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# The Lone Ranger: Creating guidance for those working alone in the public health system

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GUIDELINE DOCUMENT

## Isolated or Remote Work Guideline for ACT Health Services

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Steering Committee  
**Audience** Calvary Public Hospital Bruce  
Canberra Health Services  
ACT Health Directorate  
**Version number** 1

# Nurses and Midwives: Towards a Safer Culture (TASC)- The First Step- Strategy

To provide a safe and healthy environment, an environment where our staff and all persons who enter ACT Health workplaces, encompassing **ACT Health Directorate, Canberra Health Services and Calvary Public Hospital Bruce**, are protected from harm and feel safe at all times



# Occupational Violence

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OV is defined as any action, incident or behaviour that departs from reasonable conduct in which a person is assaulted, threatened, harmed or injured in the course of, or as a direct result of, his or her work (International Labour Organisations Code of Practice)

- Personal intimidation, verbal abuse, physical assault, sexual harassment, threatening behaviour, abuse through technology (text, emails, and phone calls), making vexatious complaints, and making derogatory, slanderous or threatening statements to or about another person.



# Protecting workers and others from harm

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- The ACT public health system are committed to implementing various initiatives and strategies, to improve workplace safety and continued compliance with their legislated responsibility to protect workers and others from harm.
  - *Under the Work Health Safety ACT 2011 (ACT), reasonably practicable steps must be taken to protect workers through the **elimination** or **minimisation** of risks related to work practices.*

# The TASC journey so far..



# NM Strategy – 4 Pillars – 22 Priority Actions

NM TASC

## PILLAR 1

### Organisational Wide Actions

- PA 1 – Establish Strategy Governance
- PA 2 – Review and strengthen Governance
- PA 3 - Implementation of WHS Plans
- PA 4 - Staff Engagement
- PA 5 – Clinical Leadership and Leadership Support
- PA 6 – Ongoing Review to ensure meeting legislative requirements
- PA 7 - Strategy Evaluation

## PILLAR 2

### Occupational Violence and Aggression

- PA 8 – Disruptive Behaviour Guideline (Challenging Behaviour Guideline)
- PA 9 - Safewards
- PA 10 – Increased OVA visibility across organisation
- PA 11 – Target strategies to prevent OVA
- PA12 – Post OVA follow up (Managers OV Incident Response Toolkit)
- **PA 13 – Lone worker Guidelines (Isolated & Remote Worker Guideline)**
- PA 14 - Community Awareness communication strategy

## PILLAR 3

### Challenging Occupational Behaviours

- PA 15 - Civility Index Measurement
  - PA 16 – Use PA 15 to develop targeted strategies
  - PA 17 - Review of bullying and harassment prevention and management guidelines
  - PA 18 - Review of dispute and conflict resolution guidelines to focus on management and early intervention
- (Culture Review)

## PILLAR 4

### Safe Work Practices

- PA 19 – Research and develop a Ratio Framework
- PA 20 – Develop and implement a Workload Management System
- PA 21 – Review and strengthen rostering and leave allocation guidelines (Rostering Discussion Paper)
- PA 22 – Embed Safe Workplace Design

# Isolated and Remote Work Guideline for ACT Health Services

The Isolated and Remote Work Guideline for ACT Health Services is designed to support ACT public health workplaces to **identify, manage, and respond** to risk when workers are located in isolated or remote work environments.

# Defining Isolated or Remote Work

In relation to a worker, means work that is isolated from the assistance of other persons because of **location, time** or the **nature of the work** (Work Health and Safety Regulation, 2022, Part 3.2, Section 48).

Who	Where
Nursing	Alone in peoples homes
Counsellor	Alone in the building
Assessor	Isolated in peoples homes
School Youth Health Nurse	Isolated among others
Audiometry Nurse	Working in remote sites
Registrar	Community
Resident Medical Officers	Mobile roles in acute environment
Nurse Educator	Mental Health
Clinical Nurse Consultant	Palliative Care
Team Leader	Maternal and Child Health
Midwifery	Health Centre
Nurse Practitioner	Critical Care
Psychologist	Research
Physiotherapist	Clinical education
Social Worker	Aged Care
Non-clinical	Primary Health Care
Dietician	Justice Health
Medical Emergency Team	Outpatients
Paediatric Clinician	HiTH
Infection Prevention Control Clinician	Sexual Health
After hours managers	



