Training section summary: the WeSwim Way

There are a few key things that are important to the way that WeSwim works. They ensure that all of our swimmers & volunteers are safe, respected and supported during their time with us.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is vital for keeping everyone at WeSwim safe. We highly recommend reading through our safeguarding policy and safeguarding overview to make sure you feel comfortable with this process. They key points are:

1. Recognise: If you notice anything that seems off or concerning to you, or if anyone tells you about something that's happened to them, stay calm. Let them know you have to tell a committee member, then listen to what they have to say, and reassure them they've done the right thing.
2. Report: Let the committee member who is on the side of the pool know what happened as soon as possible. Don't tell anyone else.
3. Record: Fill out our incident reporting form, found here.

Training section summary: the WeSwim Way

Helping swimmers

Physical touch & consent

Physical touch is so important at WeSwim, helping swimmers to feel and be safe in the water as well as poolside. However, it's important to never assume that someone is okay with being touched in any way at a WeSwim session. Before physically making contact with someone, always ask and get their consent first. This also applies to any mobility aids they might use, such as wheelchairs or canes. The only exception is if someone is in immediate danger, such as falling or their head has gone under the water.

