

Governance Policy – Corporate Social Responsibility

1.8.1 Corporate Social Responsibility Policy

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Responsibility	Executive Team

The Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS) is an independent, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to improving quality in health care. ACHS's mission supports the protection and promotion of public health and safety in the community. The ACHS Council includes representation from governments, consumers, and peak health bodies from throughout Australia.

What is Corporate Social Responsibility?

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business interactions with stakeholders.

The objective of ACHS's Corporate Social Responsibility Policy is to promote behaviour that strives for a balance of economic, environmental and social imperatives, while at the same time addressing the expectations of all interest groups (customers, employees, suppliers, environment, and stakeholders).

This CSR Policy was adopted by the ACHS Board of Directors in May 2021. ACHS is committed to driving progress in relation to CSR by implementing an action plan.

Policy Elements

ACHS's responsibility falls under three categories: **economic, environmental, and social**.

- Economic refers to observing community values in the conduct of our business.
- Environmental refers to protecting our natural environment and minimising detrimental environmental impact.
- Social refers to helping our community.

Economic

Business Integrity

ACHS will ensure that:

- All business is conducted in accordance with the laws and regulations of the countries in which the business is located (including tax compliance).
- ACHS competes fairly in the markets in which the business operates.
- ACHS business investments are made in accordance with our Ethical Investments Policy.
- Corrupt practices are unacceptable. No bribes, kickbacks, or similar payments will be made to, or accepted from, any party.
- Employees do not engage in activities that involve, or could appear to involve, unconscionable conduct.
- ACHS will endeavour to use suppliers which will have a positive impact on the communities within which we operate, such as local and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and suppliers.
- ACHS will ensure fair labour practices, including providing fair wages, and equal opportunities for employees. ACHS is committed to developing a diverse workforce where everyone is treated fairly, irrespective of race, colour, nationality or national origin, class, religion, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identification, political opinion, or any other status protected by applicable law.
- ACHS will identify and manage economic risks. This includes financial risk management, ensuring ACHS has the appropriate insurance coverage and contingency plans to mitigate potential financial losses.

Business Ethics

ACHS will always conduct business with integrity and respect for human rights. ACHS does not knowingly conduct business with any company that engages in modern slavery. Modern slavery describes situations where offenders use coercion, threats, or deception to exploit victims and undermine their freedom.

ACHS will promote:

- Safety and fair dealing
- Respect towards the consumer
- Engaging partners and suppliers who share a similar commitment to social responsibility.
- Fair and ethical relationships with our suppliers. This includes fair trade practices, ensuring the absence of slavery or child labour, and promoting sustainable sourcing.

Environmental

Protecting and Preserving the Environment

ACHS recognises the need to protect the natural environment. Keeping our environment clean and unpolluted is a benefit to all. ACHS will always follow best practices when disposing garbage and using chemical substances.

In addition to its legal obligations, ACHS will respond to the following key environmental responsibilities:

- Ensure environmental sustainability – i.e., ACHS should strive to operate in an environmentally sustainable manner.
- Ensure pollution prevention and reduction – i.e., ACHS should implement measures to reduce emissions and waste generation.
- Support resource conservation i.e., ACHS should promote the efficient use of natural resources such as water, and the use of energy efficient technologies.
- Ensure sustainable product development - i.e., promoting eco-friendly materials and recyclability.
- Environmental education and awareness – ACHS will contribute to environmental responsibility by raising awareness amongst employees, members, and the wider community (i.e., educational programs, campaigns).
- Seeking out suppliers who have a proactive approach to environmental risk management and who manage natural resources responsibly.

Social

As part of our CSR, ACHS has social responsibilities that focus on our impact on society and the well-being of various stakeholders. ACHS will support the following social responsibilities:

1. Stakeholder Engagement – ACHS will actively engage and communicate with our stakeholders, including staff member, members, suppliers, and local communities. ACHS will do this, by listening to concerns, seeking feedback, and involving them in the decision-making processes (i.e. State Advisory Committee Meetings, involving staff in the development of the People and Culture Strategy).
2. Provide a safe working environment through best practice in health and safety management in ACHS.
3. Diversity and Inclusion – ACHS promotes diversity and inclusion in our workforce, ensuring equal opportunities and fair treatment for individuals from diverse backgrounds. ACHS does this by fostering a workplace culture that values and respects differences in race, gender, ,physical ability, ethnicity and age.
4. Employee well-being – ACHS prioritises the well-being of its employees. ACHS does this by providing a safe and healthy work environment, work-life balance, professional development opportunities and employee support programs. ACHS creates an environment where everyone is encouraged to give their best and realise their full potential, through the provision of learning and development opportunities.
5. Support employees to discuss any problem connected with their work, confident that they will receive a fair, impartial, and confidential review of the issue.
6. Philanthropy and community involvement – ACHS actively contributes to the welfare of society by actively participating in community development initiatives and philanthropic activities. ACHS does this via our workplace giving and fundraising initiatives, which provides staff with an opportunity to support those in need in the community. In addition, ACHS is in the 'reflect' stage of a Reconciliation Action Plan, supporting local community events and initiatives to contribute to the national reconciliation movement both internally in ACHS, and within our local community.
7. Responsible marketing and advertising – ACHS ensures that our marketing and advertising practices are ethical, transparent and do not deceive or manipulate our customers.
8. Human Rights protection – ACHS ensures that we respect and promote human rights within our sphere of influence. This includes ensuring that our operations, and supply chains do not involve human rights abuses, slavery, forced labour, child labour or any other form of discrimination.

Responsibility for the Success of this Policy

The ACHS Executive has responsibility for this CSR Policy and will review as required. An action plan will be developed to support the implementation of the policy. Employees are invited to comment on the action plan and suggest ways in which the actions may be delivered. Comments or suggestions should be addressed to the CEO.

All employees are responsible for the success of this action plan. ACHS creates workplaces in which open and honest communications among all employees are valued and respected. If you have any questions about this CSR Policy, or if you would like to report a potential breach of it, please speak to your DMA, or the CEO. No reprisal or retribution will be taken against any employee for raising concerns under this policy. ACHS is committed to investigating, addressing, and responding to concerns of employees and to taking appropriate corrective action in response to any breach.

Related Documents

RELATED CORPORATE POLICIES:

- 1.2 Governance Framework
- 1.3 Compliance and Conduct
- 1.4 Risk Management
- 1.5 Quality Improvement
- 2.1 Human Resources Management
- 2.2 Staff Welfare and Support
- 2.4 Financial Management

Related ISQua Policies

Guidelines and Standards for External Evaluation Organisations, 5 th Edition, Version 1.0, September 2018 The International Society for Quality in Health Care (ISQua) International Accreditation Programme (IAP)		
Standard	Criterion	Guidance for Criterion
1 Governance - The external evaluation organisation is responsibly governed to meet its defined purpose and objectives.	1.4 The organisation documents its approach to corporate social responsibility and this is used to guide ethical decision making in the organisation.	<p>Social responsibility relates to the duty of an organisation to act for the benefit of society. This could include the protection and promotion of public health and safety (e.g. through research, public health campaigns, standards development) and the environment (e.g. resource conservation, waste reduction). The organisation's approach to corporate social responsibility may be documented in a statement or policy.</p> <p>Strategic planning (particularly capital planning) and operational planning reflect the organisation's approach to corporate social responsibility and this is also reflected in the organisation's policies and procedures (e.g. procurement, waste management, human resource management).</p>

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