



TRAUMA INFORMED CARE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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Drafted by:	Student (Shenai)	Board approval on:	November 2022
Responsible Person:	Strategic Finance Executive	Scheduled Review Date:	November 2023

INTRODUCTION

Big Yellow Umbrella's aim is to establish a culture where the values and principles of Trauma Informed Care ultimately becomes second nature to all staff, volunteers, and students across the organisation. The process is intended to develop a service culture whereby staff and volunteers remain receptive to the change and innovation needed to promote capacity building and sustainability.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to assist Big Yellow Umbrella's staff, volunteers, and students in the adoption of Trauma-informed approaches.

This includes the recognition that trauma informed approaches do not involve trying to distinguish "symptoms" from the impact of trauma but recognise that "symptoms" are often responses to trauma.

Benefits of being trauma-informed:

- creates an environment that cares for and supports staff
- creating a proactive approach to safety
- creating a safe physical and emotional environment for clients and staff
- reducing the possibility of re-traumatisation
- creating a resiliency and strengths-based focus
- increases client engagement with service and satisfaction

DEFINITIONS

Trauma refers to the emotional response experienced after a distressing event. Traumatic situations that cause post-trauma symptoms vary quite dramatically from person to person. It is important to recognize that trauma is defined by the response rather than the event itself.

Trauma informed care seeks to:

- realize the widespread impact of trauma and understand paths for recovery
- recognize the signs and symptoms of trauma in patients, families, and staff
- recognize that trauma can affect us at the time of the stressful event or later. if the right support is not provided, trauma can affect us right through our life
- integrate knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices
- actively avoid re-traumatization.

POLICIES

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, and students of Big Yellow Umbrella. Trauma-informed care is based on the understanding that:

- a significant number of people living with health conditions have experienced trauma in their lives
- trauma may be a factor for people in distress
- the impact of trauma may be lifelong
- trauma can impact the person, their emotions, and relationships with others
- it can be hard to recognise that a person has experienced trauma that is still affecting them

- there are different types of trauma, for example childhood trauma, complex trauma, intergenerational trauma, which affects the intervention needed

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chief Operations Manager and the Strategic Finance Executive are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of all aspects of this Policies and Procedures.

All staff, volunteers, and students are responsible for reading and understanding this Policies and Procedures.

All staff, volunteers, and students who are responsible for providing a high standard of service and support to clients and service providers and play an integral role in the frontline actioning of this Trauma Informed Care policy.

The Chief Operations Manager or delegate is responsible for coordinating the internal operation of this Trauma Informed Care policy.

PROCEDURES

BYU staff, students, and volunteers who are providing service delivery will adhere to the core principles of trauma-informed care, including:

- Safety – physical and psychological- is the environment welcoming?
- Trust – decisions are made with transparency and with the goal of building and maintaining trust- is the service sensitive to people's needs?
- Choice – does the service provide opportunity for choice?
- Collaboration – supporting shared decision making- does the service communicate a sense of 'doing with' rather than 'doing to'?
- Empowerment – strengths are recognized, validated, and build upon- including belief in resilience and the ability to heal from trauma
- Respect for Diversity – recognising and addressing biases and stereotypes

BYU staff, students, and volunteers will recognise the impact that trauma may have on service users, including:

- loss of trust in others
- changes to physiological arousal (either chronic hyper-arousal or hypo-arousal or both)
- difficulty with self-regulation
- sensitivity to trauma reminders and triggers
- development of identity that is shaped by trauma and survival
- difficulty using language to talk about or describe trauma
- difficulties with attention, learning and memory
- difficulty establishing context when experiencing fear, therefore experiencing distress when there is no danger
- increased attention and sensitivity to cues for threat, for example angry faces, therefore responding with extreme fearfulness when exposed to small signals of threat - like a person being annoyed or frustrated
- difficulty with 'sensory integration' leading to heightened anxiety if the brain cannot coordinate all of the information available to it
- difficulty interpreting and regulating emotion therefore annoyance can become rage, and disappointment despair quite quickly
- greater awareness and notice taken of non-verbal 'negative' information like body language and facial expressions
- less reward may be anticipated from an activity, which can appear as low motivation because less pleasure is expected
- complex trauma is different to the trauma of a single incident and has more damaging long-term effects
- childhood trauma is multi-faceted and long-lasting, impacting development, health, and the ability to attach to others.

- First Nation people often exhibit trauma responses due to colonization and policies such as forced removal of children, shattering important bonds between families and kin and damaging people's connection to land and place

Consumer and Family/Carers Participation

Consumer and carer participation and co-design is integral to the process of becoming trauma informed. Consumers and carers must be encouraged and supported to engage through active participation strategies.

Equally, Big Yellow Umbrella must actively promote co-design by encouraging and supporting consumers and carers to participate in the development, planning and implementation of policy and evaluation of services, and to be part of all quality improvement processes and activities.

By listening to and utilising lived experience wisdom, perspectives and feedback and incorporating this expertise in upskilling staff, Big Yellow Umbrella can go some way to meeting the principle of sharing power and governance.

This process will also provide a diversity of ways for consumers and carers to be significantly involved. This includes recognising the potential for power dynamics to hinder or inhibit effective participation.

RELATED DOCUMENTS
Charter for Mental Health Care in NSW
Code of Conduct Policy
Complaints Management Policy
Confidentiality and Declaration Policy
Conflict of Interest Policy
Governance Policy
Health and Community Service Standards (6 th edition)
Home Visitation Policy
Integrated Stepped Care Policy
National Safety and Quality Digital Mental Health Standards (draft)
National Standards for Disability Services
Police Checks Policy
Privacy Act 1988
Recovery Oriented Practice Policy
Standards of Practice Guidelines Policy
The National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards (2 nd edition)
Working with Children Policy

AUTHORISATION

The Board of Big Yellow Umbrella have reviewed and approved this policy

Signature of Board Secretary: _____

Date of approval by the Board: _____

On behalf of the Big Yellow Umbrella