



ACT
Government

ACT Health

Nurses and Midwives Towards a Safer Culture – the first step



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Overview

- TASC Strategy purpose
- The journey to TASC
- Synergy with similar and concurrent ACT projects
- Highlighting developed Priority Actions of the Strategy

The Nurses and Midwives-Towards a Safer Culture 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

The NM TASC Journey so far

PHASE 1: DISCOVER and DEVELOP

PHASE 2: LAUNCH and IMPLEMENT

PHASE 3: EMBED

2016

ANMF advocated a review of workplace safety.

Parliament Agreement for the 9th Legislative Assembly for ACT committed to develop a safety strategy for nurses and midwives.

2017

Phase 1 Consultation with Nurses and Midwives

Areas to be addressed include recognition and mitigation of workplace risks, resource allocation, safety benchmarks, workplace design, policy and education

2018

The Nurses and Midwives, Towards a Safer Culture Strategy developed.

Strategy endorsed by Former Minister for Health and Wellbeing and Minister for Mental Health.

Project Officers appointed

2019

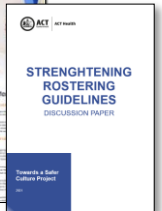
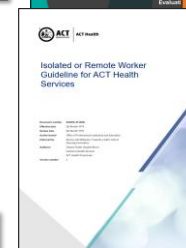
Development of Priority Action resources commenced



2020



2021



2021 >



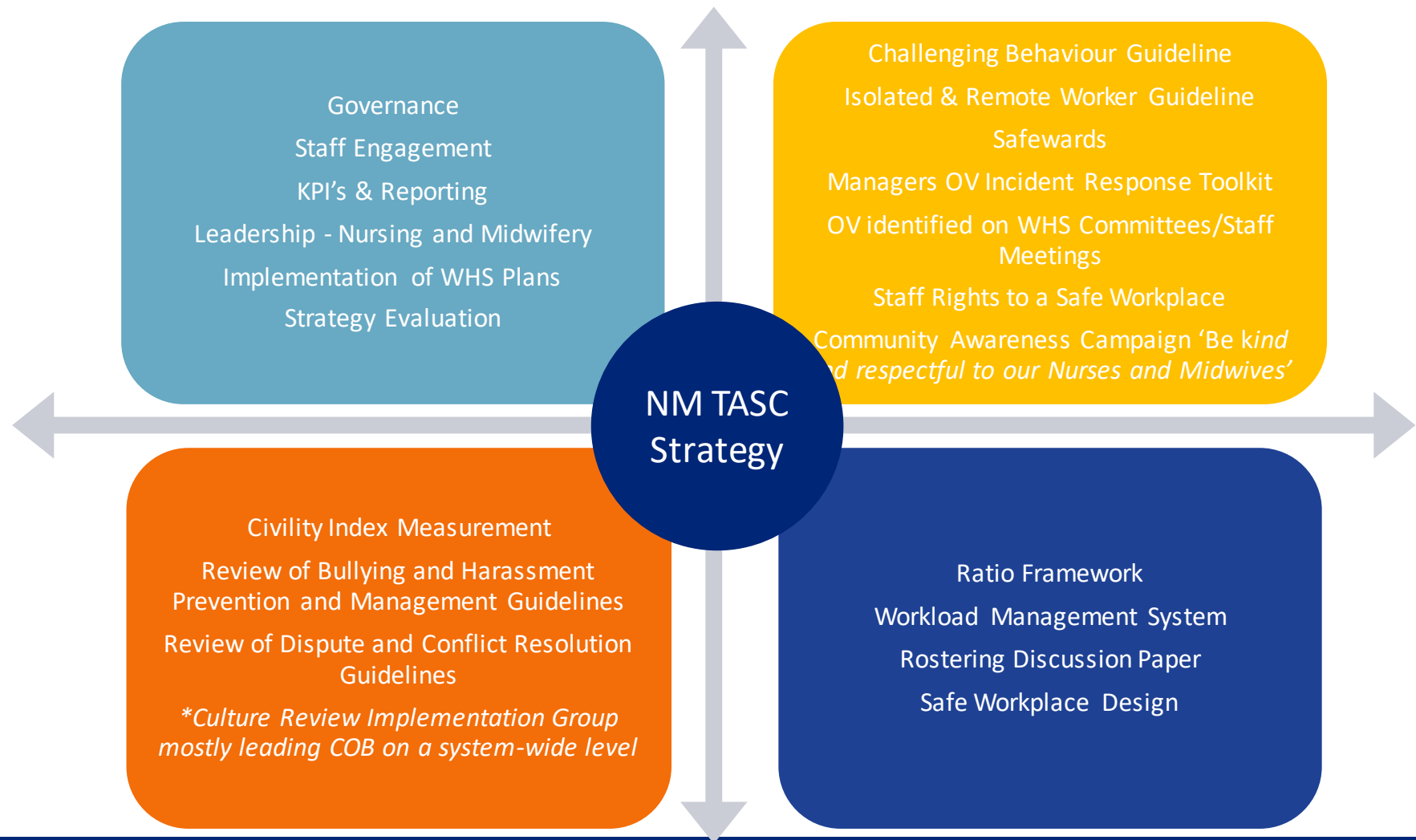
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NM TASC 4 Pillars

