

## Official Launch of the Open Arms Policy Hub

### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Guide

#### Who is this FAQ Guide for?

This Guide is for all members of the Open Arms Veterans & Families Counselling (Open Arms) staff group and all Open Arms External Providers; including Outreach Program Counsellors, Group Program Facilitators, Clinical Supervisors and Partnership agencies.

#### What is this FAQ Guide for?

This Guide provides information about the Open Arms Policy Refresh Project and the Official Launch of our new Policy Suite and online Policy Hub.

It includes answers to commonly asked questions about the project and launch; including information about key changes, dates and launch activities; and how these changes will affect the way we conduct business, support our staff and External Providers, and provide services to our clients.

We have tried to make the Official Launch FAQ Guide both user-friendly and informative, to assist you through all aspects of the Official Launch of the Open Arms Policy Hub on 15 September 2020.

#### Terminology used in this Guide

**Confluence** – proprietary name for online platform technology developed by the company Atlassian

**Open Arms Communication and Operations Resource Exchange (CORE)** – the new Open Arms name for the platform based on Confluence technology. The term CORE will replace all everyday use of the word Confluence to describe the platform

**Policy Suite** – the collection of Open Arms policies, procedures, instructions, templates and task cards that support all aspects of Open Arms operations

**Open Arms Policy Hub** – the specific area of the CORE platform where the Policy Suite is located

**Official Launch** – the official unveiling and commencement of the new Policy Suite and Policy Hub, and the mandatory start date for all staff and External Providers to begin using the new Policy Suite and Policy Hub for everyday business.

**Comment Draft feedback period** – the period from 15 September to 15 December 2020 during which the Policy Suite and Policy Hub will be live and users will be encouraged to actively review them and provide Comment Draft feedback for improvement.

**Final Approval** – this will occur after the Comment Draft feedback period closes, the feedback is reviewed and incorporated as required, the policies are professionally edited and formatted, and their content finalised. The Open Arms National Manager will provide final approval for the Policy Suite on this date.

**Outreach Program Regional Liaison** – the Open Arms regional liaison team or person who is the nominated point of contact for External Providers in that region.

## What information is included in this FAQ Guide?

Answers to questions contained in the Guide can be found by clicking on the hyperlinks in the list below.

Please note that it will make much more sense to read through the Guide from start to finish **first**, then return and click on the hyperlinks later to find key information.

Topics covered in this Guide include:

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## What is the Policy Refresh Project and how will it assist me?

**The quick version:** We needed to update our policies to align with our expanded and improved eligibility, services and ways of doing business and managing risk. We also needed to make accessing them, understanding them and applying them to everyday practices much easier for all staff and External Providers. Instead of just updating the policies and associated documentation; we've listened to user feedback and made them more flexible, user friendly and client focused; as well as easier to access and search from any location. The associated Policy Refresh Project changes will enable you to support our clients and organisation more easily, effectively, flexibly and consistently.

**The detailed version:** Open Arms has undergone significant change over the last four years. We have expanded and enhanced both our service offerings and client eligibility, and improved the way we manage risk and deliver client care.

As the leading mental health delivery service for veterans and their families, the work we do needs to be underpinned by a suite of policies that supports our staff and external providers to deliver client-centred services and care that are simultaneously nationally consistent and locally responsive and flexible.

Instead of simply reviewing and updating our policies to reflect expanded eligibility and services, we decided to overhaul our entire approach to developing, accessing, utilising and continuously improving our policies, procedures, instructions, templates and task cards.

This was undertaken through an extensive consultation process, utilising a combination of external specialist providers and internal expertise and input. This included the utilisation of professional policy consultants and editors, the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Legal team, all Open Arms business areas, and a Policy Tiger Team and the PAC; the latter comprising representatives from across Open Arms, our Outreach Program and our client group. We also drew on regionally developed and trialled resources, subject matter expertise, processes and pilot projects; and adapted these for national consistency and regional flexibility. Throughout the Policy Refresh Project we have endeavoured to ensure that the review and development process was widely consultative and reflective of best practice in both intent and applicability.

The result is a completely new Policy Suite and online Policy Hub which are intended to be readily accessible to all users, straightforward to navigate and comprehend, easy to incorporate into everyday business practices, and reflective of our evolving organisational culture. Most importantly, the policies are client-centred and principles-based, rather than being strictly rule and process driven. They are centred on our stepped care model of mental health support and risk management; and designed to promote flexible, person-centred, circumstance-based, autonomous decision making. This is balanced by supporting procedures and instructions to provide certainty, consistency and good governance.

The new suite of policies is framed within the broader *National Mental Health Strategy* and the *DVA Veteran Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and National Action Plan 2020-2023*. Consultation and improvement will continue to be ongoing after the Policy Suite is launched.

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## What key changes are included in the new Policy Suite?

