

Training Relating to Adults at Risk

 Right people, right role, right knowledge

STANDARD 7

ONGOING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Criteria 7.3

Personnel are supported to recognise the factors that contribute to adult abuse, with a focus on adults at risk.

Indicators

- 7.3.1 Education and training programs include materials addressing factors that may place adults at risk of abuse, building knowledge to:
- understand the nature and impact of adult abuse;
 - understand the nature, factors, and impact of institutional abuse;
 - identify risk factors, such as abuse of power, and exploitation;
 - recognise how adults and institutions can be groomed, including how power imbalances can be exploited; and
 - understand what could make specific adults at increased risk of abuse.

One of the most valuable tools in strong and successful safeguarding systems are the people. Policies and procedures are only effective if the personnel implementing them are trained, knowledgeable and committed to safeguarding. Standard 7, and particularly criterion 7.3 requires that relevant personnel to be trained on recognising the nature and indicators of abuse of adults, risk factors that contribute to abuse and individual circumstances that increase vulnerability.

What are the benefits of training personnel working with adults at risk?

- Upskilling personnel increases their capacity, knowledge and confidence to safely engage with service users.
- Reduces the risk of stress and burn out for personnel.
- Reduces need for engaging casual or unfamiliar staff in service delivery.
- Increases confidence to identify and report issues of concern.
- Keeps the organisation and personnel accountable for their actions.
- Assists in embedding a culture where safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone.

Education and training must be regular, ongoing and maintain relevance. Equipping personnel with the skills to identify risk and signs of abuse is vital in creating safe environments. Training must be focused on adult abuse and specifically adults at risk.

What should safeguarding adults at risk training include?

Effective education and training programs should include:

- The nature and impact of adult abuse
 - E.g. forms of abuse, short and long-term impacts of abuse, statistics, definitions.
- The nature, factors and impact of institutional abuse
 - E.g. indicators of institutional abuse, risk factors that increase the opportunity for abuse in institutions, impact on victims, families, personnel and organisations.
- Risk factors associated with abuse
 - E.g. power imbalances, exploitation, special care relationships, the use of grooming.
- Factors that increase the risk of abuse for certain individuals
 - E.g. health, financial, relational, age, disability, substance abuse, cultural background, trauma, isolation, previous abuse.

Further considerations

Entities should also consider the following:

- Training should be included in inductions and regularly delivered to personnel as well as refreshers to ensure the content remains relevant and in focus.
- Training can be delivered in a variety of formats to increase access and availability including delivery from an educator face-to-face or online, self-paced online modules or combinations.
- All education and training material and attendance should be documented and stored to assist organisations for internal and external audits.
- Sessions should be evaluated by participants and trainers for review so content or delivery can be amended as required.
- Impacts of training should be measured where possible to ensure effectiveness

Resources

Entities may seek external training programs where appropriate for their needs.

- <https://www.ccinsurance.org.au/Risksupport/learning-manager/Pages/Protecting-Children-Vulnerable-Adults-Course.aspx>
- <https://opan.org.au/education/education-for-professionals/>

Resources which may assist in developing training for adults at risk include:

- <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/abuse-of-older-people>
- <https://aifs.gov.au/research/research-reports/elder-abuse-understanding-issues-frameworks-and-responses>
- <https://www.afdo.org.au/about-australians-with-disability/abuse-of-people-with-disability/>