



23 Wallace Street  
PO Box 317  
Macksville NSW 2447  
Ph: 02 65682522  
Fax: 02 65684024  
Email: [mail@lifetimeconnect.org.au](mailto:mail@lifetimeconnect.org.au)  
[www.Lifetimeconnect.org.au](http://www.Lifetimeconnect.org.au)

# Volunteer Handbook

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional owners of the land, on which we live and work, the Gumbaynggiir people

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The first service of the organisation commenced in 1972, following a Public Meeting forming a committee of local residents, to commence a Meals on Wheels service in the Nambucca Valley. The first meal was delivered on Christmas Day 1972. In 1994 our Meals on Wheels service became known as Food Services and the Nambucca Welfare Committee became Nambucca Valley Community Services Council Inc.

***In 2014 we changed our name to Lifetime Connect Inc***

## **OUR VISION**

Building strength in individuals, families and communities

## **OUR MISSION**

To provide quality and inclusive community based services that will enhance the lives of the people we support

## **OUR VALUES**

### **Integrity**

We say what we mean, do what we say and take responsibility for all our actions

### **Empathy**

We relate to others with care and understanding

### **Professionalism**

Consistency and excellence in all areas of operations

### **Respect**

Treating people with dignity, care and supporting their right to choose

### **Communication**

Honest, open, respectful and ethical communication in all relationships

Lifetime Connect is governed by a voluntary Board of Governance who are elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The General Manager of Lifetime Connect reports to the Board of Governance. All Lifetime Connect staff are accountable to the General Manager.

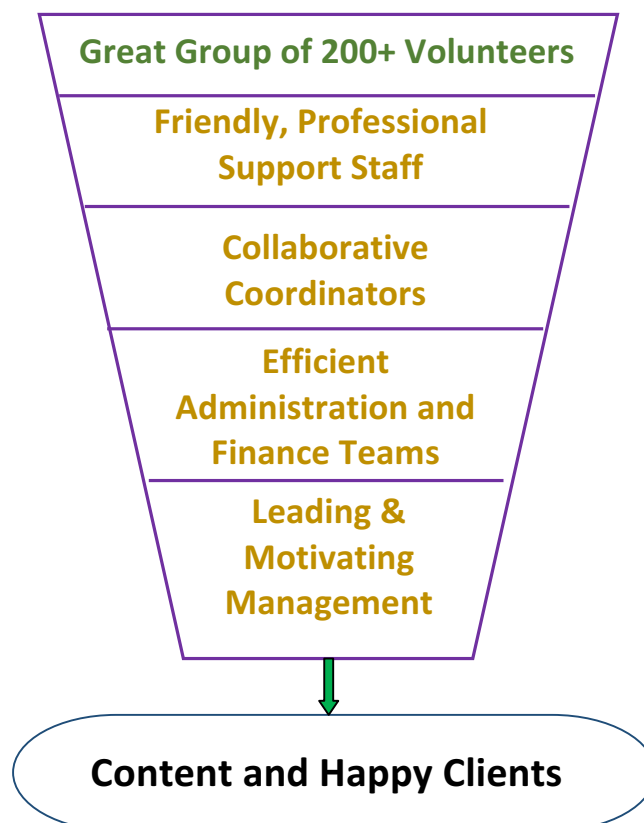
Lifetime Connect receives financial support from a number of government departments. They include:

- Department of Health
- Office of Fair Trading
- Department Families and Community Services
- National Australia Bank
- Department of Veteran Affairs
- Department of Human Services and Community Services
- State Government Department of Family and Community Services
- State Government Department of Education and Communities
- Commonwealth Department of Social Services
- Commonwealth Department of Education

## Management and Team

General Manager	Glenys Munro
Community & Aged Care Manager	Ruth Hannagan
Family Services Manager	Renee Brownlee
Office Manager	Alana Sills

Our programs team consists of Managers, Service Advisors, Coordinators, Clinical Advisors, Project Officers, Community Care Support staff, Program Assistants, Administration and Finance teams, Contractors and Volunteers.



## **Services and Programs**

We provide a range of services across the 3 local government areas of the Nambucca Shire, Bellingen Shire and Coffs Harbour.

