

Masonic Homes Community Care



The Masonic Homes was invited to be involved in a pilot project developed by a steering committee under the Safer Aged Care Strategic Plan.

Consultant, Marion Pocock, conducted an audit in consultation with Valerie Sandlant, Residential & Community Care Manager and Chris Racar, the OHS/CQI Co-ordinator.

The community aged care packages were a new service to the Masonic Homes, which meant starting from the basics. At the first meeting it was found that provisions for community care could be incorporated into a number of Masonic Homes' existing policies and procedures. Valerie, Chris and Marion met to develop an action plan to be implemented over a 6-month period.

The action plan included:

Goal 1 – Policies and procedures to reflect issues of community.

Actions – Valerie was invited to join Masonic Homes OHS committee and assisted in including community care in all relevant policies when they were tabled for review. Valerie and Chris met on a regular basis to work through the listing from the action plan of required procedures to be developed:

- First aid procedures
- Isolated/after hours work procedures
- Electrical testing

- Aggression procedures
- Infection control

The most time consuming area was organising the material safety data sheets from the manufacturers for the home support workers that were using the client's own chemicals.

Goal 2 – OHS plan developed and regularly reviewed.

The community care packages were implemented at the tail end of the OHS action plan. OHS committee members decided to include community care as a main goal for the next 3yr OHS strategic plan. The community care program will also be included in the year 2002 Safety Achievers Business System (SABS).

Regular meetings that included OHS as a standard item agenda were organised for home support workers to attend. The first area to be discussed with workers was the hazard management audits that had been conducted in client's homes.

Goal 3 – OHS training

A training needs analysis was conducted by Valerie and Chris, resulting in a full day training session to include areas such as:

- Handling of aggression
- Fire safety in the client's home
- Safe work procedures
- Chemical safety
- Hazard management
- OHS responsibilities

Separate training sessions were conducted for manual handling and infection control. It was identified that staff would require ongoing manual handling training and be able to access a person who could assist with any manual handling issues that may arise within the community care.

Trea, a member from the community care staff, joined The Masonic Homes manual handling committee and has just completed the No lift/No Injury training session program to assist community care staff with any issues.

Goal 4 – OHS hazards have been identified, assessed and controlled.

Valerie or the community care co-ordinator in consultation with home support workers used the 'client home OHS assessment form' from *the guidelines* to identify any hazards within the client's homes. Methods were then discussed to assess, control and monitor the hazards.

The guidelines were a valuable source of information for The Masonic Homes when developing and implementing the OHS systems for community care.

We would like to thank the Safer Aged Care Working Party for identifying the need to develop industry specific OHS guidelines, the WorkCover Corporation Grants Scheme who funded the project, the consultant Marion Pocock and all members on the steering committee who gave their time and expertise to make the project a success.

Contact: Chris Racar, OHS Manager
Masonic Homes
Tel: (08) 8375 1509