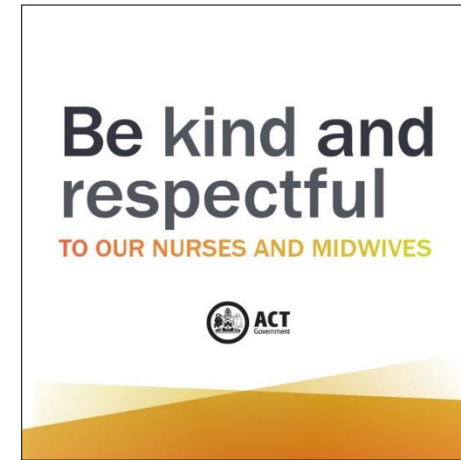


NM TASC 4 Pillars Unpacked



“Be kind and respectful to our nurses and midwives”

- Minister for Health Media Launch, Sep 2020
- Strategic community awareness campaign using a strong storytelling approach to *inspire* understanding and *engage* emotions.
- Builds on the community’s appreciation for the *valuable* work nurses and midwives do
- Educating about unacceptable behaviour and the *impact* it has on service provision.
- Tactics used Sept 2020- July 2021



Key Messages

1. Be kind and respectful of our nurses and midwives

2. Some behaviours, while they do not physically connect, are still violent and aggressive

aggressive body language

rude gestures

banging fists on a desk

standing in the way

shouting

