



Staff Handbook

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SECTION 1

WELCOME AND INFORMATION ABOUT THE STAFF HANDBOOK

Staff Handbook

A WARM WELCOME TO YOU

Welcome as a staff member to Tallangatta Health Service. Our Service is an organisation that is client focussed. This means cooperating, working together, assisting and supporting one another in a concerted effort to achieve organisational goals. As a member of staff I am sure that you will make a vital contribution to the success of our organisation.

As a member of our team your efforts and work will help to achieve the Tallangatta Health Services mission which is, "... pursuing excellence in health care and aged care services and imparting knowledge and skills to the community to adopt a lifestyle that enables optimum health and wellbeing".

The Staff Handbook is designed to help you succeed in your "job" as a Tallangatta Health Service employee. We hope this information is helpful in assisting you to understand and become familiar with the organisation.

The Handbook will help and assist you to settle in and feel positive and comfortable with the commitment you have made in becoming a staff member of our organisation. It will also provide you with a clear understanding of the expectations that Tallangatta Health Service has of its employees and the commitment that the Service has in ensuring that appropriate training, information, support and recognition is proved to its staff.

As a team member you can expect that the environment that you work in will be supportive, encouraging and one that recognises and appreciates your own uniqueness. This is a reciprocal arrangement between everyone who works for the Service, whether as paid staff or in a voluntary capacity. It is an environment that recognises that all members of the team have mutual obligations in supporting and encouraging one another in the fulfilment of their respective roles, as well as facilitating each others personal growth and development and furthering the aims of the organisation.

The Handbook will provide a useful resource in helping you to understand the aims and objectives as well as the policies and practices of the organisation. This will ensure that your experience as an employee with Tallangatta Health Service is both rewarding and satisfying.

If you have any further questions regarding your work at Tallangatta Health Service, please do not hesitate to discuss these with your Supervisor or one of the members of the Management Team.

Yours Sincerely


Wes Carter
Chief Executive



Staff Handbook

The handbook has been divided into a number of sections that you can refer to. These sections are:

SECTION 2: OVERVIEW OF TALLANGATTA HEALTH SERVICE

This Section of the Handbook explains the history, background and development of Tallangatta Health Service (THS). The emphasis of this section is on the way in which THS operates today and how organisational development is based on the THS's Values and Mission Statement.

SECTION 3: THE INDUCTION PROCESS

This Section of the Handbook explains the induction and orientation process for new staff members. The section outlines what you can expect as an employee in the early days of your involvement with the THS.

SECTION 4: GUIDELINES AND POLICIES FOR STAFF

This Section of the Handbook provides a detailed description of the guidelines and policies, which have been developed to enable you to feel comfortable in working for Tallangatta Health Service.

SECTION 5: THE WORK ENVIRONMENT

This Section of the Handbook provides details of the rules that staff are expected to follow whilst an employee of THS.

SECTION 6: STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

This Section of the Handbook identifies the responsibilities that all staff are expected to follow as an employee of Tallangatta Health Service.

SECTION 7: FACILITIES AND SERVICES

This Section of the Handbook provides information about the facilities of THS and basic information and procedures about using these facilities and equipment.

SECTION 8: EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

This section of the Handbook provides information for employee reference.

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SECTION 9: SERVICE'S PERSONNEL PRACTICE

This Section of the Handbook provides the policy that guides the relationship between THS and its staff and a range of basic personnel items.

SECTION 10: OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY AND PROGRAM PROCEDURES

This Section explains essential occupational health and safety issues.

SECTION 11: ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES

This Section of the Handbook briefly explains and provides an introduction to the THS administrative practices.

SECTION 12: LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS AND SALARY

This Section on the Handbook provides details about annual and other types of leave and details about overtime and salary payments.

SECTION 13: USING THE SERVICE'S MOTOR VEHICLES

This Section of the Handbook provides policies on the use of motor vehicles, driving licence requirements and essential information on how to make vehicle bookings.

SECTION 2

OVERVIEW OF TALLANGATTA HEALTH SERVICE

- **MISSION STATEMENT**
- **ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE**
- **RANGE OF SERVICES PROVIDED**

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TALLANGATTA HEALTH SERVICE

Address: PO Box 77
25 Barree Street
Tallangatta. VIC. 3700

Phone: 02 60715200

Fax: 02 60712795

E-Mail: admin@ths.vic.gov.au

Administration Hours: 8.00am-5.00pm Monday-Friday

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OUR HISTORY

The original Tallangatta Hospital was established as a Cottage Hospital in 1914, in what is now called Old Tallangatta. A new wing was added to the Hospital in 1937 to accommodate the increasing number of patients and to improve the facilities for urgently required services.

The township was shifted in the mid 1950's, to allow for the enlargement of Lake Hume, and with it came the construction of the present day 30 bed Hospital complex. The Hospital was officially opened on 26th March 1958, and provided general medical, surgical, midwifery and paediatric beds for the town and surrounding Shires.

Due to the downturn in persons requiring the Hospital's obstetric services, these were withdrawn, with all deliveries and post natal care now being carried out in Albury/Wodonga.

In 1987 the Tallangatta and District Extended Care Centre Inc. was established to construct a 30 bed aged persons hostel for the district. The committee engaged architects Australian Construction Services to design and construct the proposed hostel.

A brief was prepared for the hostel in September 1987. It was agreed that the hostel should adopt the principle of providing a "home-like" environment where residents could live in a familiar setting. The design and management of the hostel should meet the physical, social and psychological needs of the residents and staff.

Five accommodation units, each with six bedrooms with ensuites, dining room and lounge, were constructed together with a community building. The community building comprises a kitchen, lounge, dining room, craft room, shop, reception and staff office, staff bedroom, toilets, cleaning and storeroom. The community building is designed as a facility where all residents can get together for meals and special social occasions.

Construction commenced in March 1990 and was ready for occupation in April 1991. With a northern aspect and overlooking Lake Hume, Bolga Court offers the residents magnificent and uninterrupted views of the Lake and surrounding hills.

Tallangatta Hospital provides a level of service that conforms with the level of funding and standard of expertise available. Ten of the thirty hospital beds are Commonwealth funded nursing home beds, whilst five of the Acute beds are also used for nursing home type patients and Respite Care. A major redevelopment was carried out on the 15 nursing home bed facility during 1997/98. The four bed wards and shared toilet/shower facilities were converted into two bedrooms with ensuites. The William Hoysted Day Centre was converted into a spacious lounge and dining room for the residents. After consultation with the residents committee, it was decided to name the nursing home "Lakeview".

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The William Hoysted Day Centre was relocated into the nurse's quarters thanks to a capital grant through the ADASS program. The nurse's quarters were developed to provide a purpose built activity centre, accessible for residents from Bolga Court, Lakeview and the community. The centre provides many valuable services including social assistance, diversional therapy, and craft and social activities.

The hospital was accepted into the Healthstreams program in 1997, and as a result, has been able to develop other services for the community. These included a community dental program, counselling service, transfer funding for district nursing service, occupational therapy and dietetics. These services compliment the already well utilised physiotherapy and podiatry service.

On 1 July 1997, the Tallangatta Hospital and Tallangatta and District Extended Care Centre merged to create the new entity called Tallangatta Hospital. Tallangatta and District Extended Care Centre Inc. managed the Bolga Court Hostel which was opened on 17 March 1991, and is a 30 bed aged care facility. The merger of the two main health service providers in Tallangatta and the acceptance of the service as a Healthstreams agency, not only improved the coordination of a wide range of services provided to the community, but also made the service more sustainable in the longer term.

In March 1999, the Hospital commenced a major redevelopment of the acute wards, administration area and allied health facilities. The total cost of the project was \$2.02m and was jointly funded by the Department of Human Services (\$1.62m) and the Hospital (\$0.4m). The redevelopment was completed in March 2000 and was officially opened in August 2000.

In November 1999 the Tallangatta Hospital underwent a name change. The Hospital changed its name to reflect its evolution in service provision to the Tallangatta Health Service.

In March 2000 the Department of Human Services approved the transfer of the Home and Community Care (HACC) services for the Tallangatta area of the Towong Shire from Upper Murray Health and Community Services to the Tallangatta Health Service. This was a valuable addition to the services provided by Tallangatta Health Service and enhances the coordination of residential and community based services for our clients.

In January 2001 the Health Service received approval from the Department of Health and Aged Care for an additional six (6) low level aged care places. The facility was officially opened on the 21st June 2002 at a cost of \$500,000 and was entirely funded from Bolga Court reserves.

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The 66 registered beds are currently classified as follows:

General Medical	10
Respite Care/Palliative Care	5
Aged Care – High Level	15
Aged Care – Low Level	36

TOTAL	<u>66</u>

MISSION STATEMENT

Tallangatta health Service is a dynamic and flexible provider of services that meets the changing needs of our rural community.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

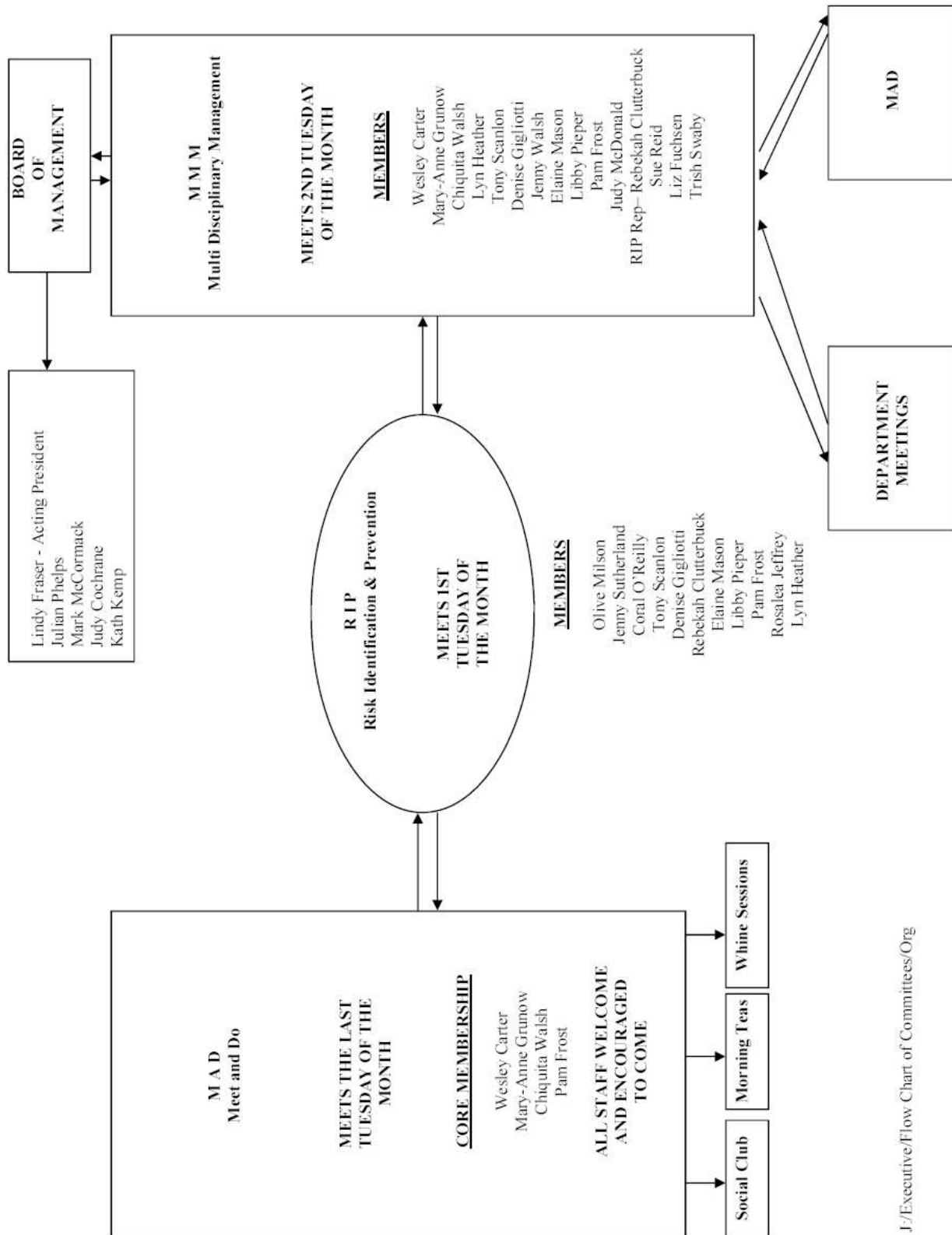
1. The health needs of the community are assessed to identify strengths and weaknesses and areas of unmet need.
2. Appropriate services (groups/persons/knowledge base) are consulted to determine the effectiveness of services provided and the structure and processes of new services.
3. Best practice is aimed for in all areas of health service provision.
4. Services provided are accessible to the community at an affordable cost.
5. The community is given information and skills to enable improved health care and safety.
6. An excellent image of the Health Service will be maintained
7. Risks are identified, assessed and managed.
8. The provision of health services to the community will be achieved within the funding guidelines set by government and the Board's limitation policies.

