



RISK ENABLEMENT STRATEGY AND SAFEGUARDING POLICY

THIS POLICY DOCUMENT SHOULD BE APPLIED TO ALL EMPLOYEES IN THE ORGANISATION

Contents Page

Our approach to risk	2
Legislation and guidance	2
Our principles	3
Risk enablement in practice	3
Safeguarding	5
Event Planning Checklist (appendix)	8

Created: July 2018	Approved by the Board:
-----------------------	---------------------------

Date for review	Review complete
July 2019	

RISK ENABLEMENT STRATEGY

Our Approach to Risk

At get2gether we believe that risk is a normal and important part of life. From choosing whether to take an umbrella in the morning, to crossing the road, to going on a date, we all constantly take and manage risks in order to live the life we want. Sometimes we take careful consideration before doing something. We might think about whether the risk is worth it or we might think about how to do it in the safest way possible. At other times we do things without any thought.

While 'risk' is linked with ideas such as 'danger' and 'harm', it is also synonymous with the idea of 'possibility'. Taking a risk does not always lead to the positive outcome we had hoped for, but not taking a risk will often mean that no progress is made. Throughout our lifetime we learn to manage our own risks. We learn what makes something more or less risky, how we can protect ourselves from the possibility of harm, and what is important to us so we know what we are willing to risk. We learn all of this through having experiences and taking risks.

Within disability services, however, risk is more often seen as a negative word. The vulnerability that is equated with disability has led to a risk averse blame culture where protection from harm is often valued over experiences of true adult choice and control. Preventing risk might well protect someone from more noticeable dangers of accident or abuse, but the harm caused by not being able to take risks is only less noticeable because not having a job, social life, or relationships are the norm for adults with disabilities. It can also be argued that over protection actually keeps individuals in a state of vulnerability as it stops people learning how to manage risks themselves.

At get2gether we are driven by the belief that adults should be treated as adults and that everyone has the right to live the life they want. We work in a way that not only acknowledges the inevitability of risk, but also supports and encourages our members to take life enhancing risks and to learn through experience. We recognise our role as providing opportunity in a supportive culture through which our members can gain the skills they need to manage risks for themselves.

Legislation and Guidance

Our approach to risk and safeguarding has been guided by human rights. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities asserts that people with disabilities must enjoy the same human rights and freedoms as anyone else. Within its General Principles it explicitly includes 'freedom to make one's own choice', 'full and effective participation and inclusion in society', and 'equality of opportunity' (Article 3, CRPD, 2006).

Legislation and guidance such as the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007, sets out ways to protect individuals who are unable to protect themselves. Although legislation such as the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000, states it should be otherwise, often

the fact that someone has a disability is unofficially used as sufficient justification for protecting someone through preventing their choice. At get2gether we believe that enabling risk and true choice around risk not only upholds the principles of the CRPD, but also acts to protect the individual from harm as it supports individuals to gain the skills needed to manage risks themselves.

Our Principles

At get2gether:

- We choose to see risk as a positive word.
- We choose to work in a way that supports and encourages our members to take risks and get the life they want.
- We choose to share the responsibility for managing risks with each individual member in order to empower them to be able to take and manage risks in all areas of their lives

Risk Enablement in Practice

Following these principles, get2gether does not seek to minimise risk any more than, or differently to, another membership or events organization.

The way that we put these principles into practice is detailed in the table below.

What?	Why?	How?
<p>Access to information</p>	<p>Access to information is a vital part of understanding risks and knowing how to minimise harm.</p>	<p>get2gether will provide access to information or will signpost to relevant helpful organisations when members ask about something specific.</p> <p>get2gether will work in partnership with organisations such as <i>Crew 2000</i> and <i>LGBTQ Health and Wellbeing</i> to create informal opportunities for members to access information.</p> <p>get2gether will continue to form partnerships with organisations that might be of use to members.</p>