### **Aged Care Services**

Commonwealth Home Support Services

Food Services

Low level domestic

Social Support

Assistance with Care and Housing

Home and Garden Maintenance Services

Veteran's Home Care

Home Care Packages

### **Community Services**

No Interest Loans Scheme

Community Men's Shed

Community Gardens

Tax Help Program

Information and Referral Services

Personal Counselling services

Legal Aid Clinics

Community Education

Volunteer Training

Information, support and small group activities for families

Community Development

### **Family Support Services**

Victims of Crime

Families NSW

Out of School Hours Care

Vacation Care

Family Day Care

Early Connections

Reconnect Bellingen/Nambucca

## **Welcome!**

Thank you for your Volunteer support and welcome to the Lifetime Connect Team!

### *Volunteers ... ordinary people, extraordinary contribution*

Lifetime Connect Inc recognises the valuable contribution to the services made by volunteers and therefore will ensure that all volunteers within the organisation have conditions of employment which comply with the National Volunteer Standards.

General induction, orientation and support will be carried out by the relevant Program Co-ordinator. This will involve the interview, the completion of required documentation for staff files, Volunteer Application, National Police Checks, Code of Behaviour, and a Volunteer Agreement.

The organisation will review all Volunteer Agreements annually. If a volunteer is employed to drive or operate machinery for a service, they will be asked to undertake a medical competency check and driving check.

Then the Coordinator of the specific program for which the new staff member is volunteering will undertake a program specific induction for the new employee. This will include a general overview of the policies and procedures relating to Lifetime Connect and its volunteers, meetings and training times, monthly supervision sessions, client support information.

Volunteers are covered by Volunteer Personal Accident Insurance and Public Liability Insurance for any injury or damage incurred whilst undertaking their volunteer duties except where they wilfully or deliberately cause injury or damage.

All staff and volunteers, who are required to drive a vehicle in the line of their duties are required to have a current drivers licence and if using their own vehicle, to have comprehensive insurance and a registered vehicle.

Travel requirements when working with a client needs to be negotiated with the Coordinator. Reimbursement is in the form of petrol vouchers paid for kilometres travelled when engaged in volunteering for the organisation.

It is not expected that there should be any other out of pocket expenses but if an emergency arises which incurs an out of pocket expense during the course of volunteering this should be negotiated with the Coordinator.

## Code of Behaviour

Lifetime Connect has a code of conduct, which defines the principles the organisation.

Staff/volunteers agree to:

- Abide by the philosophy of our organisation
- Observe all the rules of our organisation including those specified in the constitution and any others determined by the Board
- Adhere to all our accounting procedures
- Work in a safe and competent manner in accordance with the policies and procedures of our organisation
- Respect the dignity and culture, values and beliefs of all individuals
- Represent our organisation in a positive way
- Wear suitable clothing including closed in shoes, clean and discreet clothing (shirt and trousers/skirt or shorts appropriate to role)
- Not discuss confidential issues with people outside the organisation, regard all information provided to them by a service user as confidential and never disclose personal information to a service user
- Not take illegal drugs or consume alcohol when on duty or on the premises
- Not accept gifts or purchase any items from service users (except small gifts of home garden produce)
- Not have sexual relationships with service users or take them to their (staff) homes or engage in a relationship with service users outside of a professional relationship
- Follow any grievance procedures set down by the Board to try to resolve any conflicts with other staff or members of our organisation
- Not harass in any form service users, other staff or members of our organisation
- Not abuse, physically or verbally, service users, other staff or members of our organisation
- Not give advice to service users or diagnose the condition of a service user's health (except health promotion advice provided by a Registered Nurse). If requested by the family as to your thoughts regarding the condition of a service user – refer them to their GP or hospital
- Not alienate service users from their family
- Treat service users with courtesy, respect and consideration, act on complaints and provide services to the best of their ability.
- Take responsible care of client's possessions.

## **Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers**

Both the Volunteer and Lifetime Connect have responsibilities to each other. The Volunteer agrees to perform a specific job and Lifetime Connect is responsible to provide the Volunteer with a worthwhile and rewarding experience. In return, each has the right to some basic expectations of the other.

