can find this at: www.apexcarenz.com

Some activity ideas include:

- Going for a walk
- Baking or cooking
- Board games
- Going bowling
- Ball games

5 Mental Health & Strategies

5.1 Mental Health Support and Risk

As a support worker, you will need to ensure that the needs of the person you are supporting are continually assessed and we respond accordingly to their changing needs during episodes of increased mental health and emotional risk. Concurrently, Apex Care will ensure the safety and wellbeing of support staff providing support and education of best practice and evidence-based means of de-escalation utilising a trauma informed approach. This policy is aligned with the Support Plans and Service Reviews Policy, with an assumption that Apex Care staff have access to quality information from referral providers, implementing the knowledge gained from training into practice, and actively practices the skills and steps from the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) training.

Individual and Relationship factors that increase risk for people:

Individual:

- Previous suicide attempt
- Mental illness, such as depression
- Social isolation
- Criminal problems
- Financial problems
- Impulsive or aggressive tendencies
- Job problems or loss
- Legal problems
- Serious illness
- Substance use disorder

Relationship:

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) such as child abuse and neglect
- Bullying
- Family history of suicide
- Relationship problems such as a break-up, violence, or loss
- Sexual violence

In addition to this there are the added risk factors for marginalised communities of Māori and Pacific Island who are overrepresented in the statistics for mental health and addictions, corrections and Oranga Tamariki. People of this ethnicity often have a background of intergenerational abuse and trauma.

Considering the evidence above, it is understandable that Apex Care endorses and supports the use of a trauma informed care approach, alongside, wherever possible, family/whanau inclusion. This would be dependent on consent from the person or customer e.g. Oranga Tamariki.

Triggers

Triggers can present as internal (a memory, a thought, an emotion, a nightmare), and external (a comment made by someone in person, a phone call, a smell). In the background of a trauma history, this can make the person more vulnerable to intense emotions, and difficulties with expressing their needs. This can present in numerous ways, often in mental health and social support services this can be with anger, feeling defensive, use of drugs and/or alcohol, self-harm to numb emotional pain.

5.2 Risk

Managing our risk is essential for the sustainability of our organisation and the health and safety of our workforce and those we support.

Working with challenging behaviours, trauma and mental health always carries some risk. Good risk management requires skill, experience, and careful judgement applied to a sound base of information and knowledge.

Risks include:

- the risk of progression of illness – risk to health of the individual.
- the risk of deliberately induced harm to self, including suicide.
- the risk of unintentional harm to self, or exploitation.
- the risk of intentional or unintentional violence, or fear-inducing behaviour towards others.

The most common risks we experience are self-harm or suicide attempts and violence/ aggression towards staff. When these occur we follow the risk management plan. If harm is likely we call 111 for police/ ambulance first and once able contact OT contact Centre and Apex Care.

Risk generally comes in two main categories:

Risk to Self:

- Self-harm
- Suicide
- Inadvertent risk (neglect, drugs and alcohol, exhaustion if experiencing mania)

Risk to others:

- Assault to others
- Assault to property
- Others, includes risk to service, reputation

De-escalation and early intervention tips

Early Warning Signs	Indicators	What may help
Early intervention is best, as soon as you notice the Early Warning Signs. These can include, but are not limited to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in body language • Change in tone of voice • Change in eye contact • Pacing/Fidgeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to their concerns • Actively listening without interruption • Reassure that you are there for them and you care

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased/use of swearing/insults/abusive talk • Impatience • Isolating/withdrawing/shutting down 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sitting with the person in silence • Giving some space (and keeping an unobtrusive eye on them and increase to 4x usual distance) • Distraction or redirection • Burn off some energy with an activity. • Call Apex Care for support, available 24/7. Use the threshold of, “If I am wondering if I call Apex Care” to call Apex Care. If the person would prefer not to talk with you, they call or text 1737 for free support 24/7
Late Warning Signs	Indicators	What may help
Not limited to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yelling/Shouting • Use of explicit language • Making provocative statements • Making threats against themselves/you/others • “Squaring up” posture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase your personal space area. When people are running high on adrenaline their personal space area increases, so move away but remain where you can still communicate effectively. • Increase your use of validation skills
Crisis	Indicators	• What may help
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making threats (to the point you feel there is a possibility this will be followed through) • Escalated aggressive behaviour • Destroying property Self-harming (for example, if the person has locked themselves away and there is significant concern for their health) • Behaviour is out of control • Unable to reason 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disengage/distance completely and do not reengage, exit the property. • Call police (and ambulance if indicated) • Follow Apex emergency procedure • Call Crisis team (number is on the back of ID Badge) as an option to talk to tangata whaiora
Self-Harm & Suicide	Indicators	What may help
Please remember what can increase the risk on the first page of this policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-harm and suicide risk support. This can vary between pacing/agitation, through to quiet and withdrawn. Sometimes there are no signs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do your best to stay calm, it is normal to feel anxious on the inside, just try not to show it on the outside. • Validate feelings (discussed below) and listen without judging the person. • Do your best to gently remain with the person, at the same