		get2gether will actively use the newsletter and Facebook page to highlight information and opportunities to members.
Supportive staff	Interdependence is an important part of society and feeling supported by people that you trust can encourage people to take life enhancing risks.	<p>get2gether will create an environment where members feel supported and valued.</p> <p>get2gether will offer light-touch support or coaching when appropriate.</p> <p>get2gether will create an environment where members feel safe to ask questions.</p>
Zero tolerance to violence and illegal behaviour	As with normal social protocol, violence and illegal behavior is not acceptable at get2gether events.	<p>get2gether will suspend or ban members when they have been violent at an event or acted in a way that is against the law.</p> <p>get2gether will investigate any report of violent or illegal behaviour at its events.</p>
Normal venue and event safety precautions	<p>When going to a bar or the cinema individuals do not usually carry out risk assessments as venues and events will usually have their own safety precautions and protocols in place.</p> <p>The majority of our events are not specially put on for our members. We therefore utilise the risk assessments and safety precautions established by the venue or event staff as would be the case if our members were going somewhere without get2gether.</p>	<p>get2gether will always check that a venue is accessible for our members, including in relation to emergency evacuation procedures.</p> <p>get2gether will not do additional formal risk assessments unless it is felt necessary. get2gether staff will, however, assess the suitability of a venue and check that the venue has relevant procedures in place. An Event Planning Checklist has been created to support this (appendix 1).</p> <p>get2gether will hire security staff for the ATIK club night and follow usual ATIK safety protocols.</p> <p>get2gether will ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities at events and, where necessary, will provide training around this.</p>
Health and safety at work	Work spaces are similarly governed	get2gether will follow Thistle Foundation health and safety protocols for working in the office. This includes

		creating the required evacuation protocols when necessary.
Investigating complaints	An environment of risk enablement should be seen as an environment of learning. Both members and staff will not always get things right so it is important to learn from mistakes.	<p>get2gether will always take complaints seriously and will investigate accordingly</p> <p>get2gether will regularly review its policies</p> <p>get2gether will respond to investigation findings and reviews and will make changes accordingly.</p>

Risk assessments and management plans

On most occasions we rely on the risk assessments and management plans of the events and venues that we use in the same way that any other member of the public would. On some occasions, however, we may wish to carry out our own assessment and management plan if we feel it is lacking.

When carrying out our own risk management plans we will always look at both the potential risks that might arise from participation, and the potential risks that might occur as a result of not participating. For example having alcohol on sale at our club night might lead to risks such as members drinking too much, falling and hurting themselves, but not having alcohol on sale would be preventing choice, control and opportunities to learn about personal limits.

get2gether aims to provide opportunities and access to information that individuals can choose to utilise in order to inform their own decisions about risks. Providing this is a key part of our overall risk strategy and could be used in specific risk management plans to target areas where we feel risks are potentially greater.

Incidents

If staff should witness a serious incident at an event or if someone should report something, get2gether will carry out an investigation in order to understand how best to respond and to learn how get2gether might do things differently in the future.

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

While we use a risk enablement strategy, we also acknowledge that having a disability or learning disability is linked to increased risk of harm and abuse. Our members often express that they feel valued and listened to by get2gether and as a result members sometimes disclose information about harm, both historical and current. It is important therefore, for

our staff and volunteers to know what to do when someone discloses something so that the information is handled in an appropriate and useful way.

Our guidance has been written with reference to section 4 of Tell Someone (2009), the national Adult Support and Protection implementation booklet.

What to do if someone discloses harm

The term harm can mean lots of things and can include physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, institutional, discriminatory, neglect and self-harm.

An individual may start disclosing harm in any setting, and may not be aware of the significance of what they are saying. The disclosure might be about actions that are current, or actions that occurred in the past, but staff are always expected to take appropriate action as detailed below.

As get2gether encourages self-determination, it is important to highlight that adults have the right to engage in behaviour that others might view as 'risky' or 'harmful' and so not all disclosures need to be formally escalated. In some circumstances, get2gether staff might also wish to offer support or signposting to the individual so that they can protect themselves from potential harm. Staff, however, must never promise to keep information secret and must be clear about this.