- As a volunteer with Lifetime Connect you have these rights:
- To work in a healthy and safe environment
- To be treated with respect, consideration and courtesy.
- To be able to carry out duties without harassment.
- To be provided with a safe working environment.
- To be supported and supervised.
- To be adequately covered by insurance
- To be given accurate and truthful information about the organisation for which they work
- To be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses
- To be given a copy of the organisation's Volunteer policy and any other policy that affects their work
- To have a job description and agreed working hours
- To have access to a grievance procedure
- To make suggestions
- To know the relevant policies and procedures.
- To be provided with orientation to the organisation
- To have confidential and personal information dealt with in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988
- To be provided with sufficient training to perform their job.

(Reference source: Volunteering Australia Website, 2003)

### **Lifetime Connect has the right to**

Make the decision regarding the best placement for you

Expect conscientious work performance, punctuality and reliability

Expect enthusiasm and belief in the working of Lifetime Connect

Expect loyalty to Lifetime Connect and suggestions as to how areas of concern can best be addressed

Expect clear and open communication

Release an inappropriate Volunteer.



## **Observing boundaries in community work**

At times we can develop close relationships with clients and it is sometimes difficult to draw precise lines about what sort of behaviour is appropriate.

This is often a matter of striking just the right balance between being caring and helpful, and maintaining a relationship that is professional and workable.

All volunteers or paid staff with Lifetime Connect need to be able to set and maintain appropriate boundaries in your relationships with service users.

Please observe these boundaries by;

1. not giving your private phone numbers to our clients
2. only entering the clients home when the client is in attendance unless
3. pre arranged with the service advisor and the client.
4. not accepting house keys from clients.
5. not being involved with financial requests made ( eg lending, accepting money or PIN information to make payments)

## **First Impressions**

### **Appropriate clothing**

Lifetime Connect is committed to staff/ volunteers presenting a professional image within the sector and community it represents. Please abide by these requirements for appropriate clothing.

### **Acceptable Clothing**

- Modest attire
- dress trousers or three quarter pants
- skirt
- Culottes
- lace up or covered slip on “duty” shoe with a rubber sole
- cardigan and or jacket
- Neat and clean jeans

### **Unacceptable Clothing**

- Immodest attire
- Tracksuit pants
- Leggings
- Sandals
- Thongs

### **Uniform for Men’s shed or Community Garden staff who may be working Outdoors**

- Comfortable trousers or shorts
- Corporate Shirt
- Accredited safety footwear
- A sun hat
- Sunscreen

Staff and volunteers when working within the Men’s shed shall wear all appropriate protective equipment that is relevant to the machinery and tools with which they are working.

### **Identity Badges**

All employees / volunteers shall be issued with identity badges when they commence employment.

## Safety Procedures

### Work Health and Safety

Under the Work Health and Safety Act 2012, it is the responsibility of ALL persons to maintain a safe workplace for themselves and other people in the workplace. Please do not put yourself or others at risk by either your actions or omissions.

Management will take all practicable actions to identify, evaluate and control those factors in the workplace, which cause or have potential to cause injury or ill health.

### Volunteers are responsible for:

- Reporting a workplace accident/incident to a Supervisor and recording it on the Accident/Incident Form
- Reporting any hazards identified to the Supervisor
- Reporting and not using any equipment which may be faulty
- Keeping areas tidy
- Cleaning up any spills
- Using Safe Manual Handling and Safe Food Principles at all times.

### Use of Equipment

Volunteers should not use any equipment unless they have been especially trained and requested to do so.

### Infection Control

Infection control is a means of preventing infection passing from one person to another and includes a combination of high standards of personal and environmental hygiene. It also relates to correct practices in disinfection, sterilisation, housekeeping, safe food handling, laundry, pharmacy, nursing procedures, all waste disposal, ventilation, maintenance, and storage of food and pest control

Please strictly adhere to infection control standards to safeguard against contamination.

### Hand Washing

Good hand washing is essential. You need to wash hands **before:**

- Starting work
- Handling food
- Handling equipment or utensils.

