

APPENDIX 5 WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PROJECT BROCHURE

Definition of Workplace Violence.

Workplace violence is any situation or incident where a staff member is abused, threatened or assaulted in situations or circumstances relating to their work (adapted from WorkCover definition 1998). This definition was constructed to address the issue of workplace violence enacted by clients against workers practising in the community.

A community model for preventing workplace violence has been developed by the Royal District Nursing Service (RDNS) Research Unit in SA. A participatory action research (PAR) group was established to work on this project. The group, consisting of 9 RDNS staff and 2 convenors, collected and collated stories of community workplace violence from colleagues. The model consists of nine awareness and action steps for staff to consider (see diagram). The three main aims of the model are to Prevent, to Report and to Support.

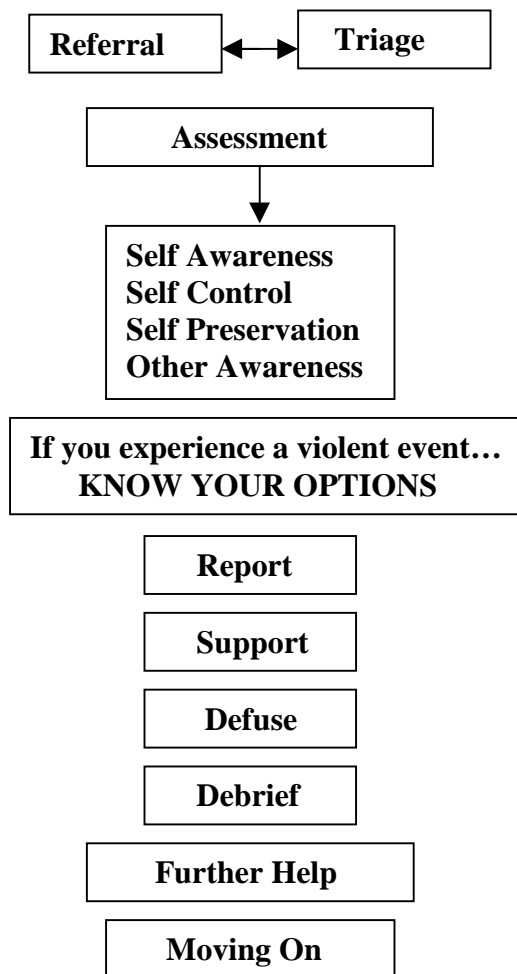
Prevent

The prevention strategies process begin at the **referral** and **triage** stage. Here we seek to identify potentially violent situations. Pertinent questions are asked of the referrer and other participating agencies, e.g.

Is there a safety hazard, history of violence or challenging behaviour that you know about that can pose a threat to the safety of RDNS staff?

Clients are **assessed** on the initial and every other visit. Information from **referral** and **triage** is also used to identify the potential for violence. On each visit, observe not only the physical environment but trust your own judgement. Using your intuition, **self awareness, other awareness and self control, promotes self preservation.**

A BEST PRACTICE MODEL FOR VIOLENCE PREVENTION IN COMMUNITY WORK



It is important to know what **options** are available to you. If you find yourself confronted with a violent or potentially violent situation, the RDNS preferred **option** is to leave in a calm, controlled manner. Negotiating with the client is also an **option**, which can be successful.

Report

If you experience a violent event, even if it is verbal abuse, it is imperative to **report** it as soon as possible to your supervisor. Your supervisor will assist you to complete the required RDNS documentation, using the RDNS Injury Management Package. Seek immediate **support** from your Harassment Contact Person. This is one of the most important elements in the model.

The completed forms must be returned to your supervisor as soon as possible. Your supervisor will investigate the incident with the Harassment Officer and the ESR Representative in your region. The Harassment Contact Persons are available for informal discussions and to help with any problems you may have:

Northern Region RDNS: Graham Dunn

Telephone:(08) 8397 7621

Central Region RDNS: Angela Rutland

Telephone:(08) 8229 2119

Southern Region RDNS: Jenny Taylor

Telephone:(08) 8422 6071

Business Centre RDNS: Maree Rogers

Telephone:(08) 8206 0012

Please feel free to talk with them. This model supports the 360° reporting, action and evaluation cycle.

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Support

Following an incident, immediate **support** is available from the Harassment Contact Person in your region. Informal **support** can also come from your peers. More formalised support is available from a team of staff who will help you through the **defusing** process.

Debriefing is done later to assess the outcomes and help set future preventative strategies. **Further help** is available through the Employee Assistance Program, facilitating **moving on**.

Information Package.

An information package is available to help individuals as well as organisations to implement safer work practices. The package is designed to be used as an information tool, and incorporates skills and strategies to prevent violence. It details action strategies for coping with threatened and actual violence and uses actual incidents to show how these work. Copies of the information pack and video are available for your use in the resource section in each RDNS region. The RDNS library also has copies. Contact your Harassment Contact Person or PAR Group member for more information.

Participatory Action Research (PAR)

The Participatory Action Research group members are RDNS staff: Nona Dimmock, Graham Dunn, Maddi Crickmar and Di Mills (Northern RDNS Region), Elaine Tooke and Andy Kelly (Central RDNS Region) and Jenny Taylor, Fiona Smith and Jackie Rollins (Southern RDNS Region). Professor Tina Koch and Sally Hudson facilitated the PAR group.

SOME SAFE WORK PRACTICES.

- Always keep your phone and keys with you.
- Have emergency numbers entered into the direct dial facility of your mobile phone.
- If allocated a duress alarm, carry it with you at all times.
- Be aware of exits.
- Check client records for hazard alerts.
- Be aware of specific needs e.g. Access side door.
- Be prepared. Know what the visit will entail.
- Audit your surroundings.
- Keep doors unlocked while you are in the house.
- Know your rights and be able to assert them when necessary.
- If someone is hanging around your car or workplace, stay away and summon help.
- Trust your intuition.
- Know your options.
- When you feel unsafe, LEAVE.
- Seek backup and advice.
- Report any untoward happenings.

Project Management Team

The Project Management Team are Professor Tina Koch, Pam Wilkinson (ANF), Hennie McAllister (Helping Hand), Michael Kelly (DAIS), Leith Pontifex/Mike Williams (RDNS ESR) and Sally Hudson (RDNS Research Associate).



PREVENTING WORKPLACE

VIOLENCE IN COMMUNITY

SETTINGS:

A NEW MODEL FOR RDNS

Royal District Nursing Service (SA Inc)
31 Flemington Street
Glenside SA 5065
Telephone: (08) 8206 0000
Facsimile: (08) 8206 0011

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