Child Safe Policy

1. Purpose

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of Health Services at Modbury to child safety and establishing and maintaining a child safe and child friendly environment.

2. Context

This policy reflects our commitment to provide a safe environment where every person has the right to be treated with respect and is safe and protected from abuse.

It complies with our obligations under the Children's Protection Act 1993, including Section 8B-8D: Child Safe Environments and criminal history assessments for people working with children; and Section 11: Mandatory reporting.

It also complies with the Child Safe Environments: Principles of Good Practice and Standards for dealing with information obtained about the criminal history of employees and volunteer who work with children issued by the Chief Executive of the Department for Families and Communities.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all persons working within this practice, including employees, volunteers, contractors, students; any other individual involved in this practice and includes all employees who regularly work with or around children in an unsupervised capacity or have access to children's health records.

4. Commitment to child safety

The Practices are committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people accessing our facility. Every child who comes to this practice has the right to feel and be safe. Everyone within our practice has a role to play in ensuring a safe environment for children.

We have appointed a child safety officer, the operations manager, as a first point of contact to provide advice and support to employees, volunteers, patients, children, young people, parents and caregivers regarding the safety and well-being of children and young people in our Practice. The child safety officer is also responsible for monitoring our child safety policy and practices, including our ongoing training needs relating to child protection issues.

5. Children's participation

The Practices encourages and respects the views of children who access our services. We listen to and act upon any concerns that children, young people or their families raise with us. We ensure that children, young people and their families know their rights and how to access the complaints procedures available to them.

We provide clear age-appropriate or developmentally appropriate explanation to children and young people and allow for questions during consultation and treatment. We involve children in decision-making as appropriate.

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices.

If any child or young person has any concern with the treatment they receive within the practice, they are encouraged to discuss this with a trusted adult either within or outside of the practice.

6. Recruitment

In order to comply with the legislation, The Practices take all reasonable steps to ensure that the most suitable and appropriate people working with children are employed. In order to do this all existing and new staff are required to undergo a Criminal History Assessment as set out in Section 8B of the Children's Protection Act 1993. A satisfactory criminal history assessment is a precondition of working in a position at this Practice.

Prior to the appointment of a new Clinical employee and then at 3 yearly intervals, The Practices will direct the applicant/employee to obtain a letter of clearance as evidence that the applicant does not pose an increased risk on harm to children. Letters of clearance are obtained for all current employees. The Practice may obtain a further criminal history assessment for an employee at any time that The Practice believes it necessary or desirable for the purpose of maintaining a child safe environment.

Support and ongoing training for staff and others is provided so that our facility remains compliant with the legislation to provide a safe environment for children and young people.

There are two options to access a criminal history assessment:

Option 1- A current letter of clearance from the Department for Families and Communities Screening Unit. The cost of obtaining a letter of clearance is born by the employee. The informed written consent of the applicant is required prior to conducting a criminal history assessment. The Screening Unit's consent form is available from
www.dfc.sa.gov.au/pub/screening.

Option 2- Obtain a National Police Certificate (NPC) from South Australian Police. The cost of obtaining a NPC is born by the employee. The NPC application form is available from
http://www.police.sa.gov.au/sapol/services/information_requests/national_police_certificate.jsp.

Where a person has no disclosable criminal history, the assessment is successfully completed and no further action is required.

Where an individual does not have a criminal history, this Practice assesses this information on its individual merits and with consideration to the inherent requirements of the position. Information relating to a persons criminal history and the assessment process is managed securely and confidentially.

7. Code of conduct

Everyone covered by the scope of this policy is aware of and must abide by, our Code of Conduct. This policy is located in the Practice Manual and forms part of the recruitment process and induction process for new staff and others.

8. Reporting and responding to suspect child abuse and neglect

All employees and volunteers understand their obligation to notify the Child Abuse Report Line

on **13 14 78**

as soon as practicable if they have a reasonable suspicion that a child has been, or is being, abused or neglected.

From time to time we provide opportunities for employees to attend information sessions about these mandatory reporting obligations. We also ensure that employees have access to relevant information resources available from the Department for Families and Communities, including Guidelines for Mandated Notifiers.

9. Strategies to minimise risk

This Practice takes steps to minimise the risks to children due to the actions or omissions of employees, contractors or other people within our Practice. We review our risks regularly to address any new or emerging risks in order to maintain a safe environment for children.

Strategies we have implemented to minimise risks to children include:

- High risk situations are addressed in our Code of Conduct.
- All employees are required to abide by our child safe policy.
- Employees are aware of and are responsive to the particular needs and vulnerabilities of children and young people (such as age, language barriers, developmental capabilities, disability, mental health, trauma or abuse).
- All patients and caregivers are made aware that young children entering our Practice must be supervised at all times. Where a child or young person is unaccompanied by a parent or caregiver, the practitioner will consider whether a chaperone is required.
- Employees provide clear age- appropriate or developmentally appropriate explanations to children about the consultation and allow for questions prior to examinations.
- Where treatment requires physical contact, employees will first seek the consent of the children and their parents (where applicable).
- Employees confirm the identity of any child receiving treatment at The Practice.

- We respond to any concerns that children, or their families or carers raise with use quickly and fairly.
- Employees understand their obligation to notify the Child Abuse Report Line on **13 14 78** as soon as practicable if they have a reasonable suspicion that a child or young person has been or is being abused or neglected.
- We ensure a physically and socially safe environment for children that is free of any identifiable hazards.

Evaluation of these strategies and the development of additional strategies to minimise and control risks to children and young people occur as part of out ongoing risk management process.

Any changes to the legislation will be communicated to staff.

Signed .....

Name .....

Date .....

Reviewed 11/11/2026 By practice manager