name calling and swearing

3. Violent behaviours make work unsafe and scary

hitting

choking

spitting

kicking

scratching

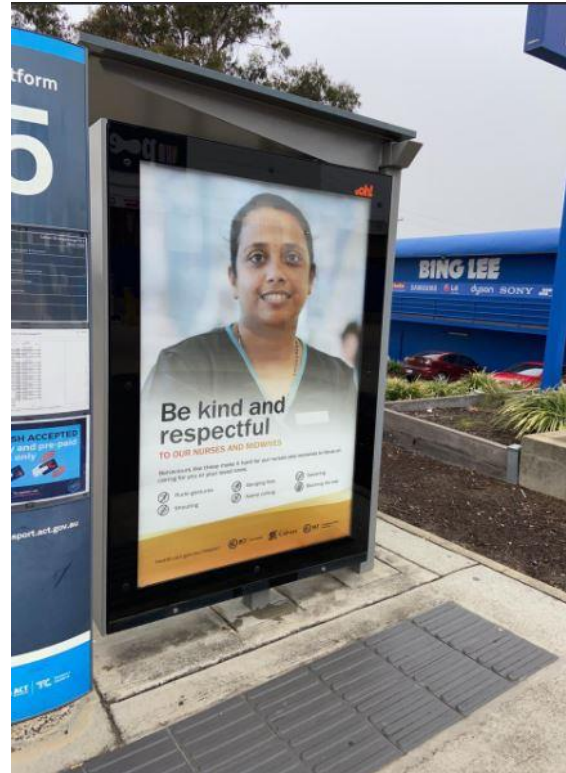
throwing things

4. They make it hard for our nurses and midwives to do their job and care for you



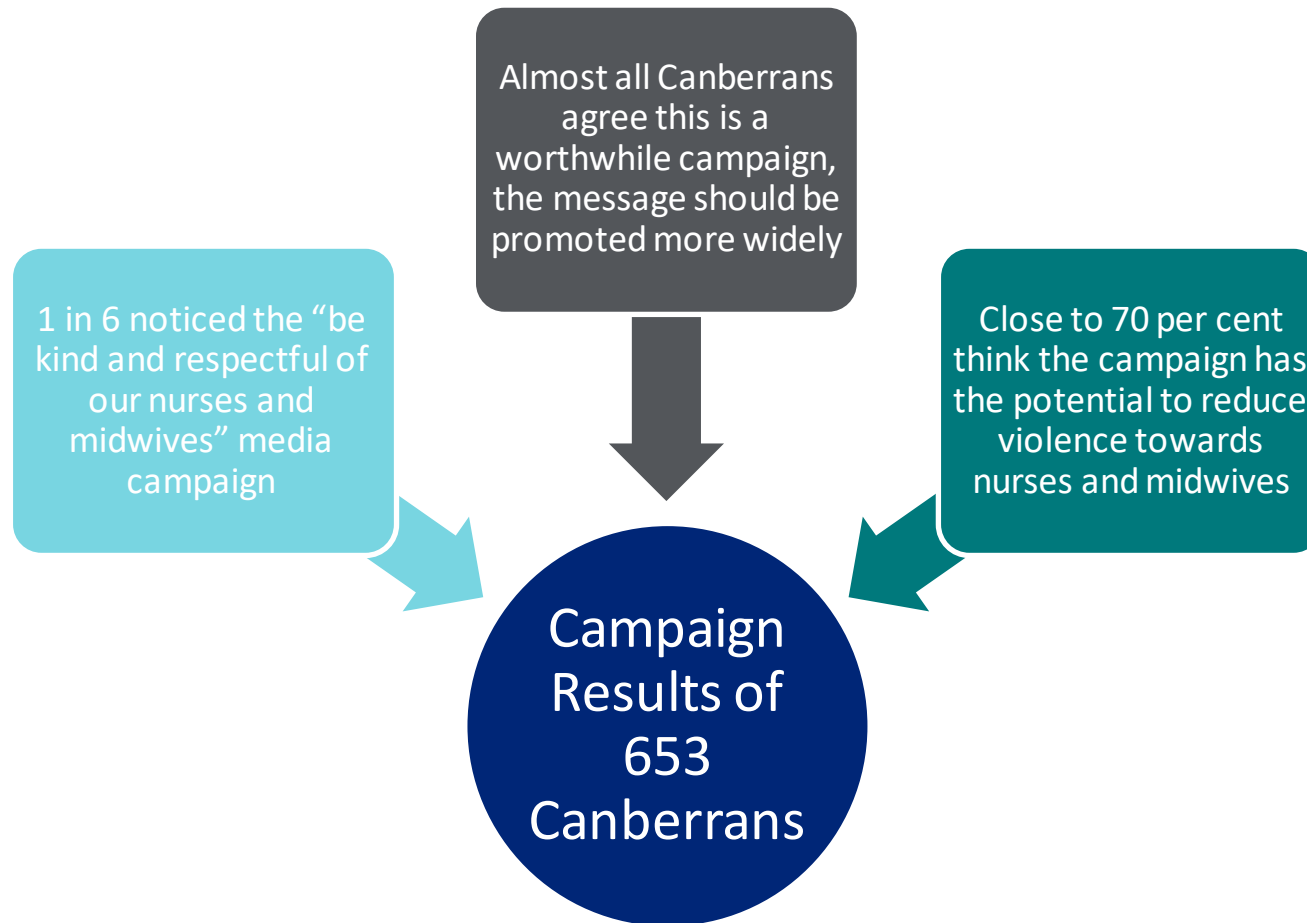
Campaign Reach

- Radio
 - Recorded/live ads Canberra/surrounding regions radio
 - Hit 104.7 (81, 084),
 - Mix 106.3 (108, 823),
 - LEBA Radio (don't provide reach statistics)
- Social Media
 - **Burst 1** Dec 2020/Jan 2021 (116,069)
 - **Burst 2** Feb-April 2021 (109,409)
 - **Burst 3** May/June 2021 (113,561)
- Bus
 - 4 x full back of bus wraps
 - 270 x bus interiors on entire ACTION bus fleet
 - 27 x bus shelters



Literally taking our campaign on the road!

