

## VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

**Our Vision:** “Every person with a neuromuscular condition is able to live the life they choose”

**Our Mission:** “To empower, connect and support people with neuromuscular conditions, and be an effective voice for the neuromuscular community”

### Volunteering with MDNSW

This agreement aims to outline your role and responsibilities as a volunteer with MDNSW and inform you of our policies that apply to you.

This agreement is not intended to be a legally binding contract between us, and it may be cancelled at any time by either us or you.

This agreement applies to all volunteers including:

- **Vocational Placements**  
Vocational placement volunteers who participate in MDNSW Camps as part of an agreement between MDNSW and their tertiary institution to fulfil components of their course.
- **Returning carers**  
Returning carer students or graduates who came to us via vocational placement and want to continue to volunteer. They may also assist in mentoring new students.
- **General volunteers**  
From time to time, MDNSW needs a helping hand to assist in peak periods, particularly before and during large events.

What you can expect when volunteering with MDNSW

- a written role description so you understand the tasks you are authorised to perform
- **Camp volunteers** will receive a full induction, orientation and 2 days of training necessary to prepare for the volunteer role  
**Returning carers** will be given refresher training and information as needed.  
**General volunteers** will be given a site induction and guidance or assistance when needed
- a safe environment in which to perform your role
- respect for your privacy, including keeping your private information confidential
- a supervisor, so that you can ask questions and get feedback
- insurance to cover you for the volunteer duties you are authorised to perform
- for **Camp volunteers** and **Returning Carers** only, food and accommodation will be provided.

### Volunteer Code of Conduct

We ask that you:

- Support MDNSW’s aims and objectives
- participate in all relevant induction and training programs
- undertake Working with Children Checks
- only undertake duties you are authorised to perform
- always operate under the direction and supervision of nominated staff and obey all reasonable directions and instructions

- understand and comply with MDNSW's policies and procedures summarised below
- notify your supervisor or another member of staff of any health and safety issues or potentially hazardous situations that may pose a risk to you or others and report any accidents or incidents relating to staff, volunteers, or the workplace
- behave appropriately and courteously to all staff, participants and the public during your role
- wear clean, neat, casual clothing appropriate for working with children, this includes clothes that are not too revealing or likely to cause a hazard, e.g. catch on equipment.
- wear covered shoes when providing direct care, keep long hair tied back
- use any property or equipment given to you in your role safely and only for purpose of the role and return it to the organisation when you finish your volunteer role
- Always comply with the law, and
- be open and honest in your dealings with us and let us know if we can improve our volunteer program and the support that you receive.

## **MDNSW POLICIES FOR CAMP VOLUNTEERS**

### **Human Rights declaration**

MDNSW recognises that all people with disability (including children and young people) have legal and human rights and that those rights should be always respected.

All participants receiving MDNSW supports, and services have the right to supports that:

- promote, uphold and respect individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making
- respect for culture, diversity, values and beliefs
- respect and protect their dignity and right to privacy
- are free from violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation or discrimination
- provide support to make informed choices, exercise control and maximise their independence relating to the supports provided
- are effectively managed, regularly reviewed, accountable and contemporary.

### **NDIS Code of Conduct**

The NDIS Code of Conduct applies to all NDIS providers, registered and unregistered, and all persons employed or otherwise engaged by an NDIS provider.

In providing supports or services to people with disability, a person covered by the Code must:

- act with respect for individual rights to freedom of expression, self-determination and decision-making in accordance with applicable laws and conventions
- respect the privacy of people with disability
- provide supports and services in a safe and competent manner, with care and skill
- act with integrity, honesty and transparency
- promptly take steps to raise and act on concerns about matters that may impact the quality and safety of supports and services provided to people with disability
  
- take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to all forms of violence against, and exploitation, neglect and abuse of, people with disability
- take all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to sexual misconduct.

