

West Neighbourhood House	
Policy Title:	Suspected or Confirmed Neurotrauma Procedures
Approved by:	Management
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West Neighbourhood House (West NH) is committed to ensuring that staff, students, and volunteers working with participants are trained on how to immediately respond to injuries in the workplace. Staff, students, and volunteers will be educated about the potential serious and long-lasting effects of injuries that can result from neurotrauma, including concussion.

Definition

Neurotrauma: A head or spine injury caused by a sudden injury. It includes neurotraumas, traumatic brain injuries, skull fractures, spinal column fractures, and spinal cord injuries.

Concussion: A brain injury that alters the way the brain functions. The effects are usually temporary, but can lead to longer term problems with memory, headaches, concentration, balance and coordination if the injury is not recognized and/or managed properly. A neurotrauma may be caused by direct blow to the head, face, neck or elsewhere on the body with an ‘impulsive’ force transmitted to the head. A person experiencing a head injury may or may not lose consciousness at the time of injury.

The site of a head injury may or may not be apparent. While symptoms of a neurotrauma may not be evident for several days following a head injury, immediate symptoms can include headache, confusion, problems with speech, vision, balance or co-ordination, dizziness, or seizures.

General Principles

1. All staff, students and volunteers need to have a basic understanding and be aware of how to respond when a participant experiences a head injury of any kind, even one in which there is no apparent injury or requirement for first aid.
2. As part of the annual Health and Safety training, all staff, students, and volunteers will receive training on how to respond to program participants (adults and children) who experience neurotrauma.
3. If a participant is suspected of having sustained neurotrauma, staff will follow the Emergency Procedures.
4. Staff will assess the cause of injury and adjust physical activities in the program as required to maintain a safe environment for program participants as possible.

Mandatory Emergency Procedures

1. Provide appropriate first aid immediately to the participant.
2. Call emergency services “911”

3. The participant's emergency contact should be notified where the information is available regardless of whether the participant accepts emergency services assistance.
4. Staff should remain with the participant until the arrival of emergency services.
5. Staff should immediately notify their supervisor of the incident and complete an occurrence report when able to.

Return to Program Activity

If a program participant has received treatment for neurotrauma, they are not permitted to return to program activity at West NH until the participant provides staff with a copy of written instructions from a health care provider indicating it is safe to do so. Staff and volunteers will:

1. Follow any directions in the written instructions that may have been provided by a health care provider (e.g., timetable for resuming physical activity and the nature and level of physical activity to be allowed for the participant).
2. Be aware of the post-neurotrauma status of the participant and report back to the emergency contact any changes in the participant's behaviour or level of engagement in program/physical activity.
3. Keep a written record of the steps taken to comply with the written instructions of the participant's health care provider.