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STAFF PROFILE

Chief Executive Officer:	Wesley Carter
Director of Client Care:	Mary-Anne Grunow
Director of Support Services:	Chiquita Walsh
Executive Support:	Marilyn Hughes
Quality Coordinator	Pam Frost
Nurse Unit Manager	Tracey Rooney
Manager Bolga Court Hostel:	Liz Fuchsen
Manager of Hotel Services:	Lyn Heather / Carmel Smith
Payroll Officer and Work Care Claims:	Kate Lewis
Maintenance / Gardener :	Tony Scanlon, Andrew Kirk
Medical Officers:	Dr. Coleman / Dr Swaby
Practice Nurse:	Judy McDonald
Visiting Podiatrist:	Louise McPherson, Kathryn Mason
Visiting Social Worker	Catherine Washington
Visiting Dietician:	Milton Jacobs
Diabetes Educator:	Denise Johnston
Physiotherapist:	Wodonga Regional Health Service
Occupational Therapist and Return to Work Coordinator:	
Women's Health/School Nurse	Sue Reid
District Nursing Team Leader	Liz Fuchsen
Home and Community Care Manager:	Denise Gigliotti
Strength and Fitness Coordinator:	Angela Stevenson

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J:/Executive/Flow Chart of Committees/Org

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SERVICES PROVIDED TO THE COMMUNITY

INPATIENT SERVICES

General Medical	Nursing Home
Acute Medical	Respite Care
Aged Care	Post Acute Care
Convalescence	Dementia Care
Rehabilitation	Palliative Care

OUTPATIENTS

Outpatients provide treatment for minor emergency and/or trauma.

ALLIED HEALTH SERVICES AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

- Physiotherapy
- Dietetics
- Podiatry
- Occupational Therapy
- Counsellor
- District Nursing Service
- School Dental Program
- Health Promotion/Education Program
- Day Activity Program
- Diabetes Education
- Home and Community Care
- School Nurse Program
- Women's Health Nurse
- Community Physical Activity Programs

MEDICAL SERVICES

The Tallangatta Township has two medical practitioners and a practice nurse. Their rooms are within the Hospital complex.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (DVA):

Staff Handbook

Tallangatta Health Service is the designated provider of health care to DVA clients in this region through the Community Nursing Service and Home and Community Care. The Department Of Veteran's Affairs advocates a preventative approach to health care and that eligible veterans, war widows (er)s and their dependents have a right to health, well being and self determination in managing their health.

The Department supports the approach that all methods of assessment, referral and intervention are considered with the aim of promoting veteran health, optimal level of function and self care prior to establishing and maintaining ADL services.

FUNDING MODEL

THE HOSPITAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

The Healthstreams Service Purchasing Model aims to facilitate the flexible allocation of resources by participating agencies.

Promote a shift to preventative health and coordinated services

The development of the rural Healthstreams model had provided Tallangatta Health Service with an opportunity for self-sufficiency and the ability to provide a broad range of health and community services directly related to community needs. The ability to provide a more efficient service delivery through flexibility of program funding has enabled Tallangatta to create a new and innovative model of care for its community. This has changed the focus from the traditional role of the hospital, which has been an acute in-patient based service, to one providing stronger primary health and community support programs, rehabilitation and aged care programs that reflect and provide for community needs.

LAKE VIEW NURSING HOME AND BOLGA COURT HOSTEL

These facilities are funded under the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care. The funding instrument used is called the Resident Classification Scale (RCS).

ACCREDITATION

Accreditation is a mandatory process required of all Residential Aged Care and Acute Care services.

Each facility is required to demonstrate how it meets the 4 standards for Residential Aged Care-:

1. Management Systems, staffing and organisational development
2. Health and Personal Care
3. Resident Lifestyle
4. Physical Environment and Safe Systems.

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We have to show evidence of how we provide care and service and continually strive to improve what we do.

Tallangatta Health Service has received accreditation through the following:

Australian Council of HealthCare Standardising the EQUIP Guide

Residential Aged Care Services of Australia through the Aged Care Standards Agency

Management and staff are committed to providing the best care and service to our residents and internal and external clients. To assist us to ensure our systems are working well residents, visitors and staff are encouraged to complete Suggestion forms, questionnaires, staff appraisal forms. Regular auditing processes are also undertaken to identify our areas of strength and weakness. Our quality improvement policies recognise that a willingness to ensure standards are achieved and maintained is the responsibility of each staff member.

The rights of residents and staff members are to be considered when implementing the Quality Improvement Program.

STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIPS/PARTNERSHIPS

Tallangatta Health Service has developed strategic relationships with the following organisations:

Wodonga Regional Health Service

Albury Base Hospital

Upper Murray Health and Community Services

Upper Hume Community Health Service

Upper Murray Family Care

Wodonga Institute of TAFE

La Trobe University

Towong Shire.

Charles Sturt University

Upper Hume Primary Care Partnerships

HumeNet

Beechworth Health Service

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THS Front Entrance



Bolga Court



Views across to Lake Hume



Bolga Court Gardens



Reception/Staff Base Area

SECTION 3

THE INDUCTION PROCESS

Staff Handbook

INDUCTION

The initial few days of starting a new job in any setting can be a daunting and unfamiliar experience. Tallangatta Health Service has developed an induction process to help you as a new employee to become familiar with the organisation. The induction process is a specifically designed program of activities developed for each new staff member according to the position and role that they are expected to fulfil. At the conclusion of the induction process you should feel positive and happy about your new environment and position.

Aims of the Induction Program

1. To build your confidence so that you will feel more at ease and familiar with your new environment and assisting you to become an efficient and effective employee of Tallangatta Health Service.
2. To establish in you the feeling of "belonging" and to promote loyalty to Tallangatta Health Service.
3. To give you the information and a knowledge of the expectations that Tallangatta Health Service has of you in the work that you have been engaged to undertake.
4. To provide Tallangatta Health Service with informed staff members which will assist in helping you to gain satisfaction in your role within the organisation.
5. To assist you to understand how you and the role that you perform fits into the organisation as a valued member of the team.
6. To provide information about communication channels, details of support and supervision, training, insurance, rights and responsibilities, health and safety issues.
7. To provide an understanding of the organisational structure, the varying responsibilities of paid staff and voluntary workers and how they complement one another.

The induction and orientation process is a team effort between your Department Head, Supervisor, Colleagues and you. Induction and orientation is an ongoing process, which can take several months. The induction program will be developed specifically to meet your needs taking into consideration your relevant work experience and background and the requirements of your position as documented in your Position Description. For example, a person entering the work force for the first time is going to be assisted with a more directive supervision style whilst a person who has extensive experience in the field may require only organisational information and quickly adapts to the new position, therefore requiring a supportive and delegated supervision style.

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RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

RIGHTS

As a staff member you have rights to:

- Receive orientation to Tallangatta Health Service and to the Department in which you will be working.
- Receive a position description outlining your responsibilities.
- Have any queries, concerns and complaints listened to and responded to by management in a timely manner.
- To receive relevant ongoing education within Tallangatta Health Service resources.
- To be informed of relevant policy and procedure changes within THS and DHS.
- To work in an environment that complies with the OH & S Act and Australian Standards.
- To work in a harmonious and harassment free environment.
- Confidential personnel records.
- Conditions of employment as per your Industrial Award
- Cooperatively achieve performance development.

RESPONSIBILITIES

As a staff member, Tallangatta Health Service expects you to:

- Respect the rights of clients to make their own decisions, to be treated with respect, and to enable clients to maintain their dignity at all times whilst maintaining their privacy.
- Maintain safe work practices and report unsafe practices, facilities and equipment.
- Be loyal to the Tallangatta Health Service and supportive of its goals, policies and practices.
- Actively participate in and/or develop Quality Improvement Activities.
- Adhere to Tallangatta Health Service requirements of confidentiality regarding patient and THS matters.
- Perform required duties with a high standard of care and professionalism.
- Act in the interest of the patient/client.
- Be reliable and act with honesty and integrity and comply with the THS Health Code of Conduct.
- Care for Tallangatta Health Service equipment and facilities and patient's/client's belongings.
- Undertake regular education updates.
- Be aware of trends relevant to your area of employment.
- Foster harmonious working relationships.
- Be an active member of the Tallangatta Health Service team.
- Ensure there is no conflict between an employee's private activities and official duties.
- Wear an official identification badge **at all times** whilst on duty.
- Maintain competencies outlined in position description.

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TRANSITION INTO THE WORKPLACE

Prior to commencing work, you will be contacted to confirm the time that you should arrive and who to meet on your first day at Tallangatta Health Service. On your first day at work you should bring with you:

- Completed employment forms, 1, 2 & 3
- This Staff Handbook
- Signed copy of your Position Description
- Signed copy of your Employment Contract
- Current Drivers Licence



Sent to you prior to commencement

PREPARING TO START WORK

You can prepare for your first day at work by reading through the Staff Handbook. This will help you to understand some of the aspects about your role and the way in which the organisation works. As you read through the Handbook make notes about any points or issues that you do not fully understand as this will enable you to ask questions when you start work. You will find space in the rear of this book.

ON YOUR FIRST DAY

- Taxation Form (Form 1 as above)
- Employment Registration Form (Form 2 as above)
- Bank Account Details Form (Form 3 as above)
- Confidentiality Statement
- Privacy Statement

When you commence work you will be issued with a name badge. This badge must be worn at all times whilst at work. Your supervisor will take you to an area set aside where you can discuss your role and the supervisors expectations in an undisturbed and relaxed manner. Depending on the type of work that you will undertake, sufficient time is essential to enable you to settle in and feel comfortable with your environment and role. Everyone is different, so do not be afraid to discuss any issues or concerns that you may have with your supervisor.

Your Supervisor will explain the Induction Process that has been designed to meet your needs and the requirements of the job that you have been appointed to undertake. There will be plenty of opportunities for you to ask questions and you are encouraged to do so. You will be provided with an induction passport and receive instructions on the purpose of the passport and on how this tool can be used to assist you to become familiar with Tallangatta Health Service.

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You will receive a warm welcome and be introduced to other team members. This will be completed as soon as you arrive. You will be shown around your immediate workplace and will soon be able to identify where essential facilities are located, i.e. toilets, lunchroom, notice board and reception.

Your supervisor and/or another staff member will act as a mentor who will assist in making you welcome and resolving any problems that may occur. It is important that you have a well planned on-the-job induction process which introduces you to the workplace and gives you enough information to successfully begin your job.

During your initial stages of employment the role of your Supervisor is to:

Ensure a thorough on-the-job induction process. This is an ongoing process until you become competent and confident in fulfilling the required role that you have been appointed to fulfil.

Provide ongoing advice and support whilst assisting you to settle in and to become and feel part of the team.

Ensure that you have access to the resources to enable you to do the work required.

Your supervisor will emphasise how your section works:

(a) as a team

(b) as part of Tallangatta Health Service

At the end of your first day, some time will be spent with you by your supervisor reflecting on your experiences and ensuring that you have an opportunity to ask any questions that you may have.

Your supervisor will review the induction process requesting feedback and encouraging you to talk as much as possible. It is important to identify and resolve any perceived problems as early as possible, and avoid a situation where they are stored up and become more difficult to solve.

The duties to be performed and your expectations, as well as those of your supervisor should be reiterated. Honest, constructive communication is essential at all times.

POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

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All positions within the organisation have position descriptions. Please ensure that you are provided with this on commencement of employment and that a signed copy is returned to your supervisor. This will be placed in your personal file.

HOURS OF WORK

Hours of work are client dependent. Generally morning shifts start at 0700hrs and conclude at 1530hrs. Office hours are from 0800hrs to 1700hrs. Afternoon shifts hours are as negotiated with your supervisor. No employee is to work more than 76 hours per fortnight. All staff must be prepared to undertake all of the duties stated on the position description, and not only part of the duties. Home and Community Care employees must be willing to work flexible hours. The minimum shift offered will be ½ hour.

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INDUCTION PASSPORT

The Induction Passport is designed to document the steps that will be taken to assist you to become familiar with your role as a staff member and to gain a better understanding of the THS. A sample section of an induction passport is illustrated on the next page. You are requested to keep all the appointments that have been made for you. You are also encouraged to ask questions, as this will help you to gain a better understanding of THS.

INDUCTION PASSPORT

DAY ONE

Arrive at Tallangatta Health Service at 9:00 am – Main Reception

Meet with Department Head

Welcome Tour of Tallangatta Health Service

EXAMPLE ONLY

At the conclusion of the Tour, you should have visited:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Reception |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acute Ward | <input type="checkbox"/> Payroll |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lakeview Nursing Home | <input type="checkbox"/> Bolga Court Hostel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Staff Dining Facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Evacuation Assembly Areas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Location of Hospital Vehicles | |

Signed By: _____

Date: _____

SECTION 4

GUIDELINES AND POLICIES FOR STAFF

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THS PRINCIPLES

Tallangatta Health Service is guided in its activities by the following principles

- **Equity:** decisions and conduct shall be honest, fair, consistent and dependable.
- **Quality:** excellence in all services shall be constantly pursued and promoted.
- **Accountability:** resources shall be used efficiently and effectively for the good of the community and in accordance with governance policies.
- **Knowledge:** the sharing of knowledge to achieve strategic objectives shall be through education, training, research, media and evidence based practice.
- **Consultation:** ongoing consultation shall occur with our community and other agencies to identify, manage and plan for changing needs and expectations.
- **Safety:** a comprehensive and integrated program shall exist to manage risks.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Through the course of performing your duties you may have access to client details, medical histories, staff salaries or other information. This should be treated with strictest confidence and is not to be discussed with any other person, including your family. You are able to discuss clients with your Department Head / Team Leader who is also bound by the Confidentiality Statement.

As you have agreed to employment with Tallangatta Health Service, you are required to abide by this policy and all existing policies of Tallangatta Health Service.

Tallangatta Health Service is governed by the Health Services Act 1998. The purpose of the Health Services Act "is to make provision for the development of health services in Victoria, for the carrying on of hospitals and other health care agencies and related matters".

Section 141 of this Act relates to Confidentiality and applies to:

- (a) The health service
- (b) The board of the health service
- (c) A person who is, or has been a member of the board

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- (d) A person who is, or has been, the proprietor of the health service

- (e) A person who is, or has been engaged or employed by the health service, or performs work for the health service, including sub contractors.

Point (e) above relates to all staff, volunteers and students at Tallangatta Health Service.

The Act is quite specific and advises that we must not give any information regarding clients (either directly or indirectly) to any person. We are prevented by the Act from stating whether or not a

person has received any form of service from us. This is a very serious offence and individual staff members, volunteers and students can receive penalties for providing such information.

The only time does this not apply is:

- (a) With the prior written consent of the person to whom it relates or if that person has died, with the written consent of the senior available next of kin of that person.

- (b) The giving of information TO A COURT, in the event of criminal proceedings

- (c) The giving of information concerning the condition of a person who is a patient or receiving health services from us if the information is communicated in general terms, (e.g. the patient is in a stable condition etc.) or is communicated by a member of the Medical Staff (VMO) to the next of kin or a near relative of the person in accordance with the recognised customs of medical practise.

If there are ever any doubts about the provision of information e.g. mandatory reporting of child abuse etc. then the matter should be referred to the Chief Executive Officer who will obtain legal advice on your behalf.

The Health Services Act is kept in Administration and all staff members are encouraged to become familiar with Section 141, which relates to the collection, storage and distribution of personal information.

PRIVACY STATEMENT

Tallangatta Health Service makes every effort to comply with Information Privacy Principles of the Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth; Amended 2000) and the Health Records Act 2001 (Victoria).

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Information relevant to ongoing care and concerning admission and discharge may be shared with Community Support Services and will be treated in confidence and according to the privacy laws and regulations unless otherwise specified by the patient.

Tallangatta Health Service is required by legislation to pass statistical data on some of the information it collects about the people who receive services funded under our Health Service Agreement. The information will be used for planning purposes, to ensure that resource levels are adequate and that the right services are available to meet demand.

Some patient information will be sent to the Victorian Department of Human Services. The Department has adopted information privacy principles and uses strict security measures to prevent unauthorised access to the patient database.

The Department of Human Services will forward this information to the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged care for statistical purposes.

Further information is available from the Department of Human Services, Privacy Information Brochure for Consumers.

POLICE CHECKS

All staff and volunteers employed by Tallangatta Health Service are required to submit their name for a police check prior to commencing work at Tallangatta Health Service.

CLIENT & CUSTOMER FOCUS

Tallangatta Health Service embraces the concept of Customer Focus. As such, all staff are required to display an attitude and behave in a manner which is in keeping with the THS philosophy on customer focus, that is, to provide a service to clients which is courteous, friendly and supportive and professional to both customers of Tallangatta Health Service and work colleagues.

As a member of our team you are expected to take pride and an interest in all the work that you undertake. Your attitude towards your work and your relationships with clients, fellow staff members and volunteer workers of Tallangatta Health Service is a key aspect in ensuring that you have a rewarding and satisfying employment experience.

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PERSONAL MAIL

Please do not arrange for any personal mail to be sent to Tallangatta Health Service. Please do not use our mailing service for personal postage unless appropriate postage stamps are affixed. Mail without stamps will not be mailed.

USE OF TELEPHONE

Telephones (including Tallangatta Health Service mobile phones) are provided as a tool for service delivery and a communication mechanism between staff, volunteers and the stakeholders of THS. When answering the telephone, a business-like approach is essential. When answering an outside call staff are requested to state "Tallangatta Health Service, this is (name)". If you are receiving a call from the Reception Desk please state, "This is (name)".

If in the performance of your work you are required to make a telephone call to someone outside THS you should advise the person you called of your name and that you are from Tallangatta Health Service prior to engaging in conversation with the person you have called.

It should be noted that telephones are not provided for personal calls. If it is necessary for you to make a call to your family or home because you will be later than expected or for an urgent situation, please keep the call as brief as possible.

You are requested to use commonsense and not allow personal calls to interrupt your work. No long distant personal calls are to be made from any Tallangatta Health Service telephones.

Personal mobile phones should be switched off during working hours.

FAXES AND PHOTOCOPYING

Tallangatta Health Service offers a personal faxing and photocopying service from the Reception desk at a minimal cost. Staff are not to use the THS fax or photocopiers for personal use, but should utilise the paid service for these facilities. All such faxes and photocopying is to be arranged with Reception staff.

Staff Handbook

E-MAIL AND THE INTERNET

Tallangatta Health Service has provided Internet and E-mail services to each computer work station in recognition that this technology can make a major contribution to productivity and improve communications. This technology has been provided for use specifically within the operations of THS and to contribute to achieving the objectives of the organisation.

Staff should only use Internet and E-mail services for those purposes which are within the responsibility and defined within each staff member's Position Statement. The Internet may be used for study purposes in relationship to the workplace but under no circumstances is this technology to be utilised for private purposes. Tallangatta Health Service has developed the following guidelines to ensure staff using Internet, Intranet, Voice, Video and E-mail services use this technology appropriately and ethically.

- Staff must only use information technology services in the pursuit of the goals and objectives of the Service and as defined within their Position Statement.
- Specifically high volume transmissions such as Internet radio, video and music must be avoided unless supported by the role and function as outlined in their duty statement.
- Staff should only deal with materials which are within their area of responsibility in the work place.
- No staff shall deliberately or inadvertently cause to be transmitted or displayed any material which a reasonable person considers likely to offend. This includes material which is displayed or transmitted for display, electronically or traditionally. As an example, materials that are likely to cause offence include but are not limited to those whose content relates to religion, politics and sex.
- Supervisory staff are responsible to ensure that all staff members abide by these guidelines.

Staff members who do not comply with the above guidelines will be deemed to be in breach of Tallangatta Health Service's code of ethics and may be subject to disciplinary procedures.

DRESS CODE

Uniforms are required by Tallangatta Health Service for certain categories of staff. Upon commencing duties your supervisor will advise you whether a uniform is required and what it is. Members of the public see you as a representative of Tallangatta Health Service and for this reason your clothing should be kept in a neat, clean and tidy condition.

Staff Handbook

It is a condition of employment that:

- (a) You must wear sensible, safe and clean shoes appropriate to the risks you are exposed to at work.
- (b) You must wear any protective clothing where provided and directed by your Supervisor, and where infection presents a risk.
- (c) Presentable standards of dress and grooming are required including cleanliness of clothing and shoes.
- (d) You abide by the uniform policy.

IDENTITY BADGES

Each staff member is issued with an identification badge and it must be worn at all times at work. These badges are issued for personal identification and security reasons. If you lose your identity badge please advise your supervisor immediately.

SMOKING

Tallangatta Health Service is a smoke-free environment. Smoking is not permitted on the grounds, in any buildings, vehicles or other environment or areas owned or operated by Tallangatta Health Service

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Staff are not to bring non prescribed drugs of dependence onto the premises under any circumstances. Alcohol may be brought onto the premises only with the approval of management.

STAFF HEALTH AND IMMUNISATION

Staff Handbook

Staff must be conscious of maintaining their own health and keep their immunisation status up to date. If you are unsure of your current status or would like information regarding immunisations please contact a Client Care Coordinator for advice.

COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

Becoming familiar with emergency systems and equipment should be your first priority. This will be discussed and implemented as part of your physical orientation checklist into the facility.

POLICIES

Policy manuals are accessible to all staff and are made available for reference and/or clarification. Policy manuals are located in the Resource Room. An electronic version of the facility policies can be located on J Drive/Policy Manuals/relevant policy. Developed and updated policies will be emailed to all staff.

SECTION 5

THE WORK ENVIRONMENT

Staff Handbook

THE WORK ENVIRONMENT

As a member of the THS team, whether as paid staff or in a voluntary capacity we each have a responsibility to make a positive contribution to a happy and productive work environment. The Service's Code of Ethics has been designed to provide an environment conducive to the maintenance of a satisfying and fulfilling workplace. The way in which staff members behave can have a direct effect on the working environment and certain behaviours and attitudes are unacceptable in the work place. Tallangatta Health Service has developed policies and procedures designed to make a positive contribution to creating a happy and satisfying work environment. Please ensure you read all policy and procedure manuals applicable to your job. They will include departmental specific manuals, infection control, occupational health and safety and human resources.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) is about making sure that for any vacant position, people with an equivalent chance of job success have an equal opportunity of being hired or promoted.

Equal Employment Opportunity refers to the right to be considered for a job for which you are skilled and qualified. All positions are filled on a merit principle, which means that appointment is based on qualifications, experience and ability to undertake the work involved and achieve the outcomes required.

Equal Employment Opportunity aims to ensure that employment conditions and benefits are available and can be used by all employees. Tallangatta Health Service is committed to Equal Employment Opportunity principles.

HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

Tallangatta Health Service is committed to providing a work environment free from unlawful discrimination and harassment.

As such, Contact Officers are available to provide all staff with information regarding any issues relating to discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment and bullying. The role is very important as Contact Officers allow people to determine how they can best resolve their problem – either by tackling it themselves, making use of THS's complaint procedure, or by some other means. The Complaints Officers are required to maintain strict confidentiality.

Staff Handbook

Should you have an issue that you would like to discuss, please make an appointment with one of the following Contact Officers:

- Mary-Anne Grunow Ext.202
- Robyn Polmear Ext. 203
- Sue Reid Ext.253
- Elaine Mason Ext. 220

Harassment and discrimination is unacceptable and reports will be considered sympathetically and seriously, and in confidence. An individual who experiences sexual harassment should first make it clear to the offender that it is offensive and unwelcome.

If the unacceptable behaviour continues you should implement the Grievance Procedure as soon as possible and preferably within a week of the occurrence of harassment or discrimination. Grievances are best resolved by conciliation and confidentiality is guaranteed. Disciplinary action will be taken in cases of proven grievances.

In Victoria, the Equal Opportunity Act 1995 prohibits discrimination on the grounds of:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| - Age | - Pregnancy |
| - Impairment | - Race |
| - Industrial Activity | - Religious Belief or Activity |
| - Lawful Sexual Activity | - Sex |
| - Marital Status | - Status as a Parent or Carer |
| - Physical Features | - Political Belief or Activity |

Discrimination is also prohibited in relation to any person because of their personal association with a person who is identified by reference to any of the above attributes. Discrimination on the basis of an attribute includes discrimination on the basis that a person has had the attribute in the past or is presumed to have or had the attribute.

At the Federal level, there are several Acts of Parliament, which govern equal opportunity. Those Acts are the Sex Discrimination Act 1984, the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.

The Sex Discrimination Act governs discrimination on the grounds of sex, marital status, pregnancy and potential pregnancy. Dismissal from employment on the ground of family responsibilities and discrimination involving sexual harassment is also covered by that Act.

Staff Handbook

The Racial Discrimination Act prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin. The Disability Discrimination Act prohibits discrimination based on disability.

GRIEVANCES

If you have a grievance you should, in the first instance, raise this with your Department Head/ Team Leader. You will receive a sympathetic hearing.

Grievances are far better resolved between the persons directly involved, however, if your positive efforts do not correct the situation and you consider your complaint unresolvable you should follow the next steps of our Grievance Procedure as contained in the Tallangatta Health Service Human Resources Manual.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

It is the goal of this procedure to ensure that grievances are resolved at the earliest possible opportunity through negotiation and discussion between the parties. Tallangatta Health Service recognises that from time to time individual employees may have grievances which arise and which need to be resolved in the interests of good employment relationships and client care and service. The employee has the right for a grievance to be heard through all levels of management:

1. In the first instance, the employee shall attempt to resolve the grievance with the employee's immediate supervisor. The local union representative may be present if desired by either party. The employee will be required to submit the grievance in writing prior to this discussion.
2. If the employee still feels aggrieved, then the matter shall be referred to the employee's Department Head. The local union representative or advocate may be present if desired by either party.
3. If the grievance is still unresolved, the matter shall be referred to the Chief Executive Officer and the senior local or state union representative.
4. If the grievance is still unresolved, then the state union representative shall be advised and a meeting arranged. At this stage the Victorian Health Industrial Association should be advised and will be represented at the request of the Chief Executive Officer.
5. Steps 1 to 4 should take place within seven days.

Staff Handbook

6. If the grievance still exists, the matter shall be referred to a member of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission for decision, which shall be accepted by the parties as ending the matter.
7. Until the grievance is determined, work shall continue normally in accordance with the custom or practise existing before the grievance arose, while discussions take place.

No party shall be prejudiced as to the final settlement by the continuance of work.

Health and Safety matters are exempted from point 7.

This procedure is written in line with award requirements under relevant Health Industry Awards.

STAFF AMENITIES

There is a staff room available in the acute ward for staff to access. Located in this room is a toilet and shower facilities. A general dining room is located off the central catering area. Meals can be purchased from the kitchen. Please ask catering manager re cost per meal. You will need to notify catering staff as early as possible (early morning or the night before) if you require a cooked meal (from the daily menu). The requested evening meal will be placed in the refrigerator. Staff are required to make their own sandwiches from ingredient available from within the kitchen.

A microwave oven is available for reheating meals

Each department has established break times. Please identify these on commencement of work.

Code of Conduct

Located around the facilities you will find a Code of Conduct poster. This code is to be read in conjunction with relevant Health Service Policies and Procedures. Any perceived breaches of this code of Conduct must be reported to the relevant Head of Department for investigation.

Staff Handbook



Support Policy Manual

Human Resources

Code of Conduct

AIM:

All persons employed by or interacting with Tallangatta Health Service will be respected and valued.

RATIONALE:

Every staff member has a professional and ethical obligation to respect and preserve the dignity, values, culture and beliefs of co-workers, clients, the organisation and the community at all times.

The code of conduct outlines the standard of behaviour expected of Tallangatta Health Service employees. It is designed to help staff understand their responsibilities and obligations and provide guidance relating to ethical dilemma of conflict of interest at work.

The code of conduct cannot cover every situation, staff are responsible to determine if Tallangatta Health Service has policies, or guidelines on related matters or if their professional code of practice also applies.

POLICY:

The code of conduct applies to all Tallangatta Health Service employees and volunteers

After reading the code of conduct the staff member is unsure on the appropriate action to take in a particular situation, they should discuss the matter with their supervisor.

Guidelines and procedures are provided on the following conduct issues:

- General Expectations of Staff
- Protection from discrimination
- Treatment of Colleagues
- Verbal Communication
- Confidentiality
- Conflict of Interest
- Managing staff
- Reporting Unethical Behaviour
- Personal Information and Privacy
- Making a Public Comment
- General Appearance
- Use of Resources

Staff Handbook

- Financial Accountability
- Gifts and Favours
- Alcohol or Other Drug Use in the Workplace
- Witnessing of Personal Documents
- Attendance at Court
- Risk Management
- Quality Improvement

Expectations of Staff Conduct

Tallangatta Health Service expects all staff will treat all people with whom they have contact with in the course of their work fairly, with courtesy and sensitivity. In addition staff should be open, honest and transparent when making decisions or providing any advice or service.

Staff are expected to perform their duties diligently, impartially, responsively and competently.

Staff members will observe relevant occupational health and safety requirements. They will act to reduce or remove hazards. This may be a health and safety hazard to staff, visitor or clients. Staff members are expected to follow reasonable direction given to them by any person with legitimate authority to give the direction

When providing information to clients or other staff, efforts must be made to ensure the information is accurate, complete, up to date and easily understood.

Protection from discrimination

No staff member may harass or bully anyone, particularly those people over whom they have authority or those that are vulnerable (including clients). Material that is found to be fraudulent, harassing, embarrassing, sexually explicit, profane, obscene, intimidating, defamatory or otherwise unlawful or inappropriate may not be displayed or sent by email or other forms of electronic communication or displayed or stored on the computer.

Treatment of Colleagues

Staff are expected to work cooperatively with colleagues, to support and learn from each other and accept differences in personal style.

Staff should respect, and seek when necessary, the professional opinions of colleagues in their area of competence, and acknowledge their contribution.

Verbal Communication

Staff Handbook

All verbal communication with clients and other staff must be kept on calm, controlled, caring and professional level at all times. Staff must not impose their own personal problems, beliefs or values upon clients or their carers or other staff.

Under no circumstances must clients or other staff be subject to any form of victimisation or discrimination. Any treatment of clients or other staff that could be perceived as demeaning, threatening or intimidating by any reasonable person is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in this health service.

Staff must not expose clients or colleagues to the following (either directed at a client or others):-

- Curt or abrupt responses
- Raised voices
- Yelling
- Swearing or abuse
- Derogatory/embarrassing statements
- Gossip

Confidentiality

All Tallangatta Health Service staff have a responsibility to ensure that all client and business information is kept confidential.

- Conversations regarding clients or employees must not be conducted in the presence of or overheard by unauthorised persons.
- Client information must only be discussed with authorised health care personnel directly related to client's care
- No information pertaining to clients or employees of this health service must be disclosed to any individual or party outside this health service (including client relatives), with exception of information communicated by authorised health care personnel
- Staff must not engage in gossip
- Unauthorised persons must not view printed or electronic documents, and information contained in them must not be disclosed to unauthorised persons.
- Medical records, personnel files or other documents printed or electronic that may include personal information must not be left unattended in publicly accessible places. (desk tops or computer screens)

Conflict of Interest

Employees are required to disclose potential conflicts of interest to their department managers when dealing in the course of official duties with relatives, close friends or business acquaintances.

It is not possible to define all areas of potential for conflict of interest and if staff are in doubt as to whether a conflict exists, they should raise the issue with their manager.

Staff Handbook

A declaration of interest for any employee is required when an employee is engaged in a role where there is potential conflict of interest, for example service contracts or selection for tenders.

Managing staff

Managers or supervisors should provide a safe, encouraging and supportive environment that recognises and values, staff diversity, abilities and contributions. Staff should be given a clear sense of direction and purpose.

Managers or supervisors should set realistic goals, timelines and workloads. Tallangatta Health Service trusts staff to manage their work autonomously but also provides them with support when needed through their managers and supervisors. Performance issues should be directly and confidentially communicated with the staff member concerned.

Staff should be treated fairly and consistently when making selection decisions, allocating meaningful work, assessing performance, and providing development opportunities. It is expected that genuine consultation with staff will occur on any proposed changes to the workplace that affect them.

Reporting Unethical Behaviour

Staff members should comply promptly with lawful and reasonable directions they are given. If however a staff member believes they should have grounds for complaint arising out of such directions, whether ethical or otherwise, they should discuss and attempt to resolve the matter with their manager. If they are still dissatisfied they should followed the processes in the grievance procedures. Staff must continue to carry out any lawful and reasonable directions that the may be given until the matter is resolved as per the grievance procedure.

An employee may report any unethical behaviour or wrong doing by any other employee to an appropriate senior staff member within their department or after hours the person in charge of the facility. This may include behaviour that violates any law, regulation, or represents unprofessional behaviour. It may also include behaviour that is a danger to clients' public health or physical or psychological well being/safety or to the environment. Such reporting is sometimes called "whistle blowing" and is facilitated under Victorian Whistleblower Protection Legislation.

Staff are protected against reprisals for reporting unethical behaviour or wrong doing providing the claim is based on a reasonable belief and they have reported the matter to the appropriate person. This may be departmental manager, human resource officer, Registered Nurse in Charge after hours and senior management.

Personal Information and Privacy

Staff Handbook

Staff should only collect, use and store personal information that is necessary for the performance of their work or required by law. For sensitive information such as health information, racial or ethnic origin, religious beliefs, sexual preferences or criminal record, first seek the consent of the individuals concerned. Make sure the information is accurate, complete and up to date.

Staff must take reasonable all steps to protect personal information from misuse, loss and unauthorised access, modification or disclosure. Staff are to be familiar with the process to allow clients access to their medical records.

Making a Public Comment

Public comment includes public speaking engagements(in person, video conferencing, radio or TV) comments on radio and television and expressing views in letters to the newspapers or in books, journals, the internet, or other notices where it might be expected that the publication or circulation of the comment, would be spread to the community at large.

As a member of the community, staff members have the right to make public comment and enter into public debate on political and social issues. There are additional circumstances in which public comment is inappropriate. These include circumstances where the implication that the public comment, although made in a private capacity, is in some way an official comment on Tallangatta Health Service policy, programs or services.

Employees must not use or communicate Tallangatta Health service business or client information without the Chief Executive Officer's permission.

Staff should act and advise with honesty and integrity in all aspects of their official duties. If a staff member believes an aspect of Tallangatta Health Service policy or administration may have unforeseen consequences or otherwise requires review, then bring it to the attention of their manager.

The Chief Executive Officer is the authorised spokesperson for Tallangatta Health Service.

General Appearance

All employees of the Tallangatta Health Service are expected to present a professional appearance at all times whilst at work or when representing this organisation.

All Employees are expected to maintain a high standard of personal hygiene at all times, adhering to the Health Service's uniform policy and clothing policies whilst on duty.

Use of Resources

Staff Handbook

Staff should achieve value for money and avoid waste and extravagance in the use of public resources. Where possible, staff should identify improvements to systems and procedures to achieve optimal effectiveness, efficiency and responsiveness to clients

All staff are responsible to ensure contractors are aware of the standards of conduct expected within Tallangatta Health Service.

Financial Accountability

Employees must ensure that in financial matters, including the handling of monies, there is full accountability in relation to any advice or transaction in which they may be involved.

Gifts and Favours

It is acceptable for staff to accept small gifts from residents/clients at Christmas or birthday time if the gift is valued at no more than \$10.00.

In all other circumstances staff should not seek or accept favours or gifts for services performed in connection with Tallangatta Health Service duties. Included in this category are gifts in kind such as free entertainment vouchers whether for themselves or members of their family. The general principle is that staff should not seek or accept favours or gifts from anyone who could benefit by influencing the staff member.

Staff should be immediately report to their manager or the Chief Executive Officer any circumstances where an offer of a benefit or gift is made, regardless of whether it is accepted or not, if the staff member feels that such circumstances involve an attempt to induce favoured treatment.

Where a gift has been given without a staff member's prior knowledge or consent or where a gift is given as a token of goodwill to Tallangatta Health service the Chief Executive Officer should be informed as soon as possible. Gifts of more than token value should in all cases remain the property of Tallangatta Health Service.

Staff members must not use their position to obtain a private benefit for someone else. Family or other personal relationships must not improperly influence employees' decisions in relation to their duties at Tallangatta Health Service.

Alcohol or Other Drug Use in the Workplace

Alcohol, illegal drugs or other substances that has the potential to alter the neurological state must not be consumed at work or adversely affect any staff member's work performance or official conduct. This includes behaviour at official functions here alcohol is served. Health professionals must ensure that they comply with the requirements of their registration board.

Staff Handbook

Tallangatta Health service has a non-smoking policy and staff must adhere to this policy at all times.

Witnessing of Personal Documents

Health service Employees are not permitted to witness the signing of wills or other personal client-related documents.

Attendance at Court

Work related – Inform your manager that you have been requested to attend and the reason for this. Unless otherwise exempted by the court, attend the court or inquiry as specified.

If attending in an official capacity, under a subpoena or order, to give evidence or to produce papers in any court, you are required to pay any fees you receive to Tallangatta Health service prior to receiving your normal wage entitlement for the time spent at court. Provide an account and vouchers of all the necessary expenses, if any incurred in the performance of such duty to the Chief Executive Officer.

Personal – Attending court for personal reasons should be undertaken as specified by the court. If a staff member is summonsed, subpoenaed or called as a witness or juror at a court of law or any legally constituted inquiry, they should inform their department manager as soon as practicable. Leave arrangement can be made as per the leave other than long service leave or annual leave

Risk Management

The monitoring compliance and reporting non-compliance with the code of conduct is the responsibility of all employees; however the senior person on duty in any area at any given time has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring compliance.

In the event that the senior person on duty has any reason to believe that an employee is contravening any aspect of the code of conduct, the following steps are to be taken immediately:

- Take necessary action to maintain the safety and dignity of the client/s
- Address the situation with the staff member/s concerned.
- Advise the relevant area manager and senior management as soon as possible
- Complete incident report forms (these forms will be de identified and tabled for any recommended further action at the appropriate meeting)
- Staff who breach this code of conduct will be counselled and may be subject to disciplinary procedures, employment suspension or dismissal.

Staff Handbook

Quality Improvement

The Tallangatta Health service Code of Conduct will be provided to all new recruits and discussed at orientation.

Related policies can be located in the Support Policy Manual – Human Resources

OUTCOME:

All employees will be aware of their rights and responsibilities as employees of the organisation and act in accordance with these

REFERENCES:

Beechworth Health Service Employee Code of Conduct (October 2003)

Health Records Act 2001

Information Privacy Act 2000

Aged Care Act 1997

LINKING POLICIES:

Gifts to Staff

Risk Management

Conflict of Interest

Support Services

Confidentiality and Records

Uniform and Identification

OH & S

RISKS:

Breaches of Code of Conduct can result in bullying, harassment and unprofessional behaviour within internal and external staff/customers.

APPROVED BY:

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

DIRECTOR OF SUPPORT SERVICES

Staff Handbook

DATE CREATED	June 2007	DATE REVIEWED	
RISK RATING HIGH	High	REVIEW SCHEDULE	Annual
ENDORISING COMMITTEE MMM	MMM	POLICY DOMAIN	Support Services

POLICY LOCATION:

Resource Room

Intra – Net

Staff Handbook



SUPPORT SERVICES POLICY MANUAL

CODE OF CONDUCT APPENDIX

This code of conduct is to be read in conjunction with relevant Health Service Policies and Procedures. Any perceived breaches of this Code of Conduct should be reported to the Chief Executive Officer for investigation.

In relation to job responsibilities, employees should:

- Carry out their duties in a responsible, conscientious and safe manner with honest and integrity, demonstrating commitment and loyalty to the Health Service and their profession.
- Utilise their time and the Health service's resources productively and efficiently and in a manner not influenced by personal gain, either for themselves, friends, relatives or acquaintances.

In relation to colleagues, employees should:

- Cooperate, work harmoniously and treat colleagues with respect and courtesy and in a manner free from discrimination and not use their position or their influence to intentionally degrade, hurt or humiliate.

In relation to patients and members of the public, employees should:

- Treat patients/clients and members of the public politely, with courtesy and respect and ensure that actions and behaviour are always in the best interest of the patient or public and free from discrimination.
- Treat patients/clients and members of the public in a manner that is culturally sensitive and supportive and in keeping with professional obligations and standards.
- Deal with issues, grievances or concerns promptly and effectively and uphold the good name and reputation of the Health Service

In relation to dealing with outside organisations, employees should:

- Treat individuals in organisations external to Tallangatta Health Service with courtesy and respect and ensure that the interests and reputation of the Health Service are upheld.
- No attempt to obtain personal favour/gifts from individuals or organisations.

SECTION 6

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

Staff Handbook

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

IN GENERAL

In the eyes of the patients, residents, clients and visitors, you are a representative of Tallangatta Health Service. People tend to judge the whole Service by your manner, dress and attitude. Therefore, please always be courteous. If you cannot assist an individual, refer him/her to the appropriate person. Always remember that a smile costs nothing, but means a lot to a client or an anxious relative or to another staff member.

TO OUR CLIENTS

Observe the following points:

- (a) Respect their rights to make decisions
- (b) Respect their right to dignity
- (c) Be supportive and enable clients
- (d) Keep noise to a minimum
- (e) Everything is confidential
- (f) Good standard of personal appearance and hygiene
- (g) Punctuality in your duties
- (h) Positive attitude on your part
- (i) Honesty, loyalty and
- (j) SMILE!

Also, know the organisation so that you can direct the public and others to the correct section of Tallangatta Health Service.

Be patient, give warning before entering any patient or residents room, then announce your name and your purpose and how long you are to be in the person's room. Be precise, efficient and quick. Do not enter a room when the door is closed without receiving prior approval, especially when there is a sign or notice. Respect the privacy of a patient when the screen is drawn. Do not discuss any client's illness, disease, treatment or personal affairs with others or in any area you can be overheard if "handing over" or reviewing the client with another staff member or your Department Head/ Team Leader.

Staff Handbook

CHILD ABUSE OR SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

Where an employee forms the belief on reasonable grounds that a child has been, or is in danger of being abused, it is necessary for you to advise the Department of Human Services (DHS) on the following numbers:

- DHS Wodonga (during business hours) on 1800 650 227
- The Child Protection After Hours Service (Statewide Vic) on 1800 135 135

You are encouraged to discuss the matter with your Department Head/Team Leader prior to reporting, to enable management support to be provided to you during this process.

TO YOUR PROGRAM

Each employee is responsible for giving excellent work performance, obeying safety rules, maintaining standards, having a good attendance record and behaving in a way that reflects well on your employer and co-workers.

Please follow the practices and policies of your Program and take the sort of care with the job and your employer's property that you would in looking after your own.

TO OTHER PROGRAMS

Assist wherever and whenever possible. If asked to do something which you feel is not your job, first assist the individual and then advise your supervisor if you would like to discuss the matter. Know your abilities and your level of expertise and ask for experienced help when you need it.

TOWARDS COST CONTAINMENT

Remember that everything you use costs community and public money. Be careful not to waste any items at your disposal, be precise when ordering and do not overstock. Use your own good judgement as necessary. Make suggestions about curtailing expenses.

Staff Handbook

CONCERNING SECURITY

We should always be security conscious. A few rules to associate yourself with would be:

- (a) Always wear your identification badge.
- (b) Recognise intruders, but do not take action. Contact the Police on 02 6071 2204 if safely able to do so, and keep the phone line open.
- (c) Secure your valuables.
- (d) Remove confidential material from open view and secure it in its proper place.
- (e) Make sure all files and drawers are secured.
- (f) Lock all doors and windows and turn off lights in your area when leaving.

MEDIA

The only personnel who are eligible to speak to the media are the Chief Executive Officer and the President of the Board of Management. All information/articles for the media must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer prior to publication.

SECTION 7

FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Staff Handbook

NOTICE BOARDS

Staff wishing to place personal notices on notice boards should make enquiries with the Director of Client Services.

PARKING

There is a number of parking facilities available. Staff, with the exception of evening and night staff, are not to park in customer parking areas directly in front of the Main Entrance and the Medical Centre. Alternatives are the carpark in Barree Street and the eastern carpark near Lakeview Nursing Home.

INTERPRETER SERVICE

If you or one of your clients requires the services of an interpreter please contact reception.

MEETING ROOMS

There are a range of Meeting and Activity Rooms throughout the facility. These rooms are able to be booked for staff meetings, workshops, planning etc. These rooms should be booked through reception. The resource room is accessible to all staff. Computer and internet access is provided for personal use within THS guidelines and relevant break period allocations.

MANUALS

All staff are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the information contained in our organisation manuals and seek clarification from their Department Head/Team Leader on any issue in the Manuals. Manuals on Organisational Policies, Procedures, Infection Control, Position Descriptions and Occupational Health and Safety are kept in the resource room and intra net. A master copy can be located in the Quality Co-ordinators office.

KEYS

Staff Handbook

The key register is located in the Administration department, if it is necessary to access areas outside of normal working hours; keys are available at the Nursing Station which is staffed 24 hours a day. If you are collecting a key, it will be necessary to be wearing your Tallangatta Health Service Identity Badge. Keys need to be signed for on collection and return. Please ensure all keys are returned before leaving the premises.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT / RISK MANAGEMENT

Tallangatta Health Service is committed to an ongoing Quality Improvement Program for all our activities, tasks and programs. To assist in Quality Improvement we participate in a service wide Accreditation Program that will ensure that we consistently improve the quality of our services. Staff should maintain an awareness of the Quality Improvement Standards that we must meet and should ensure that these Standards are met consistently. For information on our Quality Improvement Standards please see your Supervisor or the Director of Client Services.

The Quality / Risk management program is governed by a committee, the Risk Identification and Prevention (RIP) Committee at which OH & S issues are discussed.

The purpose of these meetings is to provide direction and resources to deal with all Quality and Risk management issues within the organisation. The RIP Meeting acts as a core body for overseeing all operational issues.

This meeting has been structured to achieve the following ideals:

- Provide effective links, information flow and feedback to all stakeholders, including the Board of Management and all staff members
- Provide effective and efficient methods of dealing with issues within the organisation
- Ensure initiatives for Quality Activities are captured and acted upon.

The Safety and Quality Meeting will be held on the second Tuesday of each month. All staff are invited to attend these meetings. The Minutes are available for reading and may be accessed on the J Drive under J:/Safety and Quality Committee/Minutes 2005. All staff members are encouraged to attend these meetings.

Enquiries should be directed to the Director of Client Services.

SECTION 8

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

Staff Handbook

Accommodation

On-site accommodation is available for overnight and short term stays. Bookings and payment can be made with reception. The accommodation is fully self contained, however, you will need to bring your own linen.

Meals

Meals are provided from the main kitchen at a nominal charge. Please enquire at the kitchen for the daily specials.

Salary Packaging

Salary packaging is available for part time and full time staff. Please refer to the Human Resource Manual for further information or contact the Payroll Manager.

Car Parking

Free on-site parking in designated areas is available for staff.

Direct Deposit of Salary

Your salary will be directly deposited into the bank account of your choice.

On-site Payroll

To assist with fast and efficient payroll enquiries.

Library

A library of resources is available to assist you in your role.

Training Policy

Regular training and updates are conducted throughout the year.

Tai Chi

A Tai Chi program is available for staff to join.

Social Worker

Our Social Worker is on site each Thursday. Please contact reception to make a booking.

Physiotherapy

Exercise equipment is available for staff use.

SECTION 9

TALLANGATTA HEALTH SERVICE'S PERSONNEL PRACTICES

Staff Handbook

Please complete a Change of Information Form available from the Payroll Department. This is essential for payroll and group certificate purposes for the correct recording of your personal details. Examples of change include:

- Name or address
- Telephone number (indicate if a silent number)
- Driver's licence number
- Any change to "next of kin" or emergency contact' details.
- Banking details

PERSONAL RECORDS

An employee record is securely maintained in the Administration office. It contains information concerning pay, staff development, your address, job application, transfers, promotion and other details related to your employment. It is the property of Tallangatta Health Service.

Information of a disciplinary nature may be placed on an employee record if any counselling has been followed by a letter confirming those discussions.

Access to employee records is limited to the Chief Executive Officer, Director of Client Services, your Department Head/Team Leader/Supervisor, the Accountant and the Executive Assistant. Copies of timesheets are filed separately and may be accessed by the Chief Executive Officer, Director of Client Services, your Department Head /Team Leader/Supervisor, the Accountant, the Executive Assistant and Payroll Staff.

ACCESS TO HUMAN RESOURCE PERSONNEL RECORD PROCEDURE

The Chief Executive Officer, Director of Client Care, Director of Support Services and Payroll Manager have access to all Human Resource files. Department Heads have access to their own staff personnel files only. A record is kept in Administration as to who has been approved to take a file and a system is in place to track and control file movements. Timesheets are securely filed in a separate file from your personal records.

Staff Handbook

Staff may have access to their personnel files but must arrange a mutually convenient time with the Human Resource Manager. At this time a staff member may peruse the file but is not under any circumstances permitted to remove any documents.

Should staff members wish to have copies made of any documentation on their Human Resources file, the approval of the Chief Executive Officer must be given.

PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATION

For some professions it is essential to maintain current registration with the appropriate State Professional Board.

It is each employee's responsibility to ensure that a copy of his or her current Registration is provided to the Department Head/Team Leader each time Registration is renewed.

Lapsed registration disqualifies a person from performing their professional skills and in such a case Tallangatta Health Service must review their employment.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND CAREER PLANNING

You are encouraged to improve your knowledge and experience to widen your career prospects. You are encouraged to undertake short courses, attend workshops or pursue academic studies to broaden your skills and qualifications. The Service is not always able to fund all courses that staff choose to attend. However, your professional development is your responsibility and if possible financially, some consideration may be made by Tallangatta Health Service.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCEDURE

Guidelines

Performance Appraisal requires commitment, honesty, caring and time. The results of an effective Performance Appraisal system assists in achieving employee job satisfaction, productivity gains and more effective working relationships. Tallangatta Health Service is committed to a staff performance appraisal system which will reduce any negativity and perceived threat by employees and use a team building approach to achieve an outcome that will benefit both the employee and the Service.

Staff Handbook

Procedure

All staff will undertake a performance review annually.

Department Head/Team Leaders have the responsibility for facilitating the Performance Appraisal System with their staff.

The Performance Appraisal format of Tallangatta Health Service requires you to reflect on your past 12 months and identify the goals you had set with your Manager. You need to assess whether these goals were achieved and the reasons if you were unable to achieve them.

In addition, you are required to look at your contribution to the organisation's Values and Mission and then agree on goals for the next 12 months with your Manager.

Performance Appraisals provide the opportunity for you to improve your performance and it is based on a Continuous Improvement Model.

When setting your goals you need to be imaginative and creative. You need to consider what you might do to add additional value to the organisation and improve the services you are employed to provide to clients (these clients may be internal e.g. other staff or external).

Improving performance is not about training courses, although some training may be required to enable you to achieve your goals. Improving performance is about setting some targets (goals) that enable you to increase your contribution in a particular way to the Service and its clients.

These targets or goals will form your Performance Development Plan and will be arranged in order of priority against those set for your department. The departmental priorities will form the basis for service planning, strategic direction and quality action plan.

Your priority list will be used to rate your training requests against your targets, which ultimately link back and support the departments identified needs.

TRAINING AND CONFERENCE REQUESTS

All requests for external training/conferences, should be made on the Leave Request and Training Request Forms, in accordance with the policy. All requests should reflect priorities identified in your Personal Development Plan.

Staff Handbook

PRIVATE PRACTICES

Any staff who have a private practice in the same or similar area of professional expertise for which they are employed by Tallangatta Health Service should notify their Department Head/Team Leader or Chief Executive Officer. A confidential discussion with the Department Head/Team Leader concerning codes of conduct, possible conflicts of interest etc., is recommended. This work may not be performed at times when you are expected to be working for Tallangatta Health Service and the resources of the Service may not be used to support your private business. This involves telephone, facsimile, photocopying, Internet/e-mail, motor vehicle or other resources.

UNION

Union membership is not compulsory, but a matter of individual choice.

Tallangatta Health Service is obligated to inform relevant unions when orientation of new employees occur. Our orientation program provides reference and contact details.

SECTION 10

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAM AND PROCEDURES

Staff Handbook

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Tallangatta health Service is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for staff and suppliers, in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act 1985. This commitment extends to ensuring a safe and healthy living environment for clients, residents and visitors, and meeting moral and legal responsibilities toward local communities.

Each employee is responsible, as a condition of employment, for observing safety rules and policies and taking care in the performance of their duties. Please bring to the notice of your supervisor any matter affecting safety or any potential safety hazard. An Incident Reporting form is available for this purpose and is located in each department.

You are encouraged to maintain good health by exercise, stress management, sensible eating and alcohol intake, and maintaining a positive attitude towards life. Each member of staff, by virtue of their employment, is a potential health educator and can have a positive influence on the lifestyle of friends and colleagues.

Smoking is an avoidable health risk and guidance on cessation is available from the Community Health Nurses.

EMPLOYERS DUTIES

As a Employer, under the Act, Tallangatta Health Service is required to provide and maintain, so far as is practicable, a work environment that is safe and without risk to health.

Specific duties include:

- Provide and maintain safe plant and systems of work
- Arrange safe systems of work in connection with plant and substances
- Provide a safe working environment
- Provide adequate welfare facilities
- Provide information, instruction, training and supervision to enable employees to work safely.
- Monitor the health of employees
- Keep information and records
- Engage or employ suitable people to provide advice on health and safety in their workplace.
- Nominate appropriately senior person/s to act as the employer's representative.
- Monitor conditions at the workplace
- Provide information to employees (in appropriate languages)

Staff Handbook

EMPLOYEE'S DUTIES INCLUDE

While at work, employees must:

- ❑ Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and for the health and safety of anyone else who may be affected by their acts or omissions
- ❑ Cooperate with their employer on any actions taken to comply with the requirements of the OHS Act.
- ❑ Complete the Register of Injury Form as soon as practicable.

Staff shall follow all Health and Safety Policies and Procedures when working on and offsite. Staff shall report all observed potential or actual hazards to their direct supervisor and document on appropriate forms. Forms can be accessed from the General Administration area.

When an injury or near miss occurs at work the Occupational Health and Safety Representative needs to be informed as soon as practicable. An investigation of the incident will occur and the necessary process put into place to address the issues.

EMPLOYEES MUST NOT

- ❑ Wilfully or recklessly interfere with or misuse any safety equipment provided for their use
- ❑ Wilfully put at risk the health and safety of others in their workplace

INJURIES AT WORK

If you suffer an injury arising out of or in the course of employment, you may be covered by workers' compensation. You should report the injury to your Supervisor immediately and complete the Incident Report Form and submit it to your Supervisor. The forms are available at reception.

A copy of this form is placed on your personnel file to serve as a record should there be a future recurrence of your injury. You should also be given a copy for your records.

It should be remembered that completion of the report form does not constitute a claim for workers' compensation. Any claims will require further documentation and should be discussed with your Supervisor.

Staff Handbook

RETURN TO WORK

Tallangatta Health Service recognises and accepts its obligations to assist employees to stay at work or return to work if injured or ill because of their work. As a consequence:

- ❑ All the actions to assist employees to stay at or return to work are commenced as soon as possible in a manner consistent with medical advice
- ❑ Any employee injured or made ill because of their work is returned to work in the shortest possible time, provided it is safe and practicable to do so.

All employees have a moral and legal obligation to inform their supervisor about any injury or health issue that may compromise their ability to undertake their full employment responsibilities. All information disclosed remains confidential and may only be made public knowledge (where appropriate and directly affects others.) on consent of the individual. Refer to Return to Work Policy

INCIDENT REPORT PROCEDURE FOR STAFF

All injuries and accidents that occur to staff in the work place are to be reported regardless of the severity of the injury. The reporting of accidents even if no obvious injury is sustained can assist THS in minimising any risk of future incidents occurring.

The Incident Report Form is to be completed at the time of the injury or incident. All injuries where a person could have been injured or equipment damaged must be reported. It is the responsibility of your Supervisor to ensure that your Department Head receives a copy of the completed Hazard Report within 24 hours of the time of injury. On receipt of the Incident Report, the Department Head / Team Leader shall immediately arrange for an investigation to be commenced. A copy of the form will be provided to the Director of Client Services and the de-identified information will be used as statistical data for Occupation Health and Safety and Quality Assurance processes.

Incident Report Forms are accessible to all staff and your Supervisor or Department Head will ensure that you are aware of the location of the Incident Report Forms. The Incident Report Forms and the subsequent investigation report form the basis of any WorkCover claim made by THS on behalf of staff members of the organisation.

The emphasis of the Occupational Health and Safety Program within THS is to ensure a safe and secure work place for all staff. All staff members have a key role to play in this regard and the reporting of all incidents no matter how minor, can make a positive contribution to achieving this goal.

Staff Handbook

INCIDENT REPORT PROCEDURE FOR CLIENTS AND VISITORS

Guidelines

Our service is insured for Public Liability / Malpractice. We have an obligation consistent with the disclosure requirements of the Insurance Contract. Failure to comply with this obligation could prejudice our rights to indemnity under the contract.

Aims of Incident Reports

1. To ensure that all known incidents, no matter how minor or trivial, have been advised to the Insurance Company.
2. To comply with the requirement of our Public Liability/Malpractice Insurance.
3. To ensure that corrective action is taken to prevent the incident occurring again.

Procedure

Immediately after attending to an incident/accident and arranging medical attention, if appropriate, complete an Incident Report Form from the Pads located in each department.

1. Forward the Incident Report Form to your Department Head to ensure information is received as soon as possible after the incident has occurred. The Department Head sign off the report and it is placed in the Incident Reports pigeonhole.
2. Information is collated by the Quality Co-ordinator, results forward to RIP committee, OT and relative department heads for evaluation and follow-up.
3. Administration Staff will complete and sign off the Forwarding Sheet each time that pink copy of Incident Reports are forwarded to our Insurers to ensure our compliance has been documented.

COMMUNICATION FOLLOWING AN INCIDENT

Our Insurance Policy requires that you must not admit liability, nor agree to any arrangements, without first obtaining the written consent of the insurer. Many organisations have worried about the impact of this clause when meeting with patients or their relatives after a serious incident. Organisations are concerned, that if they fail to give a proper explanation to the patient or relatives, the patient/relatives will suspect a cover up, and seek legal advice. An accurate explanation of the incident may well have satisfied the needs of the patient / relatives and allayed their fears and concerns.

Staff Handbook

The purpose of this requirement of the Insurance Policy is to prevent Tallangatta Health Service from entering into any binding legal admission of guilt or agreement to pay compensation. It is not intended to impede a proper discussion with the patient/relatives about the incident.

It is perfectly proper for the Chief Executive Officer, the Medical Officer or the head of the responsible unit, to explain the factual bases of an incident, as best the Service has been able to determine them with the patient/relatives at a suitable time. Usually, from a psychological not a legal viewpoint, the proper time is not immediately after the incident, because of the shock which is often involved. Once it is clear that the patient/relatives have the psychological capacity to absorb the information, it is quite appropriate for the senior person to give a comprehensive factual explanation of the events connected with the incident. This can (and should) be accompanied by appropriate expression of concern for the patient/relatives.

What must be avoided is attributing fault to any particular person or item of equipment or THS at large. Quite often, the actual cause of an incident cannot be established until some time afterwards, when a complete investigation has been made. An admission of liability, without knowledge of all the facts, could inculcate Tallangatta Health Service unnecessarily, and cause the patient or relatives to lose confidence in the Service.

FIRST AID

A First Aid Kit is available in the Acute Ward, Accident and Emergency, Lake view Nursing Home, Kitchen area and Activity Centre. Any injury requiring First Aid attention should be reported to your Supervisor and an incident form completed. The register of Injury Form will also need to be completed. The First Aid Officer on any shift is the Nurse in Charge of the shift. Any First Aid enquires or requirements should be directed to this person.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Staff must make themselves familiar with the emergency procedures. Emergency Procedure Action Plans are located in each department. Your first priority is to:

1. Know what to do in case of fire (Evacuation, use of fire extinguishers etc)
2. Attend Fire Training Sessions.

INFECTION CONTROL

Staff Handbook

Standard Precautions

Staff must use standard precautions as part of their daily routine.

Infection Control Policy and Procedural Manuals are located in all areas

This means staff should assume that all residents and staff are potentially infected and therefore should use basic infection control measures when there is potential to come into contact with:

- ❑ Body fluids, excluding sweat
- ❑ Moist body surfaces
- ❑ Non-intact skin
- ❑ Mucous membranes
- ❑ Dried blood and body substances.

PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

Protective clothing should be worn and regular hand washing should occur for all situations where staff may in direct contact with blood or body substances. Refer to Protective clothing policy in the OHS Manual

HAND WASHING

Routine hand washing techniques, at least 15-30 seconds

Hands are only washed in the hand basins provide. Avoid using resident's washbasins.

Wet hands with warm water

One depression of the dispenser

Work up lather

Wash palms, fingers, thumbs, nails and wrists

Rinse off soap by washing hands under running water for no less than twenty seconds.

Dry with paper towel- ***do not use clothing.***

If there are no elbow or foot controls turn off tap, after drying hands, with paper towel.

SECTION 11

SERVICE'S ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES

Staff Handbook

FILING SYSTEM

A Corporate Filing system is used throughout the organisation. Files are located in the Administration Office. The File Directory is also located in this area.

Staff are requested to ensure all incoming and outgoing correspondence, submissions and reports are placed on the appropriate Corporate File. All issues related to individual clients should be placed on the Client File.

PETTY CASH

Should you wish to make a purchase using petty cash, please make prior arrangements with the Finance Manager. Purchases made first may not be reimbursed as a matter of process.

ORDERING GOODS PROCEDURE

Guidelines

The general philosophy of Tallangatta Health Service is that all goods and services must be obtained at the lowest cost, consistent with acceptable quality, quantity and availability. In addition, no goods or services will be purchased without agreement on price, prior to the supply of goods or services. Where this is not possible, then a firm written agreement on the basis for calculating price must be obtained.

Budget

All Tallangatta Health Service purchases are to be within the current budget as approved by the Board. Clearly, no expenditure is to be incurred in excess of the current budget, not in excess of particular expenditure limits without the approval of the Chief Executive Officer or his/her delegate.

For copy of the Instrument of Delegation please see your Department Head.

Open and Effective Competition

Staff Handbook

The Purchasing Procedure has an emphasis on effective competition, which is directed at obtaining the best possible value for money, which also includes quality goods and services, timeliness of supply, after sales service and other customer considerations. Specifically, the purchase must always demonstrate the absence of bias or favouritism.

Quotations

The following guidelines must be observed when purchasing goods and services within the following cost structures. Where the cost of purchases or services are likely to exceed:

- (1) \$1,000 – suppliers should be invited to submit written quotations. It is desirable that a minimum of three is obtained.
- (2) \$5,000 – quotations are to be obtained by a public notice in the Border Mail.
- (3) \$30,000 – to be advertised by Tender.

Following the decision to purchase, having addressed all issues in the guidelines above, a purchase order must then be prepared. The purchase order must state;

- (a) Name of Supplier
- (b) Quantity of Goods/Services Ordered
- (c) Detailed Description of Goods/Services Ordered
- (d) Quoted Price of Goods/Services
- (e) Where the Goods are to be Delivered
- (f) Program and Account Number Goods/Services are to be Costed
- (g) Signature and Name of Staff Ordering Goods/Services
- (h) Signature of Manager Authorising Purchase
- (i) Date Ordered

Once the above has been completed the purchase order is to be faxed or mailed to the supplier. The only exception to using a purchase order is where the goods/services need to be prepaid by a cheque prior to their delivery. In this case a cheque requisition is used. The cheque requisition must state:

- (a) Name of Supplier
- (b) \$ Value of the cheque
- (c) Address of Supplier
- (d) Detailed Description of Goods/Services
- (e) Signature of Staff Ordering Goods/Services
- (f) Signature of Manager Authorising Purchase
- (g) Date of Cheque Requisition
- (h) Date Cheque is Required

Staff Handbook

- (i) Program and Account Number Goods/Services are to be costed.

RECEIVING GOODS PROCEDURE

Goods delivered to Tallangatta Health Service need to be checked prior to being stored or used.

The goods firstly need to be checked against the delivery docket or receipt that accompanies the goods to ensure what is being charged for has actually been received and also, that the goods are not damaged.

The goods secondly need to be checked against the purchase order that was raised to purchase the goods to ensure what was received was what was ordered. If an invoice accompanied the goods the price also needs to be checked with the price quoted on the purchase order.

If any discrepancies exist, they should be clearly identified on the invoice or delivery docket and the supplier must be notified of the discrepancy.

The invoice or delivery docket must then be attached to the purchase order and sent to the Administration Department for actioning, together with a file note detailing any discussions held with the supplier regarding any discrepancy.

FAX COVER SHEET

A standard fax cover sheet is used throughout the Service. This cover sheet can be obtained at each fax machine.

SECTION 12

LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS AND SALARY

Staff Handbook

ANNUAL LEAVE

Annual Leave conditions are applicable to staff at THS in accordance with the relevant Award or Agreement under which you are employed.

Accrued Leave is made up of Annual Leave Credit and Pro Rata Annual Leave.

The leave contained on your payslip is not Accrued Leave and staff should consult the Payroll staff for their Accrued Leave Credit.

Annual Leave should be taken within a period of six (6) months after the date upon which the leave becomes due. This will depend on the availability of relief staff and should be negotiated with the Department Head / Team Leader. However, that taking of leave may be extended for up to a further six months by mutual agreement between the employee and the Department Head / Team Leader. Annual Leave entitlements must be taken no later than twelve (12) months from the anniversary date.

No staff member may have more than SIX WEEKS accrued leave and Department Head / Team Leaders have a responsibility to ensure all leave is kept below five weeks at any given time. Negative Annual Leave balances will not be approved, except if authorised by the Chief Executive Officer for exceptional family circumstances.

At least 4 weeks notice of leave is required.

All leave application forms must be approved by Managers prior to lodgement with the Human Resource Manager.

Leave applications are to be attached to timesheets up to and including the leave period and submitted to the Department Head / Team Leader.

Alterations to the period of Annual Leave may be directed to the Department Head / Team Leader.

Queries regarding entitlement to Annual Leave may be directed to the Payroll Officer.

LEAVE WITHOUT PAY WILL NOT BE GRANTED IF YOU HAVE ACCRUED ANNUAL LEAVE AVAILABLE. All Leave Without Pay must be applied for in writing to the Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer must approve any Leave Without Pay.

Staff Handbook

ABSENCE FROM DUTY

The unexpected absence of employees is one of the greatest problems faced by Supervisors. It can necessitate rearranging staff rosters at short notice and can result in a heavier burden being forced on fellow workers to assume extra duties. If you are ill or some emergency arises which prevents your attendance at work, it is essential that you arrange to have your Supervisor notified as soon as possible and preferably before the commencement of your shift. You should also indicate the possible duration of your absence. All absences and their reasons should be notified directly to your Supervisor. It is not acceptable to leave a message at Reception or with another staff member.

ALLOCATED DAY OFF (ADO'S)

Full-time staff whose award provides for a 38-hour working week are provided with one allocated day off every four weeks if the Supervisor has agreed to this arrangement or in accordance with your Award. Time for the allocated day off is made up by working 40 hours each week, thereby building up a credit of 24 minutes a day.

After working 19 days sufficient time is accumulated to have a day off work with pay. Time does not accrue towards an allocated day off where a staff member is on leave without pay, long service leave or unpaid maternity leave. However, time does accrue whilst staff are on paid sick leave or leave accrued for working Sundays and / or public holidays. Where an employee's allocated day off falls during a period of sick leave, the employee's available sick leave shall not be debited for that day; that is, the allocated day off is not to be taken at a sick day, nor is it to be taken on an alternative day.

An employee's allocated day off is determined by mutual agreement between the employee and the Supervisor having regards to the needs of the Program. Permission from your Supervisor will be needed to accrue any ADO's and this is discouraged. Permission will only be granted for exceptional circumstances.

TIME IN LIEU

Some staff are able to accrue Time in Lieu (TIL) for additional hours worked above your daily total.

Time in Lieu, like overtime, must be approved by your Department Head / Team Leader **PRIOR** to it being accrued.

Staff Handbook

- No more than 8 hours balance of TIL is to be accumulated
- No more than an 8 hour block of TIL is to be taken at any one time
- TIL should be taken only after consideration is given to levels of service delivery - ensure your work can be completed and others are not employed to do your work.
- TIL should be kept to a minimum by coming to work 1-2 hours later than your normal start time or going home early where possible.
- If TIL is accrued because you have worked a day of the weekend, it is appropriate to plan your schedule so that you can take the next working day off.
- **Remember: there is no liability to pay TIL if you leave the organisation**
- If you plan to arrive late or leave early, your supervisor must be notified.
- If TIL is accrued in a manner in which it is accrued constantly, then work practices/contracted hours of work need to be reviewed for the individual, and either work practices adjusted or hours of employment increased and paid accordingly.
- Generally, TIL is not applicable to travel to and from Tallangatta Health Service funded training sessions. On such occasions travel should be treated as part of the standard working day.

Please refer to the Time in Lieu Policy for more detail.

COMPASSIONATE OR BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Health and Allied Services Award Staff

Are entitled on the death or serious illness within Australia of a spouse, including a de-facto spouse, father, mother, brother, sister, child, step-child, mother-in-law or father-in-law, grandparent, grandchild or next of kin to leave not exceeding the hours worked by the employee in two ordinary days work. The aggregate of all leave taken as compassionate or bereavement leave can not exceed the number of hours worked by the employee in four ordinary day's work.

Nurses Award Staff

Are entitled on the death or serious illness within Australia of a wife, husband, father, mother, brother, sister, child, step-child, mother-in-law or father-in-law, grandparent, grandchild or next of kin, are entitled to leave up to and including the funeral for the hours worked by the Nurse in two ordinary days work. On the death outside of Australia, leave is granted for a husband, wife, mother, father, sister, brother, child. Wife and husband include a person who lives with the employee as a de-facto spouse. The aggregate of all leave taken as compassionate or bereavement leave can not exceed the number of hours worked by the employee in four ordinary day's work.

All Awards

Staff Handbook

This leave does not apply if the employee is already on other leave. Proof of such death or, in the case of serious illness, dependence for care of such relation, is required to be furnished by the employee. A note from the relative's medical practitioner or funeral director will usually suffice.

LONG SERVICE LEAVE

Long Service Leave is accrued according to the various Industrial Awards. Long Service Leave may be taken at any time it becomes due but the period of leave must be for a minimum period of four weeks. Long Service Leave can also be negotiated to be taken and double pay over half the time or ½ pay over double the time. Ask Payroll for more information.

PAY INFORMATION

General

Payday is fortnightly on every alternative Wednesday. All staff are paid up to and including the Sunday immediately prior to the payday. Therefore, the pay period begins on a Monday and ends on a Sunday. Your salary will be transferred directly your bank.

Enquiries regarding your pay should be made to your Supervisor or the Payroll Office.

Time Recording

It is your responsibility to ensure that your timesheet is delivered to your Department Head / Team Leader by the nominated time (Wednesday prior to the end of the pay period). The Department Head / Team Leader must then check and authorise all timesheets and deliver to Payroll. This requires you to estimate your hours for the remainder of that week. Alterations to the previous week's timesheet must be given to your Department Head / Team Leader by 10 am on the Monday of the pay week. Alterations are usually related to additional hours worked or sick / emergency leave.

Methods of Salary Payment

Pay is only by direct deposit to the following financial institutions:

- All Banks
- All Building Societies
- All Credit Unions

If you wish to change the account or financial institution where your pay is credited you must supply the Payroll Office with the following information on a Bank Deposit Details Form:

Employee Name

Staff Handbook

Employee Number

Name of Bank

Bank Address

BSB Number

Account Number

Account Name

AUTOMATIC DEDUCTIONS

The payroll system is able to make certain deductions from your pay automatically. These are:

Bank / Building Society Savings – as well as having your fortnightly pay credited to the account of your choice, you can have a set amount(s) credited to a Bank / Building Society / Credit Union account for special savings.

Insurance premiums for policies with AMP, MLC

Staff Social Club and Departmental Social Clubs

Extra Tax

Superannuation

Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS). To have HECS deducted from your pay, the employment declaration will need to be completed correctly.

HEALTH INSURANCE

All staff make fortnightly contributions to Medicare by tax levy which is not shown as a separate item on pay envelopes, but are included in each taxation payment.

RECOGNITION OF PREVIOUS SERVICE FOR INCREMENTAL SALARY PURPOSES

Staff Handbook

If you have previous service in the health industry (e.g. a hospital or community health centre) in a position directly related to your job at Tallangatta Health Service your service may be recognisable for incremental purposes. The onus is on employees to prove previous service and letters are required from former employers to determine your eligibility. The letters should state;

- (a) Period of Service
- (b) Whether the service was part-time or full-time. If part-time, should state hours per week.
- (c) Whether there were any periods of leave without pay
- (d) Award Classification.

For nursing staff, your Service Record is generally sufficient proof of previous recognisable service.

SUPERANNUATION

Membership of the Health Super Pty Ltd Superannuation Fund is available to all employees. As a part of the Federal Government's Superannuation Guarantee (SG) requirements, Tallangatta Health Service contributes an amount equal 8% increasing to 9% from 1 July 2002. Employees may also make additional voluntary contributions either by a fortnightly deduction from their pay or by lump sum payments by cheque into their account.

The Superannuation Fund offers a base death and disability cover and this may be increased on request. Enquiries about superannuation should be directed to the Payroll Co-ordinator.

OVERTIME

In general, overtime is worked only in exceptional circumstances with prior approval of your Department Head / Team Leader required.

CONCLUSION OF EMPLOYMENT

Resignation

Staff Handbook

Each award allows for a minimum notice of resignation by the employee. The period varies from one week to one month. Each employee must obtain a clearance for keys, books, identification badge, their individual computer password and other Service property before a final pay will be issued. Staff should make themselves aware of the notice resignation required under their award.

Termination of Employment

This differs from resignation in that it is employer originated. The general categories are;

- (a) Having completed the period of employment or training for which a person was engaged.
- (b) Dismissal

Dismissal

The Workplace Relations Act 1996 sets out the obligations upon employers and employees in relation to dismissal. The Act ensures that both the employer and employee are accorded a "fair go" when dismissal of an employee is considered.

An employee may appeal a dismissal if;

1. The dismissal was unlawful under the Act
2. The dismissal was harsh, unjust and unreasonable.
3. A combination of the above.

An application for unfair dismissal must be lodged within 21 days after the day on which the dismissal took place.

In determining whether a dismissal has been harsh, unjust or unreasonable, the Commission will have regard to:

- Whether there was a valid reason for the dismissal
- Whether the employee was notified of the reason
- Whether the employee has had an opportunity to respond
- If the termination was related to unsatisfactory work performance, whether the employee has been warned in writing
- Any other matter the Commission considers to be relevant.

If the Commission determines that the dismissal was harsh, unjust or unreasonable, it may order the following:

Staff Handbook

- (a) Reinstatement of the employee and back-pay
- (b) The employer to pay compensation or
- (c) Any other order that it thinks appropriate to put the employee in the same position as if the employee had not been dismissed.

The maximum compensation for unlawful termination that an employee can be awarded under the Act is 6 months remuneration if you are on a normal award or 6 months remuneration or \$33,100 (whichever is the lesser) for a Non Award Employer (adjusted annually based on Consumer Price Index).

Retirement Age

There is no compulsory retirement based on the grounds of age. The Services Superannuation Contribution terminates when a person has their 70th birthday. Your Voluntary Superannuation Contribution terminates when you have your 65th birthday.

SECTION 13

USING THE SERVICE'S MOTOR VEHICLES

Staff Handbook

MOTOR VEHICLE POOL

If you are required to use a Tallangatta Health Service vehicle as part of your job you should contact Reception to ascertain booking procedures, log sheet requirements etc. Please bear in mind that private use of Service vehicles is not permitted even when you are on call.

All use of vehicles (other than program allocated) must be requested using the vehicle booking forms, in accordance to the Motor Vehicle Policy and Booking Form. If staff need a vehicle at night, a specific vehicle is allocated and should be returned after the meeting.

All bookings for vehicles should be made via Reception.

MOTOR VEHICLE POLICY

Motor vehicles are provided by Tallangatta Health Service to ensure the efficient and effective operation of the Service and responsive service delivery. The Chief Executive Officer and DOCS have private use of a vehicle as part of his/her salary package. All vehicles are available for the use of staff in carrying out their responsibilities to the Service.

Vehicles required for work purposes should be booked by the staff member with Reception.

Vehicles should not be returned with less than ½ a tank of fuel. All vehicles are equipped with a fuel card and wherever possible, the local supplier of fuel should be used.

Vehicles should be treated with respect and left clean and tidy, with all rubbish removed. The no smoking policy of the service extends to all Tallangatta Health Service vehicles. Staff using a vehicle should report any problems with the vehicle (e.g. accidents, overheating, broken lights etc.) to the Chief Executive Officer on return.

Condition of Use

1. Staff who need to use a vehicle should reserve it as soon as they know they will need a car, advising the Receptionist of their name, time out and expected time of return.
2. When vehicles are returned, the actual time of return should be entered in the booking diary. This is necessary so that the Service is able to comply with its responsibilities regarding speed camera tickets, parking fines etc.

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3. All staff are required to assist in the operation of this procedure by returning the vehicle within the time specified or phone in to advise of any delays. This will ensure that other staff are not late for appointments, meetings etc. due to the unavailability of vehicles.
4. The Maintenance vehicle will be used solely for maintenance work, however staff members who require a utility for work purposes may make special arrangements with the Maintenance Manager. A booking form is still required.
5. Please refer to the Motor Vehicle Policy for more detail and booking procedure.

DRIVERS LICENCE PROCEDURE

Why have a Driver's Licence Procedure?

Tallangatta Health Service has the responsibility to provide a health and safe work environment for its entire staff and the community, and will actively seek to ensure the prevention of workplace injury and illness.

In order to meet this obligation, Tallangatta Health Service has prepared this policy to comply with Health and Safety Legislation as well as the Road Safety Act. The Act states that:

"A person who employs, permits or allows a person to drive a motor vehicle on a highway is guilty of an offence if the driver does not hold a permit or licence which authorises him or her to drive such a motor vehicle."

What is your responsibility as a staff member?

Staff while at work have a duty of care to ensure their own health and safety as well as any other person who may be affected by the staff member's acts or omissions at the workplace. Staff are also required to adhere to Tallangatta Health Service's health and safety work practices and policies. The Act also states that:

"A person who is employed to drive a motor vehicle on a highway is guilty of an offence if he or she does not notify his or her employer if he or she does not hold or continue to hold a permit or licence which authorises him or her to drive such a motor vehicle."

If staff breach the Act i.e. if they drive a vehicle without a licence, they risk termination of employment, a fine and liability for any damage to Tallangatta Health Service or third party vehicles if involved in an accident.

Staff Member Reporting Pending and Actual Loss of Licence

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Tallangatta Health Service staff have an obligation to notify the relevant Manager or Supervisor:

1. If and when the driver's licence has been suspended, permanently lost or other actions e.g. limitations etc.
2. Of the actual person for which the drivers licence has been suspended or otherwise.

Procedures

All staff who either use a THS vehicle as required in their Position Description and / or use a Service vehicle in the course of their employment must provide a copy of their current licence to Tallangatta Health Service. The supply of the drivers licence information will only entitle Tallangatta Health Service to check whether or not the staff driver's licence is current. No other information will be provided to Tallangatta Health Service.

Staff with an out of state or foreign licence under Road Safety Regulations must obtain a Victorian licence within three months. As part of the recruitment process, the Department Head / Team Leader must ensure that a copy of the potential staff member's driver's licence is obtained where driving a Service vehicle is part of the job. Staff must provide a copy of the renewed driver's licence once their current licence expires. This information is to be forwarded to the Administration Department. All licence information will be treated in a confidential manner and once recorded will be placed in Personnel Files.

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CONCLUSION

This Handbook has been provided to assist all staff in their work for Tallangatta Health Service. It will be updated from time to time and additional pages provided to you to update your own Handbook. The Handbook must be returned to Tallangatta Health Service if you leave your employment.

Please read your Handbook from time to time as it is an excellent resource to refresh your memory on issues regarding your employment and your work with Tallangatta Health Service.

Staff members are encouraged to provide feedback on the Staff Handbook and should contact the Chief Executive Officer with suggestions for improvement.

Staff Handbook

EVALUATION

1. As a new staff member what was not in the book that you needed or wanted to know about?

2. The design of the new staff handbook is:

Appropriate

Too Big

Easy to follow

Confusing

Other:

3. When reading the Staff Handbook what did you think about the layout?

4. From your point of view, how useful was this handbook in developing your knowledge?

5. Your ideas / comments for future editions

6. Do you want more information? Please provide details