The new policies, procedures, instructions, templates and task cards will cover all aspects of Open Arms organisational and clinical governance, organisational risk management, administration, clinical and non-clinical operations, service delivery, and workforce management. They will incorporate information pertaining to numerous recent service enhancements and legislative changes; including:

- person-centred strengths and recovery-based approaches to service delivery and care for veterans and their families;
- improved 24 hour telephone support for clients via the Client Assist Contact Centre, including SafeZone Support;
- our new suicide prevention and intervention framework (SafeSide);
- the integration of lived experience across our organisation through the Community and Peer Program;
- improved care coordination for clients with multiple and/or complex needs;
- enhanced engagement options via telehealth, video, social media and self help resources on our website;
- improved and expanded group treatment programs, online psychoeducation groups, suicide prevention and intervention workshops and online training, and mental health training;
- enhancement of the Outreach Provider program, including implementation of the Outreach Program Management Team and improved processes and communication;
- expanded research programs, pilots and trials;
- increased cooperation and engagement with the wider Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), Department of Defence, and external community organisations; including key

national mental health and suicide prevention organisations and initiatives, ex-service organisations and veteran-led partner organisations and programs;

- changes to DVA legislation and policy, the Privacy Act, and external professional practice policies; and
- the new Open Arms name and branding.

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## What are the project milestones?

The following are key milestones for the Policy Refresh Project and Policy Hub launches:

Milestone	Date
Official Policy Hub Launch and new policy commencement	15 Sep 20
Official Launch webinar – All Staff	15 Sep 20, 2-3pm
Official Launch webinar – External Providers	15 Sep 20, 5.30-6.30pm
Comment Draft feedback period – all users	15 Sep – 15 Dec 20
Feedback review and final approval process	16 Dec 20 – 28 Jan 21
Final Approval by Open Arms National Manager	29 Jan 21

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## What does the Official Launch involve and when can I start using the new policies?

There are three key activities that will be happening on the Official Launch date (15 September 2020):

1. **The new Open Arms Policy Suite will come into effect.** The policies will be endorsed for official operational use from 15 September 2020. All previous Open Arms policies, procedures, templates and other associated documentation will cease usage on 14 September 2020.

**Staff and External Providers will be required to adhere to the new policies from 15 September 2020.**

2. **The new Open Arms Policy Hub will commence operation on the CORE platform.** This will be the entry point for accessing the Policy Suite online.
3. **Two webinars will be conducted for All Staff and All External Providers.** The webinars will include live demonstrations of the Policy Hub, with opportunities for you to ask questions and provide live feedback.

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## What is required of me on Official Launch date and afterwards?

All staff and External Providers are required to do the following from 15 September 2020:

1. **Utilise** the new Policy Suite and Policy Hub for everyday business (including all forms and templates).
2. **Attend** one of the webinars (All Staff or External Providers).
3. **Review** the Policy Hub content, structure, platform and features as much as possible during the Comment Draft feedback period; and provide ongoing feedback on their applicability and utility to your work and team. Guidelines for seeking clarification around policy issues and channels for providing feedback are included later in this FAQ Guide.

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## Why are webinars being conducted and how do I attend one?

The Policy Launch webinars provide a live visual introduction to the Policy Suite and Policy Hub for all internal and external users. They will also be attended by key stakeholders from the Department of Veterans' Affairs and Department of Defence.

The webinars will be conducted on the Official Launch date – Tuesday 15 September. There will be one webinar for all Open Arms staff (2-3pm) and another for External Providers (5.30-6.30pm), each containing content applicable to the audience group. The webinars will assist you to understand the new Policy Suite and Policy Hub, showcase key changes, and demonstrate how to navigate the Hub effectively. Your applicable webinar is essential viewing as you will need to start utilising the new policies from this date.

Please ask questions and provide feedback throughout the webinars using the Zoom *Chat* function. These questions will be answered live where possible.

**Prior registration for your applicable webinar is essential.** If you have not already registered for a webinar, please do so ASAP using the following links:

### Open Arms staff webinar

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_Q\\_Dosy3MTAetEgArYdOPqQ](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Q_Dosy3MTAetEgArYdOPqQ)

If you are unable to attend, please advise your Line Manager ASAP

### External Providers webinar

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_CBGisCk2RHS9VWp\\_u3HLTA](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_CBGisCk2RHS9VWp_u3HLTA)

If you are unable to attend, please advise [openarms.opcmanagement@dva.gov.au](mailto:openarms.opcmanagement@dva.gov.au) ASAP. If unable to attend, a link to a recorded copy of the webinar will be sent to you after the webinar has been conducted.

Any questions about the webinars, including technical queries, should be emailed to [openarms.innovation@dva.gov.au](mailto:openarms.innovation@dva.gov.au)

Please note that the webinars are for ALL staff and External Providers nationwide; the registration page states 'Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney' to indicate the timezone in which it is being conducted. The webinars are NOT restricted to attendees in those locations only.

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## How do I access the Policy Hub?

The Policy Hub is cloud-based and can be accessed directly 24/7 from any internet enabled device.