You need to wash hands **after**:

- Going to the toilet
- Meal or tea breaks
- Smoking
- Cleaning
- Handling chemicals or rubbish
- Coughing or blowing nose
- Touching other parts of the body, e.g. scratching head, ears or nose
- Handling money
- Removing gloves
- At the end of your shift.

### **Safe Food Practices**

It is the responsibility of all food handlers to maintain safe food handling practices and ensure good personal hygiene. Food handlers must comply with the following guidelines:

- Wear clean clothes
- Secure hair back or wear a hat, and gloves in food handling area
- Change gloves between tasks (e.g. handling money and serving food.) and wash hands after removing gloves
- Remove hat, gloves and protective apron before going to the toilet or taking a break and replace them upon you return
- Do not spit or chew gum in areas where food is stored, prepared or served
- Do not sneeze, blow or cough over food or food contact surfaces
- Do not eat any food in areas where food is stored, prepared or served
- Do not place fingers on surfaces that will contact the customer's mouth, e.g. cutlery, lip of glass or cup
- Use tongs, forks or gloves when handling ready to eat foods
- Cover any cuts completely with a waterproof covering
- Do not work in food preparation and serving areas if you are ill.

## **Manual Handling**

You may need to move items during the course of your work with us. These are some important general principles that apply to most manual handling situations:

### **1. Plan**

Assess the task

Assess the size and weight of the load. If it is too heavy or over 10kg, do not attempt to move or transfer it on your own.

Evaluate the location where the load will be placed, and the height to which the load will be transferred - make sure it is not too high or too low

Is there enough space?

Give consideration to the frequency and duration of the task

If the item is too heavy or too awkward for you to move alone, always ask for help.

### **2. Determine the best technique**

Avoid unnecessary bending, twisting and reaching

Use equipment to best assist with the task, e.g. a trolley

Consider the best method of handling the load

If required, seek assistance with the task.

### **3. Transfer/Lift**

Position yourself as close as possible to the load

Place feet shoulder width apart

Face feet in direction of movement

**NOTE: Please do not put yourself or others at risk by either your actions or omissions.**

## **Leave**

In order for us to be able to manage ongoing support within our programs, please give us plenty of notice if you are planning to take leave. This may not be possible if you are unwell and unable to attend however please call as soon as possible.

## **Duty of Care**

“Duty of Care” is a legal term defined under common law as negligence where there is a breach. All people in society have the right to safety, protection and quality standards of care.

