TOOLBOX TALK AWARENESS PACKAGES

HAZ-HCV · Home and Community Visit Safety Awareness

Product Overview

Audience: Workers who visit clients in their homes or in the community · Duration: 20–30 minutes

Version 1.0 · 15 November 2026

For workers who visit clients at home or in the community: pre-visit checks, dogs, aggression, unsafe homes, driving, check-ins, and leaving early when it is not safe.

Home care, disability support, community nursing, child protection, housing, allied health and outreach workers spend much of their day in other people's homes and in the community, often alone. The home is the client's, not the business's: the worker may meet dogs, aggression, smoke, drugs, clutter, unsafe floors, sharps or other people they did not expect, and help can be a long way off. WHS or OHS laws still require the business to manage these risks.

This talk covers what can go wrong on a visit, the checks before you go, dogs and unsafe homes, aggression, driving and parking, check-ins and what happens when one is missed, and the right to leave a visit early. It complements the Lone and Remote Work Awareness talk, with a focus on visits.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session participants will be able to:

- Identify the hazards of home and community visits, including dogs, aggression, unsafe homes, other people, driving and working alone
- Use the pre-visit information and checks: client alerts, the home safety check, who else may be there
- Ask for dogs to be secured and other hazards to be controlled before or at the start of a visit
- Plan driving and parking so you can leave quickly, and drive without distraction or fatigue
- Follow the check-in procedure, and know what happens when a check-in is missed
- Leave a visit early when it is not safe, and report every incident, hazard and near miss

What it covers

Module	Covers
What can go wrong	Someone else's home; Dogs, aggression and other people; Unsafe homes, driving and being alone
Controls that work	Pre-visit information and checks; Two workers, another place or another way; Check-ins and calling for help
On the day	Arriving and parking; Watching for warning signs; Leaving early and reporting

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Activities

- Pre-visit check: workers review a visit booking and list what they need to know before they go
- Stay or go: workers decide what to do in four situations on a visit

What is in the package

Item	File
Editable PowerPoint presentation with speaker notes, plus PDF	02_TRAINING_PRESENTATION/Training Presentation.pptx and .pdf
Facilitator guide with a running sheet, discussion prompts and model answers	03_FACILITATOR_GUIDE/Facilitator Guide.docx and .pdf
Participant handout with the key points to take away	04_PARTICIPANT_HANDOUT/Participant Handout.docx and .pdf
Attendance record form, to capture who attended, when, and who facilitated	06_RECORDS/Attendance Record.docx and .pdf
Excel attendance register	06_RECORDS/Attendance Register.xlsx
Multiple-choice theory assessment, to record understanding if your business wants to	05_ASSESSMENT/Theory Assessment.docx and .pdf
Answer key for the assessment	05_ASSESSMENT/Assessment Answer Key.docx and .pdf
Certificate template	06_RECORDS/Certificate Template.docx
Start here: Read Me First, Product Overview, Permitted Use Terms, Version Information	01_START_HERE/ (four PDFs)

What you need to deliver it

- A facilitator such as a supervisor, leading hand or WHS adviser who has read the facilitator guide and knows your site's arrangements for the topic
- A screen or projector, or printed slides or handouts: it works in a crib room, site office or on a video call
- Your own site procedures for the topic, to point to during the session

Questions

Can a worker really leave a visit early? Yes. If it is not safe to stay, the worker leaves, gets to a safe place and reports it, and the visit is rearranged another way. A business that sends workers into homes should say so in its procedures and back workers who do it.

Can we add our own site procedures and photos? Yes. The slides, handout and guide are editable, and the facilitator guide marks the places to add your own procedures, contacts and photos of your workplace.

Do we have to use the assessment? No. It is there if your business wants a record that each worker understood the key points. The attendance record on its own shows who attended and when.

