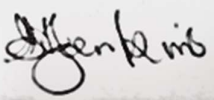


PANDEMIC PLAN

Date approved	27/6/22
Previous titles	N/A
Previous versions	23/3/20

Signature by Management representative	
	Chairperson, Suzanne Jenkins



PANDEMIC PLAN

Internal ECS References

<i>In S:\0 CURRENT POLICY & PROCEDURES:</i>	<i>In S:\1 CURRENT FORMS:</i>
WHS Policy	Incident Report Form
Workforce Policy	
COVID Management Plan	

External References

Child Safe Standards at https://ocq.nsw.gov.au/resources	Aged Care Quality Standards at https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/providers/standards
https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/communicable-diseases	
https://denden.shinyapps.io/MapApp/	

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

ECS is committed to responding appropriately to community health crises to minimise anxiety and ensure appropriate behaviours by, and within, ECS.

1.1 Definitions

ECS workers = anyone who carries out work on behalf of ECS, including staff, volunteers [including management committee members], contractors and students on placement

pandemic = an epidemic of an infectious disease that has spread across a large region, for instance multiple continents or worldwide

1.2 Acronyms

ECS = Engadine Community Services

2. GENERAL POLICY

ECS needs to maintain a broad plan of action in the event of a sudden pandemic, similar to its initial response to the coronavirus outbreak in February 2020 (COVID-19). There is now an ongoing and evolving *COVID Management Plan* at ECS; however, this policy has been updated and maintained to direct ECS workers if/when a quick set of initial actions is required by ECS again.

These are the principles that will guide ECS:

- ECS is always lawful in its operations
- ECS is committed to supporting the health and safety of clients [as above], workers [staff, volunteers, contractors, students per *WHS Policy*] and visitors to ECS
- ECS strives to provide services outlined in funding agreements to eligible and approved clients
- ECS is informed and guided by government funders and health advisors
- ECS operates within given resources, including skills of personnel, workforce availability and capacity, finances to pay for supplies and to reimburse costs
- ECS clients are adults capable of informed decision-making, and ECS is committed to protecting their right to self-determination and dignity of risk
- ECS is concerned for members of the community who experience social isolation
- ECS workers will not experience avoidable financial hardship when executing their duties during the pandemic
- Contract exercise instructors and room hirers will be assisted to follow their own duty of care and will not be charged on days they cancel classes due to genuine risk

3. SPECIFIC ACTIONS

3.1 Coordination and Planning

- ECS will make appropriate use of research, staying up-to-date with public information and funding body instructions [see also Communication]
- In response to government advice, ECS will identified at-risk groups for immediate cancellation and erect signage to remind visitors to avoid the centre if unwell or close contact [15 minutes] with someone diagnosed with the illness

3.2 Communication

- ECS messaging will be calm and aim to reduce anxiety
- Signage in the building will be clear and concise
- Regular e-news to workers will provide updates, as necessary, with useful weblinks
- External newsletters re how to stay healthy, when you should stay home and how ECS can help

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3.3 Protecting Clients and Workers

- As always, ECS workers and clients must not attend if unwell and practise hygiene and social distancing procedures [2 m between people for extended periods]. [note to workers: *Soaps, hand wash and sanitisers should be used regularly. Cough into your elbow and practise social distancing. Workers and volunteers presenting with symptoms need to advise ECS Manager immediately and this information will be shared with other workers.*]
- We will provide supplies for staff and volunteers: sanitiser, but not masks [note to clients: *If you have concerns and wish to wear a mask, you may, but ECS workers are not required to.*]
- New rules for Individual Social Support to include:
 - Only one client at a time should be taken on a shopping trip
 - The client will need to sit in the back of the vehicle
 - Clients presenting with symptoms should not be taken by the volunteer, unless they present a letter of clearance by a medical professional.
- Workers feeling vulnerable or cautious in regards to attending the workplace should work from home for up to 2 weeks, if resources allow and their work can be done that way; discussion is required with ECS Manager regarding duties [see *Workforce Policy*]

4. ENSURING CONTINUITY OF SERVICE

4.1 Phase 1: Safely Operating As Usual

- The ECS centre remains open unless directed by government to close; cleaners are asked to spend additional time on surfaces
- ECS will allow individuals to choose for themselves whether or not to attend the small gatherings held in the ECS meeting room, as they consist of people who would otherwise experience social isolation
- The social buses and Individual Social Support for Aged Services will continue unless we are instructed by our funders to stop; if that happens or volunteers are unavailable, we will shift to a focus on clients with no informal supports and who use no other services and need shopping for food
- As always, clients must not go on outings if they are unwell or symptomatic; ECS will try to make alternate arrangements for people who need groceries and/or someone to talk to

4.2 Phase 2: Partial Shutdown In ECS Operations

- If ECS is required to close the centre to the general public, a sign will be placed on the door
- The office will still operate by phone and email, with at least two workers in office at all times
- ECS will replace workers deemed to be at risk [eg. due to advanced aged or health] and recommend they self-isolate at home
- ECS will cancel Saturday trading
- Management will defer non-essential activities/projects eg. annual planning, staff appraisals, client surveys
- Payroll will proceed as usual, as wages are covered by funding
- ECS will continue Group Social Support, as long as it's safe and allowed, but may trial different types of social support [eg. groups with smaller numbers], which still provides social interaction whilst complying with social distancing
- ECS will continue Individual Social Support, as long as it's safe and allowed, but may change ECS service delivery styles if needed, including: shopping from a list and volunteer delivers shopping to client's front door only; assist client with booking online shopping; credit system for shopping and invoicing to avoid cash
- Staff will regularly phone all Aged Services clients to ask scripted questions to update them on ECS changes, identify current need and offer ongoing assistance
- ECS will provide staff access, with approval by ECS Manager, to increased petty cash [\$500] and debit cards [up to \$2000] for use when shopping for clients and urgent office supplies

4.3 Phase 3: Community Shutdown

- In the event of a total lockdown (as directed by the governing bodies workers), staff will continue to be paid and work from home, where possible
- ECS will make use of teleconferencing or livechat meetings among team members
- ECS will consider allowing volunteers to make friendly phone calls from home [using lists held by ECS Manager and Coordinators]