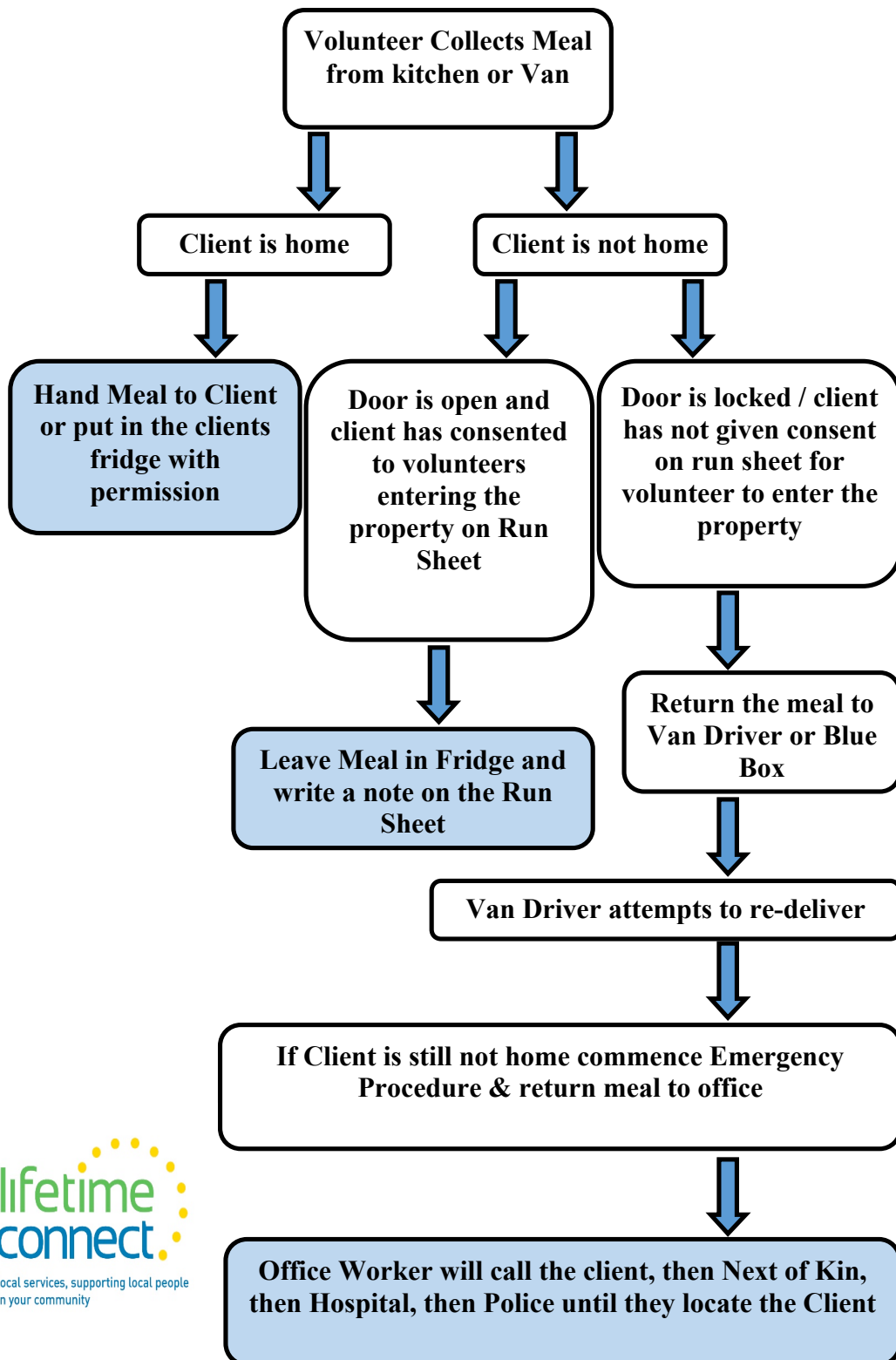
It is important that clients do not suffer harm or loss either physically, financially, psychologically or sexually, due to any action or inaction by our organisation, its employees or volunteers. Any act that has reasonably foreseeable consequences (that cause harm or loss) indicates a breach of duty of care and could constitute legal action for negligence.

“Dignity of Risk” is a term used to describe the right of individuals to choose to take some risk in engaging in life experiences. It is important not to overprotect clients in a way that unnecessarily restricts opportunities to enjoy life and a balance based on planning and commonsense should be met to ensure duty of care and dignity of risk.

Lifetime Connect is committed to person-centred services enabling consumers to choose their own care and support services.

## Client Not At Home for Food Delivery

# Volunteer Processes



## Confidentiality

As a volunteer with Lifetime Connect, you will be privy to personal information about clients. This may include social relationships, personal interests and behaviour patterns.

### Rules of Confidentiality

- Any information that is specific or could identify an individual is confidential
- Information of a personal nature about anyone is confidential and **MUST NOT** be passed onto anyone outside our organisation
- Information that is essential to meeting a client's needs should be passed onto the Supervisor or Manager
- Information should be passed on only with the permission of the person concerned
- Employees and volunteers should keep their personal details confidential including their phone numbers and address and be cautious about revealing personal and confidential information

### Is it ever OK to break Confidentiality?

The right to confidentiality has to be balanced with duty of care responsibilities.

Breaking confidentiality is only acceptable:

- If the staff/volunteer is involved in legal proceedings where they are required by law to divulge specific information
- Where there is a threat of injury or harm to the client or someone else
- For mandatory reporting the abuse of children or the situation of elder abuse. This should be done with the knowledge and support of your Supervisor



## **Conduct**

### **Common Law**

The common law duty owned by all non-nursing personnel without special training or qualifications (such as assistants in nursing, personal carers, attendants, field staff) is that they exercise the diligence and skill belonging to an ordinary person of commonsense. They are not expected to practise professional skills which would be expected of a qualified person. In particular, they must not attempt to do anything which an ordinary, reasonable person would avoid doing under the circumstances.