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TOOLBOX TALK

Home and Community Visit Safety Awareness

Know before you go, check in, and leave if it is not safe

20–30 minutes · Workers who visit clients in their homes or in the community

[Company name] · [Date] · [Facilitator name]

HCV

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What this talk is, and is not

This talk covers

- ✓ The hazards of visits
- ✓ Pre-visit checks and information
- ✓ Dogs, unsafe homes, aggression, driving
- ✓ Check-ins and leaving early

This talk is not

- ✕ Training on a duress device or app
- ✕ Self-defence or restraint
- ✕ Driver training
- ✕ Our procedure: **[Our home visit procedure]**

Awareness only. Hazards such as asbestos or electrical faults are reported, not handled.

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What can go wrong on a visit

- Dogs: bites, knock-downs, and dogs that are 'friendly' until you arrive
- Aggression from the client, family, visitors or neighbours
- Unsafe homes: steps, poor lighting, clutter, smoke, pests, sharps, infection
- Manual tasks in cramped bathrooms with no equipment
- Driving: fatigue, distraction, rushing between visits, unfamiliar streets
- Being alone, with help a long way off

A composite example

- A support worker arrives for a first visit. The client's adult son, not mentioned in the referral, answers the door, agitated, with a large dog behind him.
- The worker is unsure whether she is allowed to leave, and goes in.

The home is the client's. The risks to you are still the business's to manage.

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Duties under WHS or OHS laws

The business must

- Manage the risks of visits, even in homes it does not control
- Gather and share information about risks before visits
- Provide check-in systems, devices, vehicles and procedures
- Back workers who leave a visit that is not safe

You must

- Read the pre-visit information and follow the procedure
- Make every check-in, and keep your device charged
- Leave when it is not safe, and do not put yourself or others at risk
- Report every incident, hazard and near miss

A client's home is a workplace while you work there. Some incidents must be notified to the regulator.

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The order of controls for visits

1. **Elimination** — No visit needed: phone, video, or the client comes to the office
2. **Substitution** — Another place: a clinic, office or public place, not the home
3. **Isolation** — Dogs secured in another room or outside before the visit
4. **Engineering** — Duress and GPS devices, reliable phones, sound vehicles
5. **Administrative** — Alerts, home safety checks, two workers, check-ins, procedures
6. **PPE** — Gloves, masks and closed shoes for the home's hazards

HIGHER ORDER

Higher order controls remove or control the hazard at the source, or put a barrier between people and the hazard.

LOWER ORDER

Lower order controls rely on people to do a thing or wear a thing, every time, tired, distracted or rushed.

Behaviours are not on the hierarchy, but behaviours and culture decide whether every control on it actually works.

Start at the top: does this visit need to happen in this home, today, alone?

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Home and Community Visit Safety Awareness

Participant handout · keep this

A client's home is still your workplace while you work there. Dogs, aggression, unsafe homes, other people, driving and being alone are the main hazards. The business must manage them, and you can leave a visit that is not safe. Keep this page.

Before every visit

- ☐ Client alerts: aggression, weapons, drugs or alcohol
- ☐ Who else lives there or may be there
- ☐ Dogs or other animals, and whether they will be secured
- ☐ The home safety check: access, steps, lighting, smoking, clutter
- ☐ Infection or other health risks
- ☐ One worker or two? Any reason to change the plan?
- ☐ Your itinerary and check-in times logged

Driving and check-ins

- No hand-held phone while driving; rest if tired
- Park on the street, facing out
- Check in on arrival and when you leave
- Late? Tell the office before it is due
- Missed check-in: **[What happens when a check-in is missed]**

The order of controls

1. No visit needed: phone, video, the office
2. Another place: clinic, office, public place
3. Dogs secured away from you
4. Duress and GPS devices, reliable phones, vehicles
5. Alerts, home safety checks, two workers, check-ins
6. PPE for the home's hazards

Leave when

- Aggression, threats, a weapon, intoxication
- A loose dog, or the home is not safe today
- You feel unsafe: you do not need to be sure
- Exit line ready; way out clear; drive away, then call

Report it

- **[Who to report to here]**
- **[How to report an incident here]**
- Every incident, hazard and near miss
- Alerts: **[Where client alerts are kept]**

Know before you go, check in, and leave if it is not safe.

This is awareness training. It is not a licence, a ticket, a permit or a competency. It is not training on a duress device, self-defence or driver training.

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