## **Child Safe Code of Conduct:**

### **I WILL:**

- Conduct myself in a manner that is consistent with the values of MDNSW.
- Provide a welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all children, young people, parents, staff and volunteers.
- Report any concerns or allegations of child abuse in accordance with MDNSW Mandatory Reporting Procedures within 24 hours.
- Treat all children with respect regardless of gender, race, religious or political beliefs, age, physical or mental health, sexual orientation, family and social background and culture, economic status or criminal background.
- Use appropriate language, with consideration to how children are described or characterised and how they are spoken to.
- Take responsibility for ensuring I am accountable for my own behaviour towards children and young people by respecting professional boundaries and not engaging in any behaviour that could be interpreted as concerning or inappropriate. Wherever possible, ensure that two or more adults are present when working in the proximity of children and young people.
- Report instances of a risk of significant harm to children and young people that come to my knowledge in the course of my work, to the relevant government authorities.
- Use any computers, mobile phones, or video and digital cameras appropriately, and never to exploit or harass children or to access child/pornography through any medium.
- Comply with all relevant Australian legislation.
- Consult with my Manager if I have any questions regarding child protection and how it relates to my work/relationship with MDNSW.
- Comply with MDNSW Child Safe Policy and any related policies, procedures and guidelines in order to protect children and young people from harm.

### **I WILL NOT:**

- Use language or behaviour towards children and young people that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate.
- Use drugs, alcohol or tobacco in the workplace, or offer them to children or young people
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle or degrade children and young people, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse.
- Fondle, hold, kiss, hug or touch children and young people in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way.
- Hit or otherwise physically assault or physically abuse children and young people.
- Engage in any form of sexual activity or develop intimate/sexual relationships with anyone under the age of 18 regardless of the age of consent locally. Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defence.
- Engage in any form of sexual activity or develop physical/sexual relationships with anyone over the age of 18 who is a current or former participant of MDNSW.
- Develop relationships with children and young people which could in any way be deemed exploitive or abusive.
- Sleep in the same bed as a child or young person with whom I am working with.

- Sleep in the same room as a child or young person with whom I am working with unless required as part of my professional role e.g. overnight supervision for camp and short stay programs.
- Do things for children and young people of a personal nature that they can do for themselves.
- Condone or participate in behaviour of children or young people, which is illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- Discriminate against, show differential treatment to, or favour particular children or young people to the exclusion of others.
- Spend excessive time alone with children and young people away from others.
- Engage in any form of commercial exploitation of a child or young person.
- Provide shelter for children or young people in my home.
- Seek to make contact and spend time with any child or young person outside of my professional capacity\*.
- Invite or have an unaccompanied child or young person into my home, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger.
- Use computers, mobile phones, video and digital cameras for the purpose of exploiting or harassing children or young people.
- Disclose information or images that identify children and young people or their families or make it available to the general public.
- Share my personal contact details (email, phone numbers, social media sites, address etc) with any child or young person\*.
- Ask for or accept the personal contact details (email, phone numbers, social media sites, address etc) of any child associated with MDNSW and its services, except if it relates to MDNSW programs\*.
- Meet with or communicate with any child associated with MDNSW and its services outside of my professional capacity\*.

\*Any sharing of contact details outside of your professional capacity should go directly to the MDNSW Management team who will seek the explicit consent of the child/young person's parent/guardian.

Explicit consent means that an individual is clearly presented with an option to agree or disagree with the collection or disclosure of personal information.

## **CHILD SAFE POLICY**

Reporting concerns about a child or young person's safety or wellbeing is an important step in preventing or stopping the abuse and protecting children or young people from further harm.

### **Mandatory reporting**

- Mandatory reporters at MDNSW include all Client Services staff, management and volunteers working within Client Services programs and services.
- You must report any concerns you may have about any employee, contractor or volunteer engaging in 'reportable conduct' or any allegation of 'reportable conduct' that has been made to you, to your supervisor.
- Reportable Conduct is defined as any sexual offence, sexual misconduct (either involves a child or in the presence of a child), physical assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child or any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child.

- If, through your volunteer role, you have concerns about or become aware of a serious crime committed by another person, you are required to report it to the Client Services staff or management, who may be required to inform statutory authorities.

Camp volunteers should also complete **Participant Privacy & Dignity** training for strategies on working safely with vulnerable people.