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking about suicide or dying, expressing regret about being alive or ever having been born • Feeling or appearing to feel trapped or hopeless, and in emotional pain. Experiencing changes in personality, routine, or sleeping patterns. Sometimes people after a period of severe depression suddenly feel better (as they have made a decision to end their life) • Consuming drugs or more alcohol than usual, or starting drinking when they had not previously done so • Getting hold of a weapon, medications, or substances that could cause them harm • Talking about being a burden to others • Getting their affairs in order, arranging what possessions will go to who, getting rid of their belongings. • Writing “goodbye” letters, emails, or texts. Veiled comments on social media sites 	<p>time do not invade their sense of personal space.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discreetly ensure all things that may be harmful are removed e.g. medications, knives, graters. Be aware of other things that might be a risk. E.g. electrical items, glass, clothing. • Call your local mental health crisis assessment team or go with them to the emergency department (ED) at your nearest hospital. • If they are an immediate physical danger to themselves or others, call 111. Remain with them wherever possible and help them to stay safe. It is ok to breach confidentiality in situations like this, and it needs to happen. • People who frequently self-harm often have a specialist care plan in place from CAMHS or Oranga Tamariki. Please make sure this is followed. Consistency is critical to promote the best outcome for the person.
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What is Emotional Validation:

Emotional validation is a simple and effective tool for people who work in mental health services. Communicating when a person is overwhelmed with emotion does not usually work well. Validation from others is one of the best tools to help emotionally sensitive people manage their emotions effectively. Plus it helps role-model skills so that the person is able to learn to self-validate their emotions.

How it is done

Emotional Validation is best remembered in six levels. The goal here is to practice these so they feel natural to you when needed. A simple tool to use, that if you feel in doubt as to what to do in the moment, is validate!

- Level One: Active Listening
- Level Two: Accurate Reflection
- Level Three: Articulate Non-Verbals
- Level Four: Historical Context
- Level Five: Relay the Normal Human Experience
- Level Six: Radical Genuineness

Please remember these are suggestions and **different people have different needs**. Even if the same technique is used on the same person with the same issue, on a different day, the outcome may be different.

Staff Safety

Keeping yourself safe is just as important as keeping the person supported safe. If you find yourself fearing for your safety do not hesitate in removing yourself from the situation and calling emergency services. After an event, office staff will want to make contact with you to see how you are, and arrange for a debriefing session with those involved. Remember EAP is available to support with processing events. Adverse event investigations are used to help understand what happened and put in place strategies to help prevent further events like this in the future. The Clinical Nurse Manager will review the case file and events to formulate a plan moving forward in collaboration with those involved.

5.3 Escalation - Observing changes/ Early Intervention

It is important to observe the behavioural changes to the person you're supporting, you are more likely to be successful in preventing an escalation than in de-escalating a situation. Early intervention can prevent the situation becoming dangerous.

Indicators can be:

- A triggering event e.g. a phone call
- A person clenching their fists or tightening/untightening their jaw
- Sudden change in body language
- A change in voice tone
- Pacing and fidgeting
- A change in eye contact
- Disruptive behaviours

5.4 De-Escalation

De-escalating is an early intervention to managing aggressive behaviours to prevent a crisis.

When confronted with an aggressive situation, you need to identify whether the person you are supporting is showing early warning signs or dangerous warning signs.

Avoid things that can escalate a situation:

- Your tone of voice
- Being too close, holding direct eye contact, standing front-on
- Challenging / threatening a person
- Trying to convince the person to change their beliefs
- Telling the person to "calm down"
- Quoting Statements from others
- Dishonesty, mistrusting behaviours
- **Crossing** professional boundaries.

5.5 Unsafe due to violence

If you feel unsafe or threats are being made, don't react or argue.

You must:

- Remove yourself and retreat to a safe place.
- Phone the Police 111, or yell for someone else to phone 111

- Advise the office when you are able

5.6 Self-Care

An essential part of working safely is self-care. When Selfcare is implemented properly into your lifestyle you can enhance your quality of life as well as others around you. Everyone has different ways of practicing self-care. It is important to us that you feel well.



Mental Health

- Meditate
- Resting your mind
- Time out – Alone time
- Positive self-affirmation
- Create a list of everything you are grateful for

Physical Health

- Sleep or take a nap
- Exercise/ get some fresh air
- Stay hydrated
- Get a massage or have a Spa
- Doing a recreational activity e.g gardening, playing a sport, knitting, etc

Emotional Health

- Listen to music
- Read a book
- Organising a cluttered space
- Prayer
- Go to your happy place

Social Health

- Talk to a loved one
- Go on an adventure
- Try a new hobby
- Be creative
- Positive interactions e.g social media, watching your favourite movie or show