**Oral health policy template**

This template may help your organisation to develop an oral health policy. Many services like to incorporate oral health statements into other policies, such as healthy eating or wellbeing. Some organisations will have separate procedures that sit beside the policy and some will incorporate actions into their policy.

****This is only a guide and your organisation may have their own way of developing policies.

**Before you start…**Think about how you will get input from the people who are affected by the policy. Policies are most effective when the people who should adhere to them, are involved in their development.

**Organisation name & logo**

**Purpose***What does your organisation want to achieve by having this policy?*

*For example*: your policy may include *one or two* goals similar to the following:

* Promote the importance of good oral health for all service users, staff and visitors.
* Establish procedures that support the daily oral health care of service users.
* Develop complimentary policies, such as healthy eating and drinking, physical activity, limiting tobacco, sun protection etc.

**Scope***Who does this policy apply to?*

*For example:* This policy applies to all staff, service users and occasional visitors to our services.

**Context**
*A short statement that sets the scene for the policy.*

*For example:* Oral health is important to overall health, wellbeing and quality of life. People with intellectual disabilities experience poorer oral health than the general population.Our organisation recognises the importance of oral health in the overall wellbeing of our service users and staff.

**Definitions***This section makes sure any key terms in the policy can be clearly understood by everyone.*

*For example:*

***Oral health*** - Eating, speaking and socilaising without discomfort or embarrassment.1

***Oral health promoting behaviours*** - Behaviours that impact positively on a person’s oral health including regular tooth brushing, regular dental visits, healthy eating and tap water as the drink of choice.

**Policy***What the organisation will do to make sure they achieve the goals outlined in the Purpose.* *For example:*

**The importance of good oral health** **is promoted for** **all service users, staff and visitors.**

To achieve this, the service will:

* Seek opportunities for staff to attend professional development on healthy eating and oral health.
* Include basic oral health training as part of staff induction.
* Support service users to develop health promoting behaviours.
* Work towards becoming totally Smokefree.

*Also consider including information about how the policy was developed:*

* *The date the policy was developed*
* *Who was involved (staff, service users, families)*
* *Where the policy will be kept (in a manual, displayed on the wall, website)*
* *How the policy will be promoted and distributed*
* *Who will need to refer to the policy and when*

**Related policies, laws, procedures and resources***List any policies or documents that you have referenced, or which are relevant to the policy, or may be helpful for further reading.*

*For example:*

* Healthy eating policy
* Managing behaviours - guidelines for staff
* Oral health care plan procedure
* Staff health and wellbeing policy

Relevant resources might include:

* Dental Health Services Victoria [www.dhsv.org.au](http://www.dhsv.org.au)
* Australian Dietary Guidelines [www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au)
* Quit Victoria [www.quit.org.au](http://www.quit.org.au)
* [Use of fluorides in Australia: Guidelines](https://www.adelaide.edu.au/arcpoh/dperu/fluoride/ARCPOH_FluorideOct2014.pdf) <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/arcpoh/dperu/fluoride/ARCPOH_FluorideOct2014.pdf>
* [Key oral health messages for Australian public (2011)](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/oral-health-promotion/resources/Your_Oral_Health.pdf)<https://www.adelaide.edu.au/arcpoh/oral-health-promotion/resources/national-consensus-workshop/>

**Monitoring***How will the organisation make sure that the policy statements are being lived in the daily running of the service/s?*

*For example:* The Wellbeing Leadership Group will oversee the implementation of this policy. Staff are responsible for reporting any breaches of care to their manager.

**Review***Who is responsible for triggering the review, who will undertake the review, and who will be consulted?*

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| --- | --- |
| **Policy owner:** | Person/position or department responsible for prompting and overseeing reviews and eventually seeking endorsement from appropriate person/party. |
| **Review process**  |  |
| **Endorsed by:** | Person or group with authority to sign off on this policy statement on the organisation’s behalf. |
| **Endorsed on:** | Date  |
| **Revision date:** | Often 1-2 years  |

1UK Department of Health (1994) in Spencer, JA, Australian Health Policy Institute, Commissioned Paper Series, 2004 (dental)
This document has been adapted from the Health Eating Policy Checklist developed by the Health Eating Advisory Service.