# Guideline- Development

## Literature Search

Developed a search strategy- progressed to identify and screen resulting in **76 articles**

## Expert Advise

**Advisory Group** 19 members with depth and breadth of experience

### Workshop

When and where  
Risks  
Responsibilities-  
organisation and  
worker

## Staff Survey

**Targeting** those working in isolated and remote work environments

**88 respondents**

## Broad Consultation



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**Canberra Health Services**



**Calvary**



**Tresillian**

QUEEN ELIZABETH II IN ACT

*It's in our nature to nurture*



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# Risk controls

Organisations are required to take a **proactive approach to hazard identification and risk assessment to identify situations** in which a worker will enter into isolated or remote work and establish appropriate **controls to limit risk.**

An **evaluation process for governance to regularly test the efficacy** of arrangements in **maintaining** isolated or remote worker **safety.**



# What's the risk?



## Attachments

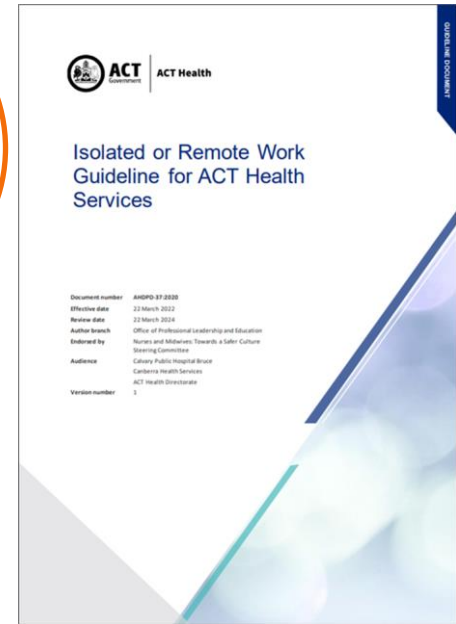
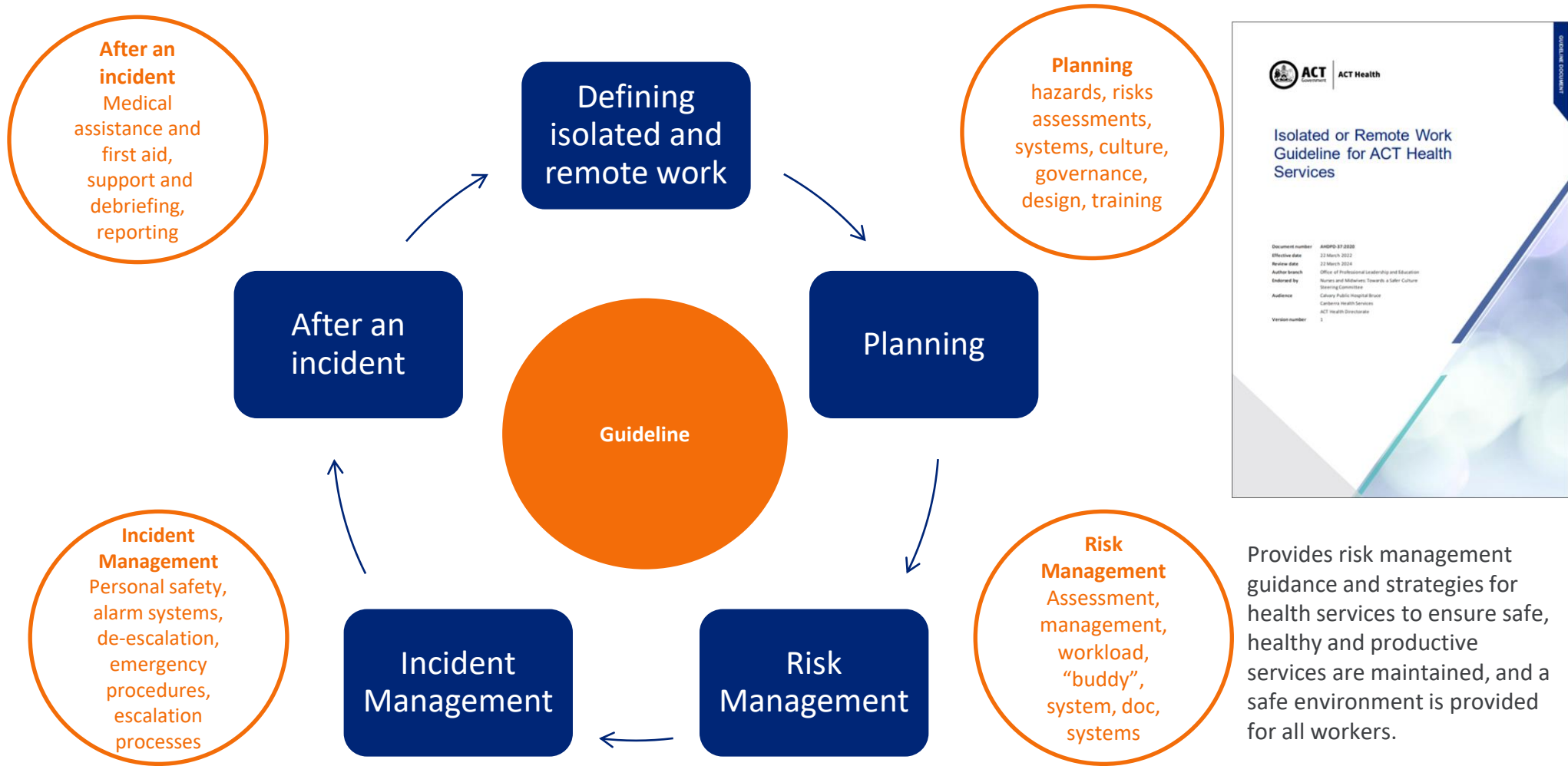
### Attachment 1- Risk management process