Campaign Evaluation



Staff Rights to a Safe Workplace



Staff Rights to a Safe Workplace

The Staff Rights to a Safe Workplace is a resource for staff to understand their rights to a safe workplace, to be able to identify unacceptable behaviours that are not just 'part of the job', and be supported to always report any incident that threatens their health or safety and their ability to deliver quality healthcare services as provided to the community.

WHAT IS OCCUPATIONAL VIOLENCE?

Occupational violence 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. These behaviours of occupational violence are always unacceptable, some examples are listed below and are not limited to those listed.

In the workplace, there can be many types of unacceptable behaviours towards staff, and it is important that they are **always** reported regardless if the incident is intentionally or unintentionally caused. Some of these situations can be caused from:

- concerned family members or friends who are in emotional distress
- those individuals under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- clinical conditions such as dementia, delirium, post-operative responses, acute mental illness, or head trauma

These behaviours, while there's no physical contact, are still violent and aggressive. These behaviours are unacceptable and must always be reported

- Aggressive body language
- Standing in the way
- Rude gestures
- Yelling
- Banging fists on a desk
- Name calling and swearing
- Racist comments
- Threats to physical safety
- Sexual harassment.

1

Staff Rights to a Safe Workplace

These violent behaviours involve physical contact, make work unsafe and create fear. These behaviours are unacceptable and must always be reported

- Hitting
- Kicking
- Choking
- Scratching
- Spitting
- Throwing things
- Sexual assault.

STAFF HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- a safe and healthy workplace, free of violence and aggression
- be respected by others
- be treated fairly and not discriminated against because of our age, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, disability or other characteristics
- feel safe and be free from physical and psychological harm
- report concerns, hazards and incidents in the workplace without fear
- make an attempt to withdraw from a unsafe situation
- ask questions and be involved in open and honest communication
- have access to organisational policies and procedures relating to occupational violence, including reporting
- participate in consultation relating to work health safety matters in the workplace
- be provided with information, training and education programs relating to occupational violence
- a workplace with control measures in place to protect us from risk and adverse outcomes
- receive information and timely feedback on reported risks, hazards, incidents and near misses and on investigations in the workplace, including outcomes and recommendations
- receive immediate and ongoing support from peers, managers and the organisation if confronted with violence
- facilitation and support from my managers and organisation in reporting criminal offences to police.

SUPPORT FOR STAFF

Working in health care can be highly demanding and very rewarding. It can be a challenging, intense and stressful time that challenges you both personally and professionally. If you are experiencing issues in your personal or professional life, seek help early. You are not alone. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a 24-hour free, professional, independent and confidential counselling service available to help resolve issues related to work or of a personal nature.

In the first instance you should seek support and advice from your managers, health and safety representatives (HSRs) and People Strategy.

By reporting all incidents in the Riskman system this gives your organisation the opportunity to take steps to eliminate, prevent, manage and minimise work health safety risks.

2

Statement of mutual behaviour expectations



Mutual behaviour expectations

For patients, consumers, carers, visitors, healthcare staff, students and volunteers

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT US

At ACT Health, we aim to provide a safe and supportive environment for everyone who enters ACT public health workplaces.

If you are entering an ACT public health workplace, you must:

- be respectful and support a positive and safe environment
- be mindful of the way you communicate to others
- raise and address any concerns with a staff member when you experience or see them
- work in partnership, share information and ensure privacy
- avoid unacceptable behaviours that can lead to occupational violence
- respect staff, students, volunteers, other people, and property
- speak to a staff member if you see any deterioration in your health condition, or that of other patients, consumers, carers, or visitors.

While you are at an ACT public health workplace, please do not:

- discriminate against age, sex and/or race
- name-call or swear
- shout or yell
- record without permission (still images, video, or sound)
- make threats, or threatening gestures
- use any form of intimidation
- use any form of violence against other people
- damage property.

Let's work together to maintain a safe environment and reduce the risk of occupational violence at ACT public health workplaces.

HOW OUR HEALTHCARE STAFF, STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS WILL SUPPORT YOU

While you are at an ACT public health workplace, our healthcare staff, students and volunteers will:

- support patients, consumers, carers, and visitors to be actively involved in making decisions about health care delivery

- assess the clinical condition of patients and consumers and provide appropriate healthcare to address underlying clinical conditions
- support patients, consumers, carers, and visitors, to provide feedback or identify concerns about their health or safety, or the health and safety of others, by being responsive to concerns or queries
- report any unacceptable behaviours towards staff that they experience or observe in any ACT public health workplace.

