

Infection Control Policy

Version #1

CFA Body	Date Adopted by Board
Cystic Fibrosis Australia	
Cystic Fibrosis Australian Capital Territory	
Cystic Fibrosis New South Wales	
Cystic Fibrosis Queensland	
Cystic Fibrosis South Australia	
Cystic Fibrosis Tasmania	
Cystic Fibrosis Victoria	
Cystic Fibrosis Western Australia Victoria	

BACKGROUND

Cystic Fibrosis NSW undertook planning for the 2015 CF Lay Conference which necessitated careful consideration of the reputation, clinical, legal and consumer rights issues arising from the need to minimise the risk of cross infection when people with CF attend such events. While the issue has been managed at a state, national and international level for many years changes to the Work Health & Safety and Privacy legislation, as well as emerging clinical evidence, provided the catalyst for seeking specialist legal advice.

RELEVANT POLICY/DOCUMENTATION:

As the instigator of a review of the current Cross Infection protocols, the Board of CFNSW adopted two policy frameworks in relation to managing the infection control risk at all its events –

1. Sound public health protocols apply to everyone, not just people with CF ie. Promoting good hand and cough hygiene, staying home when experiencing flu or gastro symptoms etc. The Board also acknowledges that risk is contextual and that an outdoor event such as Great Strides poses a lower risk than (say) an indoor meeting.
2. The organisation's culture and practices should be inclusive requiring everyone attending an event to read the warning and sign the waiver (if required). This reflects the public health protocols and mitigates the stigma that may be experienced by people with CF.

REPORT:

CFNSW secured pro bono legal advice from Allens Linklaters Lawyers in March 2014. The legal team was briefed by Prof. Peter Wark, Hunter Medical Research Institute/John Hunter Hospital and Convenor of the 2015 Medical Conference Committee, Ms Janette Hayward, consumer and genetic counsellor, and Michele Adair, CEO CFNSW.

In summary, the Allens legal opinion is that with an appropriate risk warning and signed deed of release/waiver, there is no legal impediment to people with CF attending events. This advice was shared with the 2015 Medical Conference Committee in June 2014. The Committee acknowledged the importance and value of the legal advice.

With this context, and following circulation of the Kidd et al article *Viability of Pseudomonas aeruginosa in cough aerosols generated by persons with cystic fibrosis* published in Thorax, British Medical Journal (June 2014), the Medical Conference Committee recommended the continuation of a lay conference with the adoption of an appropriate risk warning and waiver. The CFA Board then approved continuation of the Lay Conference at their meeting in July.

1. **PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

This document sets out Cystic Fibrosis Australia Limited's and all Australian Cystic Fibrosis State and Territory organisations' (collectively, 'CFA Bodies', individually, 'CFA Body') policy position and guiding principles on cross infection.

2. **POLICY STATEMENT**

2.1 CFA Bodies recommend that certain information should be considered before a person decides to attend an event conducted by any CFA Body. Events are open to all members of the cystic fibrosis (CF) community, including people with CF, family members of people with CF, and CF community supporters. These events are intended to provide enjoyment, recreation, education, to make decisions and provide an opportunity for people from the CF community to meet. The health, safety and wellbeing of everyone at these events is of great importance.

2.2 This policy applies equally to employees, volunteers and event participants.

2.3 CFA Bodies:

- (a) will ensure that the Policy Statement set out in Schedule A will be made available to all potential attendees prior to any event;
- (b) may ask attendees to sign a document/s:
 - (i) acknowledging that the attendee understands the risks of attending the event, broadly having the content set out in Schedule B ('Risk Waiver'), as amended for the circumstances; and
 - (ii) waiving liability, releasing the CFA Body and organisers and indemnifying them, broadly having the content set out in Schedule C ('Deed Poll'), as amended for the circumstances.

3. **REVIEW OF POLICY**

3.1 The CF Federation Leadership Group must review this Policy on at least an annual basis, or where a CFA Body specifically requests due to changes in circumstance, clinical practice or other emergent issues requiring it to be considered more quickly, as required.

3.2 Following that review, each CF Body will formally refer this Policy for adoption by its governing body.

4. **ADOPTION**

This Policy was formally adopted by each CFA Body on the date set out on the cover page.

Schedule A: Policy Statement

This policy provides information that should be considered before deciding to attend an event conducted by or on behalf of any Australian state or territory cystic fibrosis organisation. Events are open to all members of the cystic fibrosis (CF) community, including people with CF, family members of people with CF, and CF community supporters. These events are intended to provide enjoyment, recreation, education, to make decisions and provide an opportunity for people from the CF community to meet.

The health, safety and wellbeing of everyone at these events is of great importance. This policy applies equally to employees, volunteers and event participants and will be made available to all potential attendees prior to the event. This policy applies to members of the CF community who do not themselves have CF, because it is important to recognise that you will pose a risk to people with CF if you have an infection, and can therefore seriously compromise other event attendees with CF.

If attending an event you may be asked to sign a document acknowledging that you understand the risks of attending, as well as a waiver, release of liability and indemnification in favour of the relevant CFA Body/ies, and/or the event organisers, where required.

Some of the bacteria, viruses and fungi that commonly infect people can be transmitted from one person to another. If you (or any children under 18 years of age who will attend the Event with your permission) have CF, there is a **real, serious and inherent risk** that by attending the Event you (or your children) could be exposed to pathogens (disease-causing organisms) that might severely harm you (or your children's) health. These pathogens could include (but are not limited to): Burkholderia cepacia complex, methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, Pseudomonas aeruginosa, non-tuberculous mycobacterium, human respiratory syncytial virus, human parainfluenza viruses, influenza viruses or other pathogens that are currently unknown. For people with CF, exposure to these pathogens could lead to serious illness, injury or even death.

There is no reliable way to completely eliminate the risk of cross infection. To reduce the risk of cross infection, the following recommendations are offered as a guide:

1. Anyone who has signs of cold, flu, respiratory or gastrointestinal illness is asked not to attend the event or to leave the event if they develop any signs or symptoms during the event.
 2. Anyone who believes they may have an infection that could be harmful to other people is asked not to attend the event.
 3. People with CF should avoid close or prolonged contact with each other during the event and endeavour to maintain a minimum distance of 1m from each other at all times. However, in small enclosed spaces, the latest research suggests, and CFA endorses, a minimum of 4 metres.
 4. Everyone at the event should practice good public health hygiene. Always cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, and dispose of used tissues in a covered container.
 5. Always wash and dry your hands, or use alcohol hand sanitiser, after coughing, sneezing, touching your mouth or nose, and before eating.
 6. Do not share personal items such as eating or drinking utensils, food serving utensils, toothbrushes, nebulisers or equipment, particularly with people with CF.
 7. Other high-risk activities include: prolonged time in small poorly ventilated areas including cars; use of communal exercise facilities; handling multi-use soap bars; shaking hands or sharing hotel rooms with other individuals with CF.
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Schedule B: Risk Waiver

Acknowledgement of risks:

I acknowledge that:

- I have read this policy;
- If I have CF, then by attending this event I may risk exposure to pathogens that could cause serious damage to my health and may result in:
 - A new and potentially untreatable infection or other condition in my body;
 - The exacerbation of an existing infection or other condition in my body; and/or
 - My death.
- It is not possible for the Organiser to eliminate all risk; and
- I have chosen to attend this event despite the risks of infection.

Name (print):	Date:	Signature:
Witness Name (print):	Date:	Signature:

Schedule C: Deed Poll

Release from Liability

I release the Organiser and each of its Related Persons from all claims and liabilities related to, connected with, or arising from infection risk at this event.

Indemnity

If I allow a minor (person under 18) to attend this event, whether in my comp[any or otherwise, I indemnify the Organiser and each of its Related Persons in respect of any claim or liability related to, connected with, or arising from, the risk of infection to that minor.

Name (print):	Date:	Signature:
Witness Name (print):	Date:	Signature: