

Purpose:

The Victorian Government has introduced child safe standards to improve the way organisations that provide services for children prevent and respond to child abuse that may occur within their organisation.

The standards are compulsory for all organisations providing services to children, and aim to drive cultural change in organisations so that protecting children from abuse is embedded in the everyday thinking and practice of leaders, staff and volunteers.

The standards will apply to organisations providing services for children. This includes organisations that provide services to both adults and children.

Therefore, this policy outlines how The Digestive Health Centre meets these child safe standards.

Definitions:

Children:

The Act defines children as anyone under the age of 18

Direct contact:

face-to-face contact, contact by post or other written communication, contact by telephone or other oral communication, or contact by email or other electronic communication.

Regular contact:

Regular contact with children can be defined as contact with children that is part of your duties i.e. not incidental to your work. It relates to the care of a child where contact is expected. Theatre lists, admissions, and transport of persons under the age of 18 is not considered incidental work and would require any staff in contact with these patients to have WWC.

NB: Incidental work would be visiting children, of an adult patient, admitted for care at the facility

Policy:

Our organisation is committed to child safety.

We want children to be safe, happy, and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.

We are committed to the safety, participation, and empowerment of all children.

We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures.

We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.

Our organisation is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early and removing and reducing these risks.

Our organisation has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers.

Our organisations is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.

We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff, and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

NB: this statement is displayed in reception and in our 'How do we manage Safety and Quality' information folder.

Supporting documents

III R system

Staff Register and personnel files

VMO Register and VMO files

Minutes of Management Review Meetings and Medical Executive Meetings

Child safe procedure CG-007-WI001

Child safe statement of commitment CG-007-B001

References

Working with Children and the Child Safe Standards Frequently asked Questions

www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/child-safe-standards

[Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 \(legislation.vic.gov.au\)](http://legislation.vic.gov.au)

[Child Wellbeing and Safety Regulations 2017 \(legislation.vic.gov.au\)](http://legislation.vic.gov.au)

[About Child Safe Standards | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](http://www.vic.gov.au)

[Joint Statement Child Safe Standard 1 \(https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/news/joint-statement-child-safe-standard-1\)](https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/news/joint-statement-child-safe-standard-1)

Version	Date	Author	Description
1	05/08/2017	CEO	ISO Format & Review
2	29/01/2020	DON	Reviewed
3	01/03/2022	BOM	Reviewed no changes
4	06/03/2024	BOM/DON/Quality consultant	Reviewed – updated references
5	10/09/2025	DON/BOM	Updated references to include Joint Statement. Altered wording at beginning from 'is introducing' to 'has introduced'