Response to Unusual Events In and Around SMDHU Offices

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Introduction

Events may occur in and around health unit offices that can impact the staff, clients, or office space which are not otherwise covered by existing agency policies and procedures. When such events occur, a timely coordinated response is required. The following policy is intended to guide staff and management in this type of response.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the roles and responsibilities of staff and management in responding to unusual events in and around health unit offices when the response to such a situation is not covered by existing health unit policy.

Legislative Authority

Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990 and Regulations made under the act.

Good Samaritan Act, R.S.O. 2001, c. 2 – Bill 20

Policy Definitions and Interpretation

An **unusual event** is defined as an event that has some or all of the following:

- occurs in a SMDHU building or around a building in which SMDHU is a tenant.
- is low frequency (rare).
- may involve use of emergency services (police or paramedics).
- requires an urgent response.
- there is a lack of agency policy or procedure for the type of event.
- may involve agency liability, insurance issue, or other legal issues (i.e., trespassers/protestors refusing to leave the property, persons in altered states attempting to get access/refusing to leave the premise, damage to door locks of building during nonworking hours, rainstorm causing water damage, erratic behaviour of client/individuals).

Branch Office Lead (BOL) – a management position assigned to each branch office and the 80 Bradford clinic location who is responsible and accountable for coordinating the efficient and effective overall day to day operation of the assigned office.

15 Sperling Manager Lead – a rotation of managers is assigned to fill this role each day at 15 Sperling. The lead for the day works in the office and is responsible for managing any situations effecting the office that require management follow up. All assigned managers, excluding those assigned as BOLs and those assigned to the 80 Bradford clinic location, are part of the rotation for this role. A backup manager is assigned every day to fulfill role of 15 Sperling Manager Lead if the lead is not available. Rotation list of 15 Sperling Manager Lead.

Policy

When an unusual event as defined above occurs in or around an SMDHU office, staff and management will respond according to the procedures below, with the key overarching principle of safety of staff, clients, and the public guiding the response.

Procedures

If the event is any of the following, refer to the existing policy or response plan:

- Tornado Safety Procedure
- Midland Health Unit Office Lock-Down
- Employee requiring first aid – Health & Safety Manual
- Fire Evacuation Procedures for All Offices
- Harassment (if not urgent) – Harassment Response Policy and Program
- Workplace Violence and Prevention Policy & Procedure
- CBRN HU Office Response to Suspicious Substance/Packages Protocol
- Clinical Service - Anaphylaxis Management and Administration of Epinephrine
- Staff Exposure to Blood and Body Fluids
- Emergency Response to an Opioid Overdose/Poisoning

If the unusual event occurs at a branch office, the BOL or their alternate becomes the lead for managing the situation whether they are onsite or not. The BOL will go onsite if they are able, if it is warranted, and if it is safe to do so. When BOLs are not working, they will arrange for back up coverage prior to their absence from another BOL and communicate this to the Branch Office Program Assistant (BOPA) or Gravenhurst and 80 Bradford reception in advance. In the event a BOL is not able to be reached during an unusual event, or the BOL has advised the BOPA they are off, and a backup is not available, the BOPA will contact the 15 Sperling Manager Lead for the day, who will assume the lead for managing the situation at the branch.

If the unusual event occurs at 15 Sperling, the 15 Sperling Manager Lead for the day will become the lead for managing the situation.

Ensure as best as possible; the safety of yourself, any other staff or the public in the response to the event and if possible, avoid being alone when responding to the event by having other staff/manager or public nearby, without causing a delayed response to the event.

1. If there is an <u>immediate threat to anyone's safety</u>:
   - the staff who identifies the situation will dial 911 and request police, fire, and/or paramedic services.
     - Staff can push the office panic alarm noting this signals police only, if they need fire or ambulance, they will call 911.
   - When it is safe to do so, the staff will notify the BOL/15 Sperling Manager Lead of the unusual event in-progress.

2. If there is a <u>potential risk</u> to staff, clients, or the public, or a real or potential negative impact to health unit business:
   - Staff will notify the BOL/15 Sperling Manager Lead for the day to advise them of the situation.
   - The BOL/15 Sperling Manager Lead will provide staff with guidance and or direction on the immediate appropriate course of action and next steps.

3. If during the course of responding to the event, there are health and safety implications for staff, the BOL/15 Sperling Manager Lead will provide direction to staff initially specific to the situation, and then direct staff to contact their reporting manager as required by Occupational Health & Safety.

Communications

1. During an unusual event, the BOL/15 Sperling Manager Lead will be the communication lead for the situation.

2. The BOL/15 Sperling Management Lead will first notify (via MS Teams and email) the Vice President Corporate Services or alternate, Manager of Facilities and Infrastructure (or alternate) of the unusual event and the Medical Officer of Health (Acting CEO if MOH not working) in a timely manner of the unusual event and determine if further action is required).

3. The BOL/15 Sperling Manager Lead will then start an email thread to inform and provide updates to those required to have knowledge of the unusual event including executive committee and all managers The email thread will have subject line: *Unusual Event in office XXX.*

4. The BOL/15 Sperling Management Lead will include the main phone number to be used to call them, if needed, in the initial email thread based on the event and technology availability (i.e., their agency cell phone, office extension number, or if required plug in the analog phone in the office and provide this number).

5. All subsequent emails will use the same thread. If updates to the situation are significant – identify those in the subject line of the email – adding "update #3…#4…#5."

6. The BOL/15 Sperling Manager Lead will send a separate email to staff in the branch office involved, using the branch office distribution list. The email will notify the staff that the BOL and other management are aware of the situation and responding appropriately and may include direction about any changes in accessing the office.

7. Staff receiving the emails should not respond or ask questions unless absolutely necessary to streamline communication. The BOL/15 Spering Manager Lead will provide updates as they are able.

8. Agency cell phones can also be used for phone communication if this method is more efficient or effective.

9. The staff most involved in the event will notify their supervisor when the event is stable and immediate response is complete.

10. Staff not involved in the event are not required to inform their supervisor.

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11. Any executive member or management team member who requires information about the situation will go through the BOL/15 Sperling Management Lead in order to maintain consistent clear communication and ensure accurate and up to date information.

12. Once the unusual event is over the BOL/15 Sperling Management Lead shall advise executive committee and all affected staff and management via e-mail and alerting via Teams of such email.

Follow up after the Unusual Event has ended:
The BOL/15 Sperling Management Lead will ensure documentation related to the event is completed within 48 hours.

Documentation should include:
- Timeline of events
- Names of any staff members involved.
- Contact information for any clients involved if possible.
- If any staff provided care that would warrant documentation required by their professional college, this should be completed on an agency electronic platform i.e., CHRIS or if one does not exist, a progress note and stored with the event record.
- A copy of the final email thread completed by the manager lead.
- Any other relevant documentation

If the staff person most involved also has a professional documentation requirement, they will develop a "progress note" page and that will also be stored with the documentation of the BOL/15 Sperling Management Lead.

Any hard copy notes should be scanned following privacy and scanning policy, and all documentation should be stored in the M: Management drive - Unusual Events folder.

Depending on the nature of the event, the BOL/15 Sperling Management Lead will consult with the Medical Officer of Health and the Vice President of Corporate Service about the need for a debrief session, or additional supports for staff involved.

Related Policies

- Tornado Safety Procedure

- Midland Health Unit Office Lock-Down

- Employee requiring first aid – Health & Safety Manual

- Fire Evacuation Procedures for All Offices

- Harassment (if not urgent) – Harassment Response Policy and Program

- Workplace Violence Prevention Policy & Procedure

- CBRN HU Office Response to Suspicious Substance/Packages Protocol

- Clinical Service - Anaphylaxis Management and Administration of Epinephrine

- Staff Exposure to Blood and Body Fluids

- Emergency Response to an Opioid Overdose/Poisoning

Related Forms

Health & Safety Manual:

- Potential or Existing Unsafe Workplace Condition
- Near Miss
- Public Incidents
- Employee Incident Report
- Workplace Violence Incident Report

Final Approval Signature: _____

Review/Revision History:

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