CONSEQUENCES OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS

If you are at an ACT public health workplace, and knowingly or intentionally cause physical or psychological harm to ACT healthcare staff, students, volunteers or people in the care of ACT public health workplaces, we may contact ACT Policing to handle the matter.

 Under the Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights, everyone has a right to accessible, safe, and respectful healthcare. Access the Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights 2nd edition Charter on the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care [website](#) and by viewing the [fact sheet](#).

HOW TO REPORT A CONCERN

Please advise the ACT public healthcare workplace if:

- our healthcare staff, students or volunteers behaviours are not meeting expectations
- patients, consumers, carers or visitors are demonstrating unacceptable behaviours
- there is an immediate concern for your safety, or the safety of others.

You should raise immediate concerns with healthcare staff, or with a manager in charge of the ACT public healthcare workplace.

ACT Policing may also be engaged if there is an immediate concern for your safety, or the safety of others.

If you have feedback, that doesn't require an immediate response, please contact us using these details:

ACCESSIBILITY

 For alternative formats to the standard printed document, please phone 13 22 81. For Translation and Interpreting Services (TIS), please call 13 14 50. For further accessibility information, visit: www.health.act.gov.au/accessibility | Phone: 132281 | © Australian Capital Territory, Canberra, September 2021

Canberra Health Services and ACT Health Directorate

Consumer Feedback and Engagement Team
Phone: (02) 5124 5932
Email: HealthFeedback@act.gov.au

Calvary Public Hospital Bruce

Clinical Governance and Quality
Phone: (02) 6201 6111
Email: feedback@calvary-act.com.au

All complaints or comments will be investigated by the relevant ACT public health workplace.

HOW TO REPORT A CONCERN TO THE ACT HEALTH SERVICES COMMISSIONER (HSC)

If you have a concern, you can also raise it directly with the ACT Health Services Commissioner. The HSC is an independent statutory officer who provides a fair and accessible process for managing complaints about health services and workplaces, services for older people, health privacy and access issues.

ACT Health Services Commissioner

Phone (02) 6205 2222
Email: human.rights@act.gov.au

RESOURCES

- [Australian Charter of Healthcare Rights](#)
- [Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency \(AHPRA\) concerns about health practitioners](#)
- [Be Kind and Respectful to our Nurses & Midwives campaign](#)


ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

ACT public health workplaces acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Ngunnawal people. We respect their continuing culture and connections to the land and the unique contributions they make to the life of this area. We also acknowledge and welcome Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are part of the community we serve.

Clinical Leadership and Support

Review and strengthening of leadership for “Leading A Safer Culture”

- Advisory Board Sessions (Leadership & Change Management July 2021) [Nursing and Midwifery Office | Health \(act.gov.au\)](#)
- Leadership Pathways for Nursing and Midwifery (commence in 2022)



Leading a Safer Culture Charter

Nurses and Midwives Leading a Safer Culture

PURPOSE

Leading a safer culture is essential to ensuring all persons who enter ACT public health services including Nurses, Midwives, other Health Workers, Patients their Carers, Visitors and Volunteers are protected from physical, psychological, emotional or professional harm and feel safe at all times.

EMPOWERMENT OF LEADERS

Leaders at all levels in Nursing and Midwifery are empowered by organisations to embed and consistently lead a safer culture.

Leaders are empowered to make decisions, work within their full scope of practice and advocate for the safety of all persons. They do this by proactively identifying, reporting and responding to the safety of all persons.

LEADING A SAFER CULTURE UNPACKED

Leading a safer culture

- promotes an inclusive workplace that values the input of all persons to proactively eliminate and minimise risks to all people in the environment.
- acknowledges that both staff and patient safety are intertwined and equally important where leaders ensure environments are safe using knowledge of Work Health and Safety principles, policies, procedures and protocols.
- means taking action by being proactive with strategies which support workplace safety and wellbeing and ensuring clear and regular communication to all persons on an ongoing basis and when an incident occurs.
- promotes reporting of risks to all persons to minimise unsafe situations through risk assessment and escalation of concerns.
- seeks to make reporting easier, effective and transparent on measured improvements made to make a safer environment.
- is done in partnership with patients, their families and visitors to enable them to identify emerging risks in their environment.
- uses a psychological safety approach to support the health and wellbeing all persons where leaders ensure a good workplace climate, a responsive workplace culture and support Nurses, Midwives and other Health Workers in their work.

