



RAHC
REMOTE AREA HEALTH CORPS

Mandatory Reporting of Domestic Violence

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Mandatory Reporting in the Northern Territory

It is important for all health professionals working in the Northern Territory to be aware of legislation that affects clinical practice. The information that follows is provided to RAHC by the Northern Territory Department of Children and Families. Please read this brief carefully and talk to the Health Centre Manager where you are working and/or other colleagues if you have any questions and about how these are implemented in your workplace.

Mandatory Reporting of Domestic Violence

In March 2009 new provisions to sections 124 and 125 of the Domestic and Family Violence Act require that every adult in the Northern Territory must report to the police, if they believe on reasonable grounds, either, or both of the following:

"Another person has caused or is likely to cause serious physical harm to someone else, with whom the other person is in a domestic relationship, and/or the life or safety of another person is under serious or imminent threat because domestic violence has been, is being, or is about to be, committed."

Responsibility

Anyone 18 years of age and older who has formed a reasonable belief that either one or both of the above situations has, is, or may take place.

Recognition

- Section 1A of the Criminal Code: "Physical harm includes unconsciousness, pain, disfigurement, infection with a disease and any physical contact with a person that a person might reasonably object to in circumstances, whether or not that person was aware of it at the time."
- Section 1 of the Criminal Code: "Serious harm means any harm (including the cumulative effect of more than one harm): 1) that endangers, or is likely to endanger, a person's life or 2) that is or is likely to be significant and longstanding."

Reporting

You are advised to discuss the implementation of this requirement with colleagues at the health centre or clinic where you are placed.

If you believe on reasonable grounds that:

- Another person has caused or is likely to cause serious physical harm to someone else with whom they are in a domestic relationship
- The life or safety of another person is under serious or imminent threat because domestic violence has been, is being, or is about to be committed.

You are required to report your belief about either or both of these situations to the Northern Territory Police.

Call 000 if the matter is urgent or 131 444 if it is not urgent but you are still concerned.

For further details, clinicians are encouraged to refer to details provided on the Northern Territory Department of Children and Families website:

http://childrenandfamilies.nt.gov.au/Domestic_and_Family_Violence/The_Law/Information_for_Service_Providers/index.aspx

Related links and resources:

http://www.childrenandfamilies.nt.gov.au/Domestic_and_Family_Violence/Related_Links_and_Resources/index.aspx

Remote Health Atlas for local policy guidelines:

http://www.childrenandfamilies.nt.gov.au/Domestic_and_Family_Violence/Policies_and_Guidelines/index.aspx

Australian Government:

The National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010 – 2022: <https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/women/programs-services/reducing-violence/the-national-plan-to-reduce-violence-against-women-and-their-children-2010-2022>

The Law:

http://www.childrenandfamilies.nt.gov.au/Domestic_and_Family_Violence/The_Law/Information_for_the_General_Public/index.aspx

Contact for NT:

http://www.childrenandfamilies.nt.gov.au/Domestic_and_Family_Violence/Related_Contacts/index.aspx





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