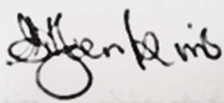


ACTIVITY CONTINUITY POLICY

Date approved	27/6/22
Previous titles	N/A
Previous versions	25/5/20

Signature by Management representative	
	Chairperson, Suzanne Jenkins



ACTIVITY CONTINUITY POLICY

Internal ECS References

In S:\0 CURRENT POLICY & PROCEDURES:

WHS Policy

Workforce Policy

*individual Client Notes in S:\2 current AGED SERVICES
TEAM\CLIENT FILES*

External References

Child Safe Standards at <https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/resources>

Aged Care Quality Standards at

<https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/providers/standards>

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ACTIVITY CONTINUITY POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

ECS is committed to maintaining the supports and services it provides for as long as resources allow.

1.1 Definitions

client = term used across ECS programs and policy documents instead of “consumer”, which is specific to Aged Care
ECS workers = anyone who carries out work on behalf of ECS, including staff, volunteers [including management committee members], contractors and students on placement

1.2 Acronyms

ECS = Engadine Community Services
IT = Information Technology ie. computers
PPE = Personal Protective Equipment eg. masks or gloves
WHS = Work Health & Safety

2. GENERAL POLICY

Engadine Community Services (ECS) is committed to providing appropriate and ongoing services that comply with the requirements of law, specific funding contracts and duty of care. This policy outlines ECS systems and processes in place to identify, manage and respond to risk events in conjunction with *WHS Policy*.

3. WHEN CHANGE IS NECESSARY

3.1 Identifying a 'Risk Event'

For the purposes of this policy, ECS defines a risk event as a serious incident, natural disaster or change in environment or circumstances that poses a threat to its clients and service continuity. This may include one or more of the following, but is not limited to:

- loss of facilities needed for delivery of service [eg. community centre destroyed, unsafe and/or closed, no bus available]
- loss of critical staff which impacts the running of ECS operations [eg. no one available to coordinate client care and/or supervise volunteers]
- loss of volunteers en mass [eg. a disaster or health pandemic prevents many or most of them from working]
- inability to access clients en mass [eg. clients unable to accept service due to fear of, or actual, illness or injury]
- loss of data required to ensure duty of care to clients or volunteers [eg. short term delay in retrieving backup files in the event of an IT problem or unplanned need to change office location]
- unmanaged WHS incident causing significant trauma and instability to service delivery [eg. ECS office/community centre in lockdown due to police action]

3.2 Short Term Actions

ECS is directed in all its operations by the ECS Management Committee, ECS Manager and, of course, emergency services and law enforcement agencies. At any time, these parties may instruct its immediate closure or order ECS to stop specific elements of service delivery. In most cases, this will result in only a time-limited pause and possibly a report or other actions necessary under *ECS WHS Policy*, before ECS activity resumes. However, if a risk event is identified, detailed forward planning is required by the ECS Manager and Coordinators, with Management Committee input and approval.

4. DEVELOPING PLANS

4.1 Tailored Responses

As it is impossible to predict every possible risk event and how they could unfold, organisational plans will be developed in response to those incidents or events. These plans allow for ECS to act flexibly and responsibly to minimise disruption to services and ensure appropriate behaviours, with minimal anxiety.

Therefore, all plans will adhere to a base set of principles:

- ECS is always lawful in its operations
- ECS is committed the *WHS Policy*
- ECS strives to provide services in accord with funding agreements
- ECS is informed and guided by health advisors and government
- ECS operates within available resources
- ECS clients are adults capable of informed decision-making
- ECS is concerned for members of the community who experience social isolation
- ECS workers will not experience avoidable financial hardship when executing their duties
- Contract exercise instructors must also follow their own duty of care
- Room hirers will be supported to follow their own duty of care

In some risk events, individual client support plans may be necessary to clarify what ECS can and will provide.

4.2 Contents of Plans

The organisational plan depends on the extent of knowledge by ECS and their expert advisors [listed above] at the outset regarding the nature, immediate and long term impacts and projected duration of the risk event. However, the following contents should always be considered:

Coordination and planning

- ◆ What information is needed and from whom?
- ◆ Liaison with emergency services or government?
- ◆ Who are the stakeholders, at ECS and external?
- ◆ Which clients are affected?
- ◆ Whole ECS Team or part?
- ◆ How to consult or involve?
- ◆ ECS data sources?
- ◆ Potential partners?
- ◆ Referral pathways?

Communication

- ◆ Media and sources?
- ◆ What ECS messaging is needed?
- ◆ How and with whom?
- ◆ Inform of full situation or just individual service changes?
- ◆ When and how are funders to be advised?
- ◆ Information flowing two ways?
- ◆ PR issues?

Protecting clients and workers

- ◆ Changes to workload, wages or times?
- ◆ More or less people required?
- ◆ Subcontracting arrangements?
- ◆ Altered service models or arrangements?
- ◆ PPE needed?
- ◆ WHS information or education?
- ◆ Choices for individual workers?
- ◆ Client rights and empowerment?
- ◆ Trauma recovery needed?

Ensuring continuity of service

- ◆ Potential scale-down phases
- ◆ Maintaining duty of care, welfare checks
- ◆ Resources needed for partial operations, incl IT
- ◆ Contract issues

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- ◆ Legal issues
- ◆ WHS issues
- ◆ Defer non-essential activities/projects
- ◆ Relocation of service delivery venue or office
- ◆ Transitioning-out of service provision
- ◆ Transferring services to another service provider

ECS always acts to ensure that the standard and delivery of services do not suffer during the execution of a plan, and seeks continuous improvement in its systems and operations. If the ECS Team later develops and delivers better responses than those described initially in the plan, it is therefore not necessary to re-write the plan; instead, the details should be documented in any reports during/of that period to the ECS Management Committee and funders.

5. DOCUMENTATION

5.1 Reporting

Some ECS workers routinely document their activities and observations in individual Client Notes on the shared drive; the latter provide updates on client welfare that are communicated between several part-time workers who may engage with an individual during any given week. It is particularly vital that these documents are kept current throughout a risk event, and specific processes are developed for workers who need to input or access information when working remotely.

Any important information necessary to assist in a public emergency and detail ECS changes will be provided in newsletters and correspondence to both clients and volunteers, which then form part of the monthly reports to ECS Management Committee by the ECS Manager and Coordinators. Wherever possible, the ECS Manager will report more often by phone, text or email to ensure the committee are well-informed and consulted appropriately during a risk event. This will be reported to government funders and quality assessors, as appropriate; indeed, the ECS Manager will actively engage with, and refer to, any relevant funder guides or checklists produced during a risk event.

5.2 Risk Assessment & Management

ECS will make every effort to recommence its usual delivery of services as soon as possible. Wherever there is a WHS risk, a task analysis will be conducted first to assess and eliminate or manage any ongoing risks.

If ECS is unable to resume safely, they will notify the relevant funder as soon as possible to discuss contract changes and/or a proposal to transfer all or part of their services. All negotiations with the Department/s, including a suitable transition date with the replacement organisation/s will occur in writing and ECS will assist the funder/s and new service provider/s in the transition of goods and/or services to achieve an effective transition and client care continuum.