
RED HEN SPEECH PATHOLOGY HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

Red Hen Speech Pathology endeavours to provide a safe environment for clients, family members/representatives, carers and staff. In particular, it is recognised that clients need to be offered services in a safe environment and staff must be protected from injury wherever possible.

Scope

This policy applies to the Director and all employees of Red Hen Speech Pathology.

Policy Statement

Red Hen Speech Pathology recognises that the overall responsibility to provide a safe workplace rests with management, who will be accountable for the implementation of this policy. These responsibilities include –

- ensuring that all health and safety policies and procedures are implemented;
- establishing measurable objectives and targets to ensure continued improvement aimed at the elimination of work-related injuries and illnesses; and
- providing adequate resources to meet these health and safety commitments.

Red Hen Speech Pathology staff also have responsibilities, which include –

- following all health and safety policies and procedures; and
- recognising and reporting hazards which may affect the health and safety of themselves, others, or the environment.

Procedures

Safety during home visits

- At time of referral, ascertain if any risks are likely to be present at time of visits such as dogs and if there are specific conditions related to parking or access.
- Prior to the initial appointment, the therapist is to obtain and read any relevant Behaviour Support Guidelines related to the individual.
- On arrival at the client service location for the first time, a risk assessment is conducted and the *Home Visiting Risk Assessment form in Cliniko* is completed. This covers both the physical and psychological environment and the participant's clinical risks. Any hazards (e.g. risk of participant falls, adequate space for services to be provided, abusive environment, dog present, smoking) are noted on the assessment form and minimisation strategies are developed. If necessary, these strategies will be discussed with the client, guardian, Support Coordinator or funding body.
- Red Hen Speech Pathology staff will NOT continue working in a situation where they feel threatened or uncomfortable.

- Upon arrival at the client's community location, if there is in any doubt or concern as to safety (prior to entering the premise) the staff member shall call the client/representative and advise that the appointment has been cancelled. An Incident and Accident Report form should then be completed.
- If a situation arises that impacts on the safety or well-being of the staff member during an appointment in a community location, staff will not hesitate to leave even if it appears impolite. Staff will advise that the appointment must be discontinued and may be rescheduled in consultation with the Director, and will remove themselves from the situation. An Incident and Accident Report form should then be completed.
- If at any time during a community visit staff are concerned about their safety and are unable to leave, they should call 000. After the visit staff will complete an Incident and Accident Report form and discuss with the Director.
- The Director of Red Hen Speech Pathology will contact the client/their representative within 24 hours to discuss their community / home situation and any strategies that could be put in place to allow the visit to be rescheduled.
- If there are still concerns, Red Hen Speech Pathology may contact the funding body or Support Coordinator to explore options to ensure a safe work environment to enable continuation of services.
- If there is not agreement regarding implementation of strategies to ensure a safe work environment, provision of services to the client may be discontinued at the discretion of the Director.

Private Vehicle Usage

The driver must hold a current Western Australian motor vehicle driver's licence, or an equivalent licence issued in another Australian jurisdiction, of the correct class for the vehicle being driven.

Private motor vehicles that are used for work related travel must be properly serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's specified service schedule.

Private motor vehicles that are used for work related travel must be maintained in a roadworthy condition and maintain current registration in Western Australia.

Drivers must not drive a private motor vehicle for work related travel if their blood alcohol level is above the legal 0.05 limit (or 0.02 for probationary drivers). Further, drivers must not drive a motor vehicle under the influence of illegal drugs or prescribed medication that cautions against driving.

Private motor vehicles that are used for work related travel must be regularly inspected to ensure that:

- All external lights are clean and working correctly;
- All windows and mirrors are clean;
- The windscreen wipers are working correctly;
- Mirrors are correctly oriented;
- All fluid levels and tyre pressures are checked and maintained; and
- They are equipped with first aid kits.

The driver of the private vehicle is responsible for paying all traffic and parking fines incurred in the course of work related travel.

In the event of an accident, staff must report the accident to the line manager and complete an Incident and Accident Report Form.

Mobile Phone use Whilst Driving

- Mobile phone use whilst driving may cause distraction and is illegal.
- IF necessary to use a phone whilst travelling, a compliant hands-free connection must be used.

First Aid

Safe Work Australia's Code of Practice states "a person conducting a business or undertaking has the primary duty under the Workplace Health and Safety Act to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that workers and other persons (e.g. clients) are not exposed to health and safety risks arising from the business or undertaking".

