



Risk Management Considerations for Staff Training

One of the most important things an organization can do is properly train their staff. Improper or insufficient training can lead to unnecessary claims, especially when policies and procedures are not in place or followed.

Take the time to craft, revise and communicate policies and procedures that will not only protect your organization, but visitors and staff as well. Policies and procedures help to determine the minimum requirements necessary to ensure the safety of all involved.

Keep in mind, training extends beyond regular day-to-day activities. Explore training opportunities that are new or trending. Policies and procedures need to be updated and revised on a regular basis.

A complete training program addresses physical, mental and emotional factors and teaches staff how to properly document their actions should they be called upon in their defence.

Here are two examples where proper training is key:

Example A

Scenario:

Two boys were paired together at a residential facility as roommates. It was alleged that one boy sexually assaulted the other. The victim's parents claimed that the facility failed to provide adequate supervision. They also noted that the facility did not take care to keep the instigator segregated from other residents. This is important because the facility knew that the boy had a history of sexual abuse.

Training:

Proper training is key to keeping everyone safe. Staff should be trained on how to appropriately pair roommates together in residential facilities. In addition, staff should be taught how to recognize high risk situations and they should be able to respond quickly and appropriately.

Supervision in facilities is of utmost importance. Create and communicate policies and procedures for resident placement and guidelines on how staff are to make those decisions in an informed way.

Have staff complete checklists and forms regularly to ensure consistency.

Example B

Scenario:

A client of a disability services organization who provides in-home care alleged that she was sexually assaulted repeatedly by the nurse who was caring for her. The client states that the nurse touched her breasts as she was being transferred in and out of her wheelchair.

Training:

All staff should be trained in the proper techniques of lifting and transferring patients in and out of wheelchairs and beds. All in-home visits should be documented and regular meetings should be held with the family of the client. This is a good time to review any and all complaints.

Also, consider rotating staff so that clients have the chance to express concerns about the caretaker to another person.