### **Misconduct**

Misconduct includes very serious breaches of our policies and procedures or unacceptable behaviour that warrants the dismissal of an employee.

Examples of misconduct include:

- Theft of property or funds from our organisation
- Willful damage of property belonging to our organisation
- Intoxication through alcohol or other substances during working hours
- Verbal or physical harassment or discrimination of any other employee or service user
- The disclosure of confidential information regarding the organisation to any other party without prior permission
- The disclosure of service user information other than information that is necessary to assist service users and to ensure their safety
- Carrying on a private business from our premises or using the service's resources for private business without the permission of the Board
- Falsification of any records belong to the organisation
- Failure to comply with the [Code of Behaviour for Staff and Volunteers](#).

The General Manager deals with all issues relating to misconduct and ensures that there are two representatives from the organisation present at the meeting to discuss the misconduct.

### **Grievance procedure**

If an employee or volunteer has a grievance related to their employment or concerning another staff person the following process applies:

## **Informal Procedure**

Volunteers are encouraged to try to resolve a workplace concern or concerns informally unless they believe serious misconduct or a breach of the law has occurred.

The informal procedures involve the following steps:

**Step 1.** If possible, they should try to sort it out directly with the person involved.

**Step 2.** Seek assistance from Supervisor or Manager

**Step 3.** Facilitating a mutual understanding

## **Formal Procedure**

Commencement of the formal procedure generally only takes place if the workplace concern could not be resolved using the informal procedure. The formal procedures involve the following steps:

### **Step 1: Lodge formal complaint**

The staff member should notify their immediate Supervisor, Manager and/or the Human Resources Advisor, in writing via a complaint form, of the substance of the workplace concern and the outcome they are seeking. If the concern is about the staff member's immediate supervisor, then the staff member should notify the Human Resources Advisor.

Where the concern relates to a named person or persons, for reasons of procedural fairness, it will be necessary to identify the person by name. The immediate supervisor or person to whom the matter has been referred is to hold a meeting with the staff member and, at their request, a support person.

### **Step 2: Investigation**

Following the clarification of the complaint and investigating all facts, the Supervisor, Manager and/or the Human Resources Advisor, will generally, with the agreement of the person who raised the concern investigate the matter and make recommendations to those involved in the matter for its resolution.

The investigation will ordinarily involve:

- Formally interviewing or obtaining statements from people who can help to ascertain the facts
- Meeting with employees involved regarding dispute resolution
- Obtaining documentation that is necessary.
- Identifying options for the resolution of the matter and discussing these with those involved.

If necessary, employing external mediators or investigators if the issue is considered outside the scope of the staff involved, or if the issue is concerning bullying and harassment.

**Step 3: Making recommendations**

Recommendations will be made to all parties and can include direction to take certain action that the Supervisor, Manager and/or Human Resources Advisor views as appropriate for resolution of the concerns and apologies.

If the matter is serious and the Supervisor, Manager and Human Resources Advisor is satisfied that the that the conduct complained about amounts to serious misconduct, the matter may be referred for disciplinary action and such other actions by the Board of Governance to address the complainant’s concerns.

**Step 4: Final Decision**

After considering any comments or objections by those involved, the Supervisor, Manager and Human Resources Advisor will make a decision on the workplace concern, including any actions that may be taken by those involved in response to the workplace concern.

A decision by a Supervisor, Manager and/or Human Resources Advisor constitutes a management direction. A failure to follow a management direction may constitute misconduct.

**Step 5: Monitoring and Evaluation**

Management will continue to monitor the environment under which the concern or dispute occurred.

Feedback on the process will be sought from the parties to identify where any improvements can be made through the Governance processes.



## **CONCLUSION**

This handbook is intended as a guide which management anticipates will be the basis of understanding and cooperation between all staff and volunteers.

**Your support and our commitment will ensure the future of excellence in aged care.**

**On behalf of the Service Users, Management and Staff of Lifetime Connect ,**

**We thank you for your valued contribution**

**I have read and understand the contents of this handbook**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Area of involvement:** \_\_\_\_\_