- Red Hen Speech Pathology staff will seek to hold a current First Aid Certificate.
- Red Hen Speech Pathology will provide first aid supplies for minor injuries which may occur in the workplace. These will be kept in the vehicle of any mobile staff member. Kit contents will be checked 6 monthly and updated.
- In general, only the most minor of assistance can be offered to clients by Red Hen Speech Pathology staff with their consent or the consent of their guardian/representative. If the condition or injury is serious or if there is any doubt about the person's condition, further medical assistance should be sought. This may involve calling Health Direct for advice or an ambulance.
- If a Red Hen Speech Pathology staff member sustains an injury at work, they should seek medical attention as soon as possible and complete an Incident and Accident Report within 24 hours.

Transport of Equipment

- Red Hen Speech Pathology staff shall abide by correct lifting and carrying techniques when transporting equipment in and out of cars.
- Transporting of equipment is to be limited by utilising resources at the home of the client whenever possible.
- All equipment should be secured in the back of the car.
- No equipment should be transported on the back seat unless secured.

Transport of Clients

- Red Hen Speech Pathology staff will NOT transport clients in their vehicles at any time.

Emergency Management

An 'emergency' could include a natural disaster or a situation where it is unsafe to provide services including: fire, flood, extreme heat events, thunder / dust storms, very high winds, major transport disruption, power outage which may be localised or widespread.

- In general, Red Hen Speech Pathology management will determine the actions to be taken during / following an emergency based on a risk assessment using available information. This includes information from emergency services and power companies but also information regarding the location and accessibility of staff and clients in relation to the emergency situation.
- If the health or safety of either staff or clients could be compromised by service delivery, the service will be cancelled and the staff and clients will be informed.
- In addition, Red Hen Speech Pathology staff are responsible for assessing their local situation and are not to place themselves or their clients at risk. If a service needs to be cancelled, they are to contact the Director and describe the situation. The client will then be informed as above.

Safety of Therapeutic Equipment

- Any therapeutic equipment (eg toys, assessments) used will be regularly inspected and tested to ensure it is safe for use. It will be repaired / replaced as necessary.

Protecting Participant's Property

- All due care will be taken with participant property to minimise risk of damage.

Safe Food Handling

- Food is a necessary component in the assessment and intervention for dysphagia and mealtime management issues.
- Before commencing any food trials, the therapist will confirm if the client has any food allergies and these will be recorded on the client management system.
- Wherever possible, the client/family/client representative is to provide food required for use in assessment or intervention.
- If the Speech Pathologist needs to provide food for use in assessment or intervention, it will be pre-packaged food or fresh produce only (ie. no food cooked by the Speech Pathologist at their place of residence).
- The Speech Pathologist will assist with food preparation if required to ensure it meets the requirements for assessment/intervention according to IDDSI guidelines and with appropriate infection control measures in place.
- Hands will be washed with soap under running water and dried thoroughly prior to preparation or presentation of any food/drink.
- Hair, clothes, jewellery or personal items will not touch food or food preparation surfaces.
- Gloves will be worn if there is a need to touch ready-to-eat food directly.

Infection Control

- Staff of Red Hen Speech Pathology will maintain up-to-date immunisation status and provide a copy of their immunisation status report upon request.
- Staff of Red Hen Speech Pathology will have an annual flu vaccination (unless medical advice to the contrary is received).

- Staff of Red Hen Speech Pathology will be vaccinated against COVID-19 (or other illnesses as directed) in accordance with relevant state and health directives.
- Red Hen Speech Pathology will adhere to all guidelines and recommendations issued by the WA Dept of Health, Federal Health authorities or Speech Pathology Australia to minimise risk of infection to staff or clients.
- Red Hen Speech Pathology staff will wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including gloves, face masks and face shields in accordance with practice guidelines issued by the WA Dept of Health, Federal Health authorities or Speech Pathology Australia to minimise risk of infection to staff or clients.
- Red Hen Speech Pathology staff will disinfect regularly touched surfaces and all assessment/intervention resources in accordance with guidelines.
- Red Hen Speech Pathology staff will utilise hand sanitiser before and after every appointment, and after any contact with their face or with clients.
- All clients of Red Hen Speech Pathology will be encouraged to use hand sanitiser at the commencement and end of each appointment.

Red Hen Speech Pathology will ensure that guidelines which impact on service delivery will be communicated to all clients in a timely and accessible manner.

Related legislation, regulations and standards

[Safe Food Australia - A guide to the Food Safety Standards \(foodstandards.gov.au\)](https://www.foodstandards.gov.au)

[Road Safety Commission - Using A Phone Whilst Driving Rules & Penalties | Road Safety Commission WA \(rsc.wa.gov.au\)](https://www.rsc.wa.gov.au)

[Road Safety Commission - Drink and drug driving \(rsc.wa.gov.au\)](https://www.rsc.wa.gov.au)

[Western Australian Legislation - Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984](#)

[Western Australian Legislation - Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996](#)

[Infection Control and Health Alerts \(speechpathologyaustralia.org.au\)](https://www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au)

Approvals

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