The address is: <https://confluence.vera.org.au/display/CPPL/Open+Arms+Policy+Hub>

Please bookmark this address or save it somewhere for easy regular access.

**Note: Please do not share this link with any third parties outside Open Arms.**

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## What should I do if I am having technical difficulties accessing the Policy Hub?

All requests for technical assistance with the CORE platform and Policy Hub should be addressed to the Open Arms Systems Help Desk. This includes issues accessing the platform, using the technology, navigating the policy suite, providing feedback using the Feedback link, and password resets.

The Help Desk can be contacted at [AMBVERAHD@dva.gov.au](mailto:AMBVERAHD@dva.gov.au)

A response will be provided by the next business day.

Urgent issues should also be directed to your Line Manager.

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## How do I search the Policy Suite to find specific information?

There are eight tools for searching the Policy Suite:

1. **Utilise the Page Tree** on the left of the Policy Hub Landing Page. By clicking on the arrows (>) you will be able to access the five key policy lines and open their subordinate policies, procedures and templates.
2. **Utilise the Quick Links section**, as applicable to your needs. This currently consists of Outreach Provider Quick Links, but will be expanded to include Quick Links for other key user groups.
3. **Browse alphabetically by Topic** on the Policy Hub landing page (under *Browse by Topic*).
4. **Conduct a Policy Hub search** using the *Search this space* panel. This will initiate a full-text search of all Policy Hub content; including file attachments such as Word, Text files, PowerPoint, PDF, Excel, and HTML.
5. **Navigate via the Featured Pages** heading on the Policy Hub landing page. This is an alternate entry point to the five key policy lines.
6. **Browse the Recently Updated section** on the Policy Hub landing page to see the latest changes to the Policy Suite.
7. **Click on any Related Labels** that appear to the right of Topic search results.
8. **Click on key word tags** (grey boxes with blue text) that will appear under search results

When search results appear, specific policy documents can be accessed by clicking on the policy number and name (in blue text) at the top of each search result item.

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## What should I do if I have a question about the application of a policy in my work, or wish to provide feedback during the Comment Draft feedback period?

During the initial Comment Draft feedback period following the Official Launch, the policy is cleared for operational use. Questions and feedback should be actioned as follows:

Situation	Open Arms Staff	External Providers
Questions about finding a policy	Search the Policy Hub	Search the Policy Hub
Questions about understanding or interpreting a policy and applying it at work	↓ If unresolved, discuss with Line Manager / Assistant Director (AD)	↓ If unresolved, discuss with Outreach Program Regional Liaison (OPRL) contact
Situations where a policy appears to be at odds with existing or understood practice	↓ AD search the Policy Hub	↓ OPRL search the Policy Hub
Situations where a policy appears to be incomplete or inadequate, or does not appear to be applicable to a real world scenario	↓ If unresolved, AD raises matter with Director	↓ If unresolved, OPRL discuss with Line Manager / Assistant Director (AD)
Situations where two or more policies appear to provide differing or conflicting advice	↓ Director searches Policy Hub	↓ AD search the Policy Hub
Situations where policy guidance cannot be found about a particular topic, scenario or issue	↓ If unresolved, Director liaises with National Operations Policy and Quality Team via the <i>'Provide feedback on this policy document'</i> link or email to <a href="mailto:openarmspolicy@dva.gov.au">openarmspolicy@dva.gov.au</a> Director may also raise the issue at a Directors' Meeting	↓ ↩ If unresolved, AD raises matter with Director as per next steps in the Open Arms Staff process flow chart
Feedback about using the Policy Suite, layout, user friendliness, and any general suggestions for improvement to the Policy Suite and Policy Hub	Use the <i>'Provide feedback on this policy document'</i> link in the top right corner of a policy, OR email the National Operations Policy and Quality Team at <a href="mailto:openarmspolicy@dva.gov.au">openarmspolicy@dva.gov.au</a> <b>Please note that feedback on grammar, punctuation and formatting minutiae is not required unless clinically or operationally significant.</b>	
CORE Platform Technical feedback		

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## **When will Final Approval of the Policy Suite occur?**

Following closure of the Comment Draft feedback period on 15 December 2020, the policies will undergo a final approval process, culminating in Final Approval by the Open Arms National Manager on 29 January 2021.

Ongoing review and feedback on the policies and platform will always be welcome after the Comment Draft feedback period closes, as an element of our continuous quality improvement framework. Suggestions and issues raised outside the Comment Draft feedback period will be considered by the Policy Advisory Committee, with any recommendations put to the Open Arms National Manager for approval and incorporation in the Policy Suite.

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## **What should I do next?**

Now that you have read this FAQ Guide, you are ready to access the Policy Hub and utilise the policies from the Official Launch date (Tuesday 15 September 2020).

Please don't forget to attend your scheduled webinar for practical assistance.

We are proud of the work undertaken throughout the Policy Refresh Project and appreciate your cooperation and participation with the Official Launch and the implementation of the Policy Suite across Open Arms practice.