



Ryder-Cheshire Australia

RISK ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT

PROVIDING VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS TO RYDER-CHESHIRE AUSTRALIA'S PARTNERS

Passed 7.11.19	For Review 2024
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ABBREVIATIONS USED:

RCA – Ryder-Cheshire Australia.

CONTEXT:

RCA sends and supports volunteers to two partner centres, one in Timor-Leste and another in India. This includes volunteers who are from overseas but who are processed through RCA. We also accept and support students and their lecturers/teachers to fulfil university requirements. RCA supports a centre in Victoria and in Mt Gambier but does not provide staff or volunteers to either of these centres. RCA does give one-off grants to both centres to allow work to proceed when necessary.

Raphael in India supports a school and residence for disabled children, a TB hospital, a residence for disabled adults and a residential area for patients with Hansen's disease. There are also a number of families of staff who live on-site - some have children. Raphael is also involved in various outreach programmes which volunteers sometimes participate in.

Klibur Domin in Timor-Leste supports a rehabilitation hospital which houses patients and their families (and often their children), a TB hospital, a dental unit, a unit for vulnerable adults and a residence for disabled students who attend a school across the road. Klibur Domin too is involved in various outreach programmes which volunteers and students sometimes participate in.

Volunteers often work in roles which require them to work directly with children and vulnerable people.

Occasionally we accept volunteers who are accompanied by their own children. Volunteers generally live in volunteer cottages in the grounds of these overseas centres. Under these circumstances there will be children present in the Volunteer quarters. Children and vulnerable people are present in the wider grounds of both centres.

Students often do part of the practical work required for their courses at our overseas centres. Some are from the local community and some from Australian schools and universities. They are generally accompanied by at least one lecturer or teacher.

Volunteers provide much needed help particularly in Timor-Leste which is still a relatively new country. Volunteers assist in teaching staff in every aspect of the centre from administration to physiotherapy, from teaching English to helping out in the gardens which provide food for the residents. A number of volunteers are clinicians and professionals in their fields. They help with initial training of personnel in Timor and with continued education. Other volunteers help out where needed and where they can. For instance, a volunteer assisting staff set up a new website and a photographer assisting staff with graphics and the overall look of the website.

The scenario is much the same in India but to a lesser extent as the centre was established 60 years ago and many of the staff are professionals. However, there is still much that can be done by volunteers from one-on-one teaching of disabled students to teaching new IT concepts to staff and teachers.

Another important aspect of the volunteer program is that this is where the main body of our Boards and our support back in Australia comes from. Without the on-going help of these volunteers RCA would have ceased to exist a long time ago.

OBJECTIVES:

- to provide support and professional development to staff in our centres in Timor-Leste and India.
- to provide the on-going funds which are much needed for the running of both centres.

IDENTIFYING THE RISKS:

Risk Sources	Risk Event	Risk Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The possibility of taking a volunteer or student who poses a risk to the safety of children and vulnerable people who are residents in the centre they are attending. • Failure of monitoring/ inadequate compliance checking /background checks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harm/injury to a child or vulnerable person • Non-compliance with policies and legislation • Relationship with partner government/other damaged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damage to reputation • Adverse media • Financial loss • Physical/mental harm • Legislative breach • Potential legal action • Leave the centre worse off than we found it • Community view of provider decreases and reduces the ability to deliver future projects.

ANALYSING & EVALUATING THE RISKS:

Since the current members of RCA have been involved with both centres we have not had one problem associated with sending a volunteer or student to a partner organisation. Our most long standing member has been involved with RCA for approximately 55 years. Many volunteers return to volunteer again in either of the centres. Some have returned up to 20 times.

Having said this, RCA recognises that there are risks and that all possible steps need to be taken to mitigate these risks. Both partner centres in India and Timor-Leste are well aware of these risks and take appropriate steps in line with Ryder-Cheshire Australia's – Child and Vulnerable Person's Protection Policy 2019.

Given the above, risks are rated in the low to moderate range.

DECISION AND RISK MANAGEMENT:

Given the benefits of the support that the volunteers and students give to Ryder-Cheshire Australia and its partners it is considered that this is a worthwhile risk.

Management of these risks is outlined in the Ryder-Cheshire Australia's Code of Conduct for Working with Children and Vulnerable People 2019.

In addition RCA will:

- monitor and review its processes as necessary;
- remain alert to changes in legislation and policy;
- record discussions around these risks in its minutes;
- keep our partners cognisant of any changes made to policies and legislation.