PRINCIPLES OF HOW LEADERS ARE DEVELOPED

Leaders require initial and ongoing investment to build knowledge and skills to be able to undertake leadership roles effectively and a strong understanding of safety principles appropriate to their level and position to enable a safe environment for all.

Through education, training and support, leaders are developed to listen to and value the safety concerns all persons who may be affected by policy, procedures, guidelines, or strategies.

To support the roles and responsibilities of Nurses and Midwives and other Health Workers in leading a safer culture education programs must be designed in collaboration with representation from Nursing, Midwifery, Patients and their Carers.

To implement changes and sustain a safer culture, leaders require authentic role models, mentoring and organisation support.

Post Occupational Violence (OV) Follow Up

Key Points

- Managing Occupational Violence (OV) is never easy, but with the correct support and guidance the process can be simplified. Staff look to their Managers for guidance on how best to respond to and manage OV that occurs. This Toolkit aims to help Managers by:
 - recognising and responding to an OV incident,
 - reporting an OV incident,
 - supporting their team's health and wellbeing, and
 - engaging staff in a review of the OV incident.
- Draft, after conducting broad consultation
- System wide resource
- Toolkit and associated Factsheets
- Next steps: 1) finalising language, tone and formatting 2) Seek endorsement from the Steering Committee 3) implementation planning and execution



Managers

Occupational Violence Incident Response

TOOLKIT



ACT Health



Canberra Health Services

Occupational Violence in any form, is not 'business as usual' and, must be reported.
ACT Health have a zero-tolerance policy to violence in the workplace.

Best Evidence Guidelines for Health Services

Purpose of Guidelines

- Provide a framework on best evidence based practices for ACT public health organisations.

Development

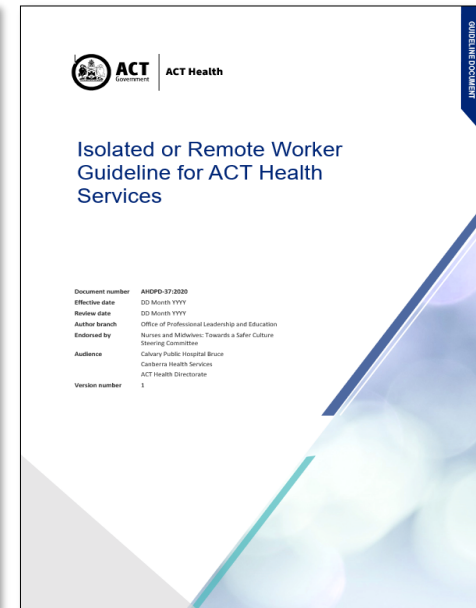
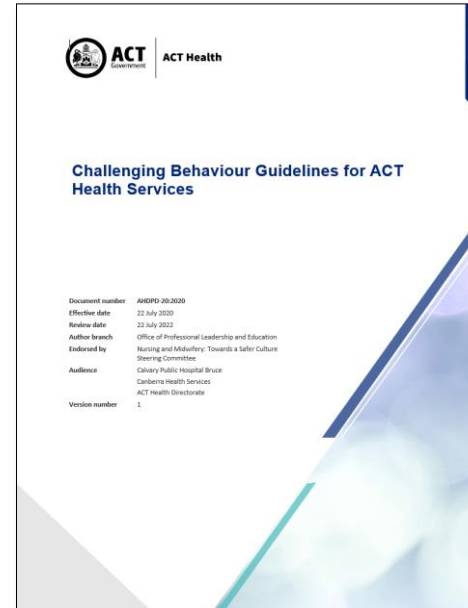
- Developed with the TASC Advisory Group- who provide expert advice to the development of TASC Priority Actions within the Strategy. Strengthened by broad consultation across the ACT public health system and externally.

Challenging Behaviour Guideline for Health Services

- Organisations manage and respond to Occupational Violence experienced as *challenging behaviour*, demonstrated by patients, consumers, visitors.

Isolated and Remote Worker Guidelines for Health Services

- Organisations identify, manage, and respond to risk of workers in isolated or remote work environments.



