

WATER SAFETY ACTIVITY GUIDE

FOR STAFF AND CONTRACTORS

WE
LIFE WITHOUT BARRIERS
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1. **Be familiar** with the needs and capability of all clients
2. **Complete** a SAFE pre activity risk assessment for each activity/location before you commence the activity (review previous assessment if location remains the same)
3. **Seek advice** from a medical practitioner for clients with Epilepsy and Diabetes management plans or Polydipsia, Medical Conditions or Impairment that could impact their ability e.g. intellectual, physical, respiratory, and cardiovascular, autonomic nervous system etc.
4. If there are **foreseeable risks** put strategies in place to manage these risks
5. **Ensure** there is mobile phone or other telephone reception at the location of a water activity
6. **Document** the pre-activity SAFE assessment
7. Provide **appropriate supervision** at all times around water.

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STOP AND THINK

- ▶ Don't rush in and get carried away, plan
- ▶ Ask:
 - ▶ Do I have all of the information for the water activity to be completed safely?
 - ▶ Is the water activity able to be completed safely for the client and staff member/carer?
 - ▶ Do I have the resources for the task to be completed safely?

Are you familiar with the needs of the client including level of water competency, current alerts, medical issues or impairments, manual handling plans, any personal care requirements?

Are you familiar with the location and environment where the water activity will be undertaken?

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ASSESS AND IDENTIFY HAZARDS/RISKS

- ▶ Assess the location/environment and find/identify any risks
- ▶ Check to see what else is happening in the area and surroundings
- ▶ Understand the limits and skills of clients and yourself if you are directly supporting the water activity
- ▶ Identify what is the chance the risks could affect you, the client, or others
- ▶ Identify what would be the consequences if the risk isn't eliminated or managed

What are the potential risks?

- Crocodiles, rips, no lifeguard
- Staff, contractor or carer has no confidence in the water
- Client has inflated view of their water competency
- Seizures or other consequence related to a medical condition
- Client engaging in water activity with friends and without direct support
- Backyard pool has no compliance certificate

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FIX THE HAZARDS WITH EFFECTIVE CONTROLS AND ADVISE OTHERS

- ▶ Eliminate the risks/hazards
- ▶ Control the risks/hazards
- ▶ Minimise the consequences

How could you eliminate the risk?

- Not proceed with the water activity
- Go to a location where a life guard is on duty
- Increase water competency before commencing activity
- Have a swimming companion/spotter

How could you control the risk?

- Use of safety equipment e.g. life jacket
- Only enter water to waist height
- Staff/carers develop their level of water competency e.g. water safety qualification
- Clients develop their level of water competency e.g. water safety qualification, swimming lessons

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ENGAGE YOUR CO-WORKERS, CLIENTS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

Explain any new rules/expectations and advise why the changes are important for the safety and wellbeing of the client and those supporting them

Ensure there is understanding and awareness of:

- the type of water activity being undertaken
- roles and responsibilities during the activity
- expectations/rules
- any risks/hazards to be managed

SAFE IN PRACTICE FOR CLIENT ACTIVITIES

STOP ASSESS FIX ENGAGE		YES	NO
STOP	Have I read and confirmed that I understand the Client Activities Risk Assessment for this activity? (if you did not complete the assessment)		
	Am I familiar with the needs of all clients including any level of water competency, current alerts, medical issues (including seizure activity responses), manual handling plans and personal care requirements?		
	Have I inspected the activity location?		
ASSESS	Are the controls established in the Client Activities Risk Assessment still relevant and in place?		
	Is the environment safe for clients? e.g. Life guard on duty, mobile reception		
	Does the public venue expose clients to large numbers of people, noisy locations and contact with public that would create potential escalations or extra hazards?		
	There are no other hazards that I can identify in the area?		
FIX	 If you answer 'No' to any question STOP and review the Risk Assessment and for staff discuss with your supervisor		
ENGAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Discuss the identified risk(s) with client(s) & any other adults/workers in the activity area ▶ Explain the safety controls that have been implemented ▶ If required discuss with other stakeholders in the activity area the identified risk(s) e.g. life guard ▶ Discuss any identified risk(s) and controls post event with your supervisor and the team of support workers providing care 		

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

All staff, contractors, carers and other volunteers share the responsibility to support clients to engage in water based activities in accordance with the following guiding principles:

1. It is our responsibility to provide and support clients with safe and appropriate water activities of their choice and to support goals of water competency and safety awareness
2. Sun Smart strategies are used at all times (Sun smart – Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek, Slide).
3. Children must always be actively supervised and clients should always swim with another person – never swim alone.
4. Before entering the water a risk assessment must be conducted to consider any foreseeable risks - Risk considerations MUST include - water competency of clients and their physical, psychological and emotional functioning and any known medical condition or impairment AND the appropriate level of support and supervision MUST be provided along with other control measures.
5. The preferred location for water activities is public swimming facilities with professional life guards are on duty.
6. ALL water activities we support clients to undertake and equipment used must adhere to all legislative safety standards or requirements (including compliance certificates for pools located in private residences).
7. We encourage clients to be aware and understand potential hazards and risks through education and learning opportunities such as swimming lessons, surf safety education, or water safety qualifications.
8. Access to therapeutic support by a professional with water safety qualifications must be considered in accordance with the individual funding arrangement of clients.
9. Some medical conditions or impairments may impact on the capability of a client to safely engage in water activities e.g. intellectual, physical, respiratory, cardiovascular, autonomic nervous system (such as PEG, epilepsy, seizure activity, diabetes and polydipsia).