When staff feel that something serious is being disclosed they must follow the best practice guidelines and try to:

- ask what happened and listen attentively to all forms of communication
- ask precise, non-leading questions, and not make suggestions that might influence someone's response
- reflect back what has been said to ensure clarity, but do not paraphrase
- get as much information as possible without pressing for more details
- show sympathy and support and make sure the individual feels safe and secure
- make sure they know that their wellbeing is your top priority
- take immediate notes using exact words
- be clear that staff cannot keep the information secret and explain what you are going to do with it
- be clear that they will be kept informed of everything that happens
- report information to your line manager immediately and take any appropriate immediate action
- record all discussion and actions agreed with your line manager and report back to the individual
- do not discuss it with anyone else

Staff must not carry out any investigation themselves, but must refer information to the local Social Work Office. In circumstances where the risk of harm is immediate, emergency services should also be involved.

Sometimes an individual will start to disclose information in a setting that is not appropriate, for example when with a group of people. It is important that the individual is provided with an immediate opportunity to speak about what they are disclosing in a safe and confidential way. This may mean suggesting that you go somewhere else to speak or that you speak about it in more detail later, but if this is the case it is very important that the individual does not feel that they have done something wrong by speaking out.

Key safeguarding responsibilities

Who?	Responsible for:
Event coordinator, Ambassador, Volunteer	Taking record of disclosed information as detailed above Reporting immediately to manager Involving emergency services when necessary
Manager	Taking record of disclosed information as detailed above (when information is directly disclosed to Manager) Discussing follow up actions with member of staff Deciding if the local Social Work Office needs to be informed and doing so if required
Board	Making sure get2gether complies with all regulations in relation to Safeguarding



EVENT PLANNING CHECKLIST

When you are planning an event for get2gether there are some things that you need to think about. This checklist is to guide you and help you remember what you need to think about.

The Venue

	Things to think about	Actions to take
Accessibility	<p>Would someone who uses a wheelchair be able to get in and out of the venue comfortably?</p> <p>Is there enough space inside the venue for someone who uses a wheelchair to get around comfortably and access any relevant activities?</p> <p>Are the toilets accessible?</p> <p>If there are any stairs in the venue, do they have a lift or ramp that is acceptable for use?</p>	<p>If a venue is NOT accessible for wheelchairs in any way then we will NOT use it for an event.</p> <p>If the toilets are NOT accessible then we will NOT use the venue for an event.</p>
Location	<p>Is the venue near good public transport? For example, is it near a bus stop?</p> <p>Are there any potential hazards near the venue? For example, is it near any rivers or very busy roads?</p>	<p>A venue with no public transport links will usually not be suitable for a get2gether event.</p> <p>If there are any hazards think about whether they make the venue too dangerous.</p> <p>Think about if we might need to reduce any risks and how we would be able to do that.</p>

Time	<p>Is the event taking place at night? If so, is the area around the venue well lit? What impact will the dark have on the potential hazards?</p> <p>Will the area be busier at the time of the event? How will that impact the potential hazards?</p>	<p>If the time of day will create any increased risk, think about whether this makes the venue too dangerous.</p> <p>Think about if we might need to reduce any risks and how we would be able to do that.</p>
Fire Safety	<p>Does the venue have accessible fire exits?</p> <p>Does the venue have a good fire safety policy?</p> <p>Does the fire safety policy cover people in wheelchairs? For example, if there are any stairs, is there a full and acceptable plan about how someone who uses a wheelchair will get out of the building?</p>	<p>The venue MUST have a fire safety policy and plan that covers our members.</p> <p>Check with the venue staff that there is a fire safety plan and that it is acceptable.</p> <p>Check who would be responsible for evacuation in the case of a fire.</p>
First Aid	<p>Does the venue have access to first aid?</p>	<p>If necessary check that the venue has access to first aid and who would be able to help in the event that first aid is needed.</p>

If you have visited a venue and are unsure about it, speak to another member of the get2gether team to help make a decision about whether it is suitable.

Other things to think about:

- Where do you want to meet people as they arrive? Do you need to be near the door or outside? Where will people see you?
- It is good to have an idea of who is coming and who you need to look out for.
- Make sure you have what you need: a fully charged phone, any tickets.
- Try not to take things you won't need that are too valuable.