Implementation of the Safewards model



Trial Setting

Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer sent a request to Canberra Health Services (CHS) and Calvary Public Hospital Bruce (CPHB) to nominate a mental health and medical inpatient unit to trial the Safewards model and interventions (2019). The below areas were nominated and participated in the trial:



7B (CHS)



Adult Mental Health Unit (AMHU)



4W (CPHB)



Older Person Mental
Health Inpatient Unit
(CPHB)

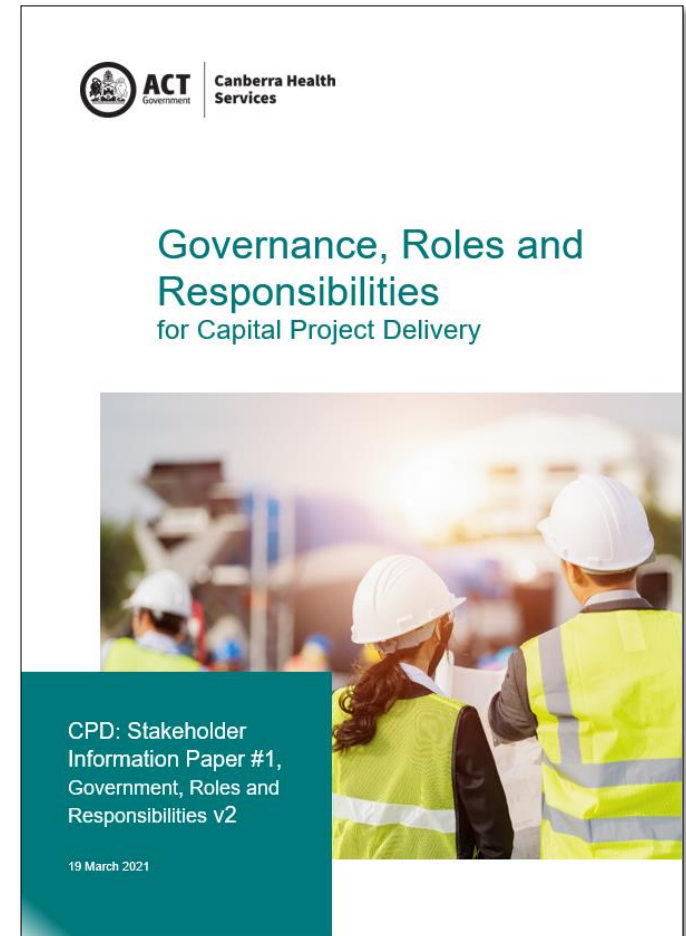
Safewards Implementation

- Minister for Health, Rachel Stephen-Smith formally launched the *Trial of the Safewards model and intervention into ACT public health services (January 2021)*
- Stepped approach to implementation
 - Adaptable and dynamic to delivery a mixed mode of training and education
 - Safewards Community of Practice (CoP)
 - Development of implementation planning and resources
 - **Expected evaluation results** indicate the need for wider implementation through a co-ordinated and systematic approach.



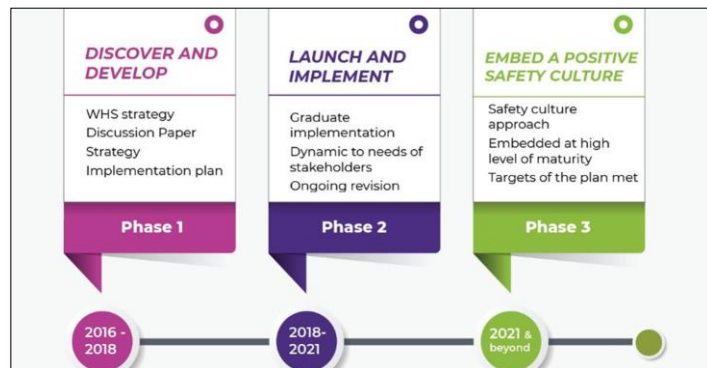
Embed Safe Workplace Design

- Developed with the key health infrastructure stakeholders to:
 - Strengthen consultation with ‘end users’ such as Nurses and Midwives on all new builds and refurbishments



Evaluation of the Strategy

- Internal staff survey (n=293)
- External staff survey (n=653)
- Stakeholder interviews (n=15)
- Literature Review and TASC document analysis



Resources & Contact Details

Resources

Nurses and Midwives: Towards a Safer Culture

- [Towards a Safer Culture | 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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