



Wellness Counselling Centre | Domestic Violence Policy and Procedure

1. Purpose and Scope

The Wellness Counselling Centre is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for clients experiencing domestic violence. We recognise the importance of addressing domestic violence effectively, ensuring the safety of both adult clients and any children involved. Additionally, we acknowledge our legal and ethical responsibilities concerning child protection laws, including the duty to report any suspicion or evidence of children at risk of harm.

2. Definitions

Domestic Violence: Any pattern of behaviours that one person uses to gain power and control over another person in an intimate relationship. This includes physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, and financial abuse.

Child at Risk: Any child who is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm because of abuse, neglect, or family violence.

3. Procedures

3.1. Assessment and Support for Clients Experiencing Domestic Violence:

Initial Assessment: Counsellors will conduct thorough assessments to identify clients experiencing domestic violence. This includes evaluating the safety of the client and any children involved.

Safety Planning: Counsellors will collaborate with clients to develop safety plans tailored to their circumstances. These plans may include emergency contacts, safe accommodation options, and access to support services.

Referral: Counsellors will provide clients with information about relevant support services, including domestic violence helplines, shelters, legal assistance, and community resources.

3.2. Reporting Obligations for Children at Risk:

Legal Obligation: Counsellors have a legal obligation under Australian child protection laws to report any suspicion or evidence of children at risk of harm due to domestic violence or other forms of abuse or neglect.

Mandatory Reporting: If a counsellor suspects or has reasonable grounds to believe that a child is at risk of significant harm, they must make a mandatory report to the relevant child protection authority in their state or territory.

Documentation: Counsellors must accurately document any concerns or disclosures regarding children at risk, including dates, times, and details of the disclosure or observation.



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Confidentiality: While confidentiality is essential in counselling, counsellors must prioritise the safety and well-being of children at risk over client confidentiality. Counsellors will inform clients of their reporting obligations and the limitations of confidentiality during the initial session.

4. Compliance and Review

The Wellness Counselling Centre will regularly train counsellors on domestic violence awareness, child protection laws, and reporting obligations.

Audit and Review: The policy and procedures will be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations. Any updates or changes to legislation will be promptly incorporated into the policy and communicated to all staff members.

5. Confidentiality and Privacy

The Wellness Counselling Centre is committed to maintaining the confidentiality and privacy of all clients. Information shared during counselling sessions will be kept confidential, except in cases where reporting obligations for child protection laws apply. Counsellors will inform clients of the limits of confidentiality and the circumstances under which information may be disclosed without consent.

6. Resources and Support

The Wellness Counselling Centre will provide ongoing support to counsellors dealing with clients experiencing domestic violence and children at risk. This includes access to supervision, debriefing sessions, and additional training on trauma-informed care and working with vulnerable populations.

7. Approval and Implementation

The management of the Wellness Counselling Centre has approved this policy and procedure, and it will be implemented immediately. All staff members are responsible for familiarising themselves with the contents of this document and adhering to its guidelines in their practice.