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Participant Identification Policy

Introduction

Training programs should establish and ensure appropriate systems are in place to confirm the correct identification of program participants by program team members. Correct identification in turn promotes the correct handling of confidential participant information which increases participant safety and receipt of intended support or training.

Objectives

Correctly identify all program participants at each appropriate encounter to ensure correct care and training is provided and safety precautions can be implemented.

Policy Statement

Correct program participant identification is fundamental for participant safety and the maintenance of participant confidentiality. The consequence of misidentification can range from minor to life threatening consequences. Where possible, our program participants are identified at each encounter by our program team members using three appropriate participant identifiers. All program team members are trained in how to correctly identify a participant using the identifiers. Correct identification of participants reduces the risk and consequences of misidentification and improves the quality of participant support and their safety.

Kentish Regional Clinic Inc. (KRC) develops, implements and regularly reviews the effectiveness of our participant identification system including the associated policies, procedures and/or protocols that:

- Define appropriate participant identifiers
- Require at least three appropriate participant identifiers on registration or encounters
- Require at least three appropriate participant identifiers when care, support or other services are provided at a personal level

KRC's organisation wide participant identification system is regularly monitored to ensure consistency and safety across all areas.

KRC has appropriate participant identifiers that allows program team members to confirm the identification of each participant either on the telephone, via electronic communication or in person, and where appropriate, prior to any program services commencing. At each participant interaction, each program team member shall ensure that they are speaking to or providing support to the right participant by asking questions to identify the participant in an appropriate manner.

KRC's initial three participant identifiers, where appropriate, are as follows:

- Name
- Date of Birth
- Participant Address

Where the above listed identifiers are deemed not appropriate or are not reasonably safe to obtain, alternative identifiers can be used, these are, but not limited to:

- Unique Participant Identification Number
- Suburb/Postcode
- Telephone Number
- Emergency Contact Details
- Series of Security Questions
- Email address

All KRC's program team members follow the necessary policies, procedures and/or protocols to ensure KRC has identifiers for each participant at relevant interactions, such as discussing past participant experiences or personal information. KRC reports any incidents of participant mismatching events through the incident register allowing for the systematic review of all reported incidents.

Our program coordinators regularly conduct observations to review the utilisation of our participant identification processes.

KRC ensures program team members are orientated and trained regularly in our participant identification process and how to ask appropriately for the information at relevant times. KRC also communicates this requirement to program participants through promotional material within the program outlining our responsibility to participant safety.

To greatly reduce the likelihood of mismatching occurring, program team members must review participant details, where appropriate, prior to:

- a program occurring (where appropriate)
- discussing personal information

- discussing past participant experiences either within the program or experiences that team members have been made privy to through the delivery of the program
- before giving **any** participant specific information over the telephone or electronically such as via email.

It is imperative that participant identification is taken seriously, especially when communicating in other forms that are not face to face, as there is no way to ensure who is at the other end of the communication. Even confirmation that a participant has used a program service can be detrimental information if given to the wrong person, so it is vital that **no information** about a participant is given over telephone/electronic means until participant identifiers have been confirmed.

If a program team member encounters a unique situation where they deem it necessary or appropriate to give out information, they must first meet with their supervisor or program manager who will consider the risks of the situation and determine the best course of action on a case by case basis. If the program manager determines it necessary to pass over information, participant identification must be determined in some form; depending on the information already known about that participant. In our program, we use a combination of asking carefully worded open-ended questions about past discussions and check postcodes and email addresses.