Figure 2 The risk management process

<b>Step 1:</b> Identify the hazard	Identify the hazard - what or who could cause harm to workers, and/or other persons
<b>Step 2:</b> Assess the risk	Assess the risk - understand the nature of harm that could be caused by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how likely it is that harm may occur e.g. rare, unlikely, possible, likely, almost certain</li> <li>• how serious the harm could be e.g. insignificant, minor, medium, major, critical</li> </ul>
<b>Step 3:</b> Control the risk	Control the risk - determine the action required and the most effective risk control measure and/or treatment that is reasonably practicable in the circumstances
<b>Step 4:</b> Review control measures	Review control measures - implement, review and improve the effectiveness of the risk control measures, to ensure the preventative measures are effective as per the treatment plan and, when necessary, improved.

# Guideline- at a glance



Provides risk management guidance and strategies for health services to ensure safe, healthy and productive services are maintained, and a safe environment is provided for all workers.

## Take home message....

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A multitude of factors play a role in determining the key outcome of safety, with multiple theories and no single 'pathway to safety' agreed in the literature.

The Strategy sought to attack the problem on multiple fronts using 22 Priority Actions – the implicit assumption being that these actions would cumulatively work towards the desired impact of reducing OV, bullying and/or harassment.

Significant risk to isolated and remote workers which requires significant effort

Collaboration and stakeholder engagement- “buy in”

Implementation, evaluation and monitoring is key...

Pop your head up and look around...

# Come see me to find out more information!



## Professional Practice Issues

- Aiding the right response at the right time: assisting health workers to respond to Occupational Violence (oral presentation)
- 11:55am Wednesday 7 September 2022, Ballroom 2, L2

## Poster Presentation Day Two

- P2.04 - Launching a communication awareness campaign in a climate of change- raising awareness of acceptable behaviour
- 12:45-1:45pm Thursday 8 September 2022, Foyer Level 2

## Poster Presentation Day Two

- P2.05 - Entering the Safewards community through a hybrid training model across jurisdictions: The Safewards ACT Trial
- 12:45-1:45pm Thursday 8 September 2022, Foyer Level 2

# Resources & Contact Details

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## Resources

### Nurses and Midwives: Towards a Safer Culture

- [Towards a Safer Culture | Health \(act.gov.au\)](#)
- [Safewards | Health \(act.gov.au\)](#)

### Community Awareness Campaign

- [Be kind and respectful to our nurses and midwives | Health \(act.gov.au\)](#)

## Contact Details

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