### **Social Media and MDNSW participants and members**

MDNSW does not permit staff or volunteers to send or accept 'friend requests' via social media that relate to vulnerable participant groups, including children, young people or vulnerable adults, such as people with an intellectual disability.

### **Duty of Care and Dignity of Risk**

MDNSW aims to support participant independence and to avoid unnecessarily removing decision-making responsibility. We have a **Duty of Care** to help participants avoid foreseeable risks and an obligation under WHS legislation to protect the safety of participants, staff and volunteers.

Participants also have a right to **Dignity of Risk**, to be able to choose risky behaviours if they have the cognitive ability to understand their choices and the risks involved.

There is a significant tension between these principles. MDNSW management and staff will assist volunteers to navigate these principles and the tensions between them when providing care for participants who are children or young people.

### **Privacy Policy**

MDNSW has a legal obligation to protect the privacy and dignity of our participants and other individuals associated with our organisation.

For this reason, MDNSW volunteers are requested to respect confidentiality of information, meetings and conversations to which they are party during their involvement with the organisation and its services.

In particular, matters related to:

- Participant identity, personal contact details and case histories
- Personal details, information and files
- Donor and sponsorship information, statistics and databases
- Commercial, financial and other business-related matters

Refer to MDNSW's [Privacy Policy](#) for more information.

### **Incident Management**

Training on incident Management at Camps includes Emergency Procedures, Evacuation Procedures, high intensity supports policies and procedures, Camp Org Charts, Covid-19 training, infection control, child safe training, medication policy information, complaints processes, etc. This information will be provided in training or in the Camper folder at camp.

### **Medication Policy**

Camper's medications are administered and stored by the Camp RN. Camp Carers' personal medications must be stored in the lock boxes provided. Everyone supporting participants who take medications need to read the policy and sign off on it.

At Young Adult Weekends, some of the participants will self-administer their medications once they have passed the Self-Administration of Medication Assessment. For more information, see the Medication Policy.

### **WHS Policy**

MDNSW staff and volunteers are expected to:

- Participate in relevant health and safety training, actions and activities and support MDNSW's efforts to reach its health and safety objectives
- Follow reasonable WHS instructions from managers or supervisors
- Report any incident, accident, injury or hazard in the workplace to supervisors or designated representatives
- Aim to work in a way that does not endanger the health or safety of themselves or others
- Properly use and maintain safety equipment
- Make sure visitors follow safety rules in the workplace
- Participate in MDNSW induction programs and implement all relevant safety procedures.

### **Risk Management**

Everyone has a part to play in maintaining safety for participants and co-workers. Staff and volunteers will:

- Attend site induction and familiarise themselves with the risk management procedures relevant to their area
- Comply with the procedures
- Inform their supervisor/manager if they become aware of a risk that is not already identified in the procedures.

### **Grievances, Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment**

MDNSW is committed to providing a safe, flexible and respectful environment for staff, volunteers and participants, free from all forms of discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment.

Volunteers are urged to report any issues they are concerned about to a staff member as soon as possible. If the issue concerns a staff member, report to an alternate staff member or to the Client Services Manager. Concerns can be reported verbally or via our website feedback and complaints form.

### **Whistleblowing**

MDNSW has a policy and procedure in place for Whistleblowing complaints. MDNSW encourages staff and volunteers to come forward if they feel they have witnessed misconduct. Under the Australian Laws, whistleblowers are entitled to certain protections. The Whistleblower Protection Policy is available on our website:

<https://mdnsw.org.au/about/publications-policies/>

### **Feedback**

Opportunities to provide feedback in the form of a compliment, suggestion or complaint, include the feedback and complaints form on our website [www.mdnsw.org.au/contact-feedback/](http://www.mdnsw.org.au/contact-feedback/) and the end of program evaluation form.

## Thank you!

MDNSW would very much like to thank you for volunteering. You are helping to change lives for the better!



### Volunteer Agreement Sign-off

I have read and understood the above policies and I agree to uphold, to the best of my ability, the values and safety considerations of MDNSW.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Office use:** Scan sign-off sheets and save to Training folder in the Hub.