

## Conflict of Interest Policy

1	Purpose	To minimise potential or perceived conflicts of interest
2	Scope	All IOH Employees and Contractors
3	References	<a href="#">Australian Research Council Guidelines for Disclosure of Interests and Confidentiality Obligations</a>
4	Definition	<p>A <b>conflict of interest</b> is a situation in which someone in a position of trust has competing professional or personal interests. Such competing interests could make it difficult for an individual to fulfil their duties impartially, and potentially could improperly influence the performance of their professional duties and responsibilities. An example of this would be where a provider routinely receives direct referrals from a SIRA approved engaged return to work coordinator who also has affiliations with the provider, e.g. a staff member of the provider. In this situation the provider is receiving a financial gain/benefit from their duties as a RTW coordinator and this could improperly influence their performance in either role.</p> <p>An <b>apparent (or perceived) conflict of interest</b> exists where it appears that individual interests could improperly influence the performance of their duties and responsibilities whether or not this is, in fact the case.</p> <p>A <b>potential conflict of interest</b> arises where an individual has a private interest, which is such that an actual conflict of interest would arise if the individual were to become involved in duties and responsibilities in the future.</p>
5	Procedure	<p>Potential/perceived conflicts of interest may occur within IOH due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• our integrated service delivery model</li><li>• IOH's long standing in the Work Health and Safety industry and the relationships formed.</li></ul> <p>IOH posits that relationships and the growth in understanding, which creates more effective communication and service delivery outweighs potential/perceived conflict of interest in these areas. This is a common interdisciplinary model respected in medical field and based on the code of ethics each professional undertakes. IOH operates a model of consultation and transparency to ensure stakeholders are aware of complementary services delivered by IOH.</p> <p>Factors to minimise perception:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Both referrer and referee must acknowledge potential conflicts of interest</li><li>- All professionals registered with a professional code of ethics</li><li>- no remuneration or benefit to a professional or support staff is derived from referrals to other service areas</li></ul>

- use of IOH brand for all services to aid in transparency
- referrals must be made through consultation process with stakeholders
- within workers compensation there is third party agent reviewing and approving services.

The simple requirement is that the action being taken is necessary and the most appropriate:

**“to create the highest quality and value to the clients’ needs”**

IOH promotes communication with stakeholders as the best way of establishing a trusting relationship and allaying any concerns.

Avoiding conflict of interest and over servicing, and their potential to damage the IOH reputation is critical to IOH. Retaining committed long-term clients and IOH’s award by iCare NSW for Customer Excellence in 2017 attests to IOH’s governance in this area, by only providing reasonable and necessary services that provide value in achieving the goals of and outcomes for our clients.

For IOH Staff: If you feel in any way that requests of you or your actions may be presenting a conflict of interest it is essential that this is raised with management.

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## 6 Operation

IOH workers have access to the internal intranet with Preferred Provider listing. This list contains both internal and external referral options for services with providers that IOH management and staff have recommended as providing quality services. IOH encourage workers to share new recommendations with the team. IOH professionals also have the right and professional obligation under their relevant codes of practice to utilise providers when and who will provide necessary value to the service outcome.

IOH workers must be conscious that perceptions of conflict of interest may be as important as an actual conflict. Transparency is essential with steps to follow:

- All services and reports will be branded with the IOH logo to highlight IOH as the overseeing organisation for the services.
- A professional must on referral (both referrer and referee) undertake to inform stakeholder of the potential conflict of interest and give option for alternatives.
- Stakeholders in rehabilitation must be informed that consultation is required in appointment of a rehabilitation provider, and that any concerns either at or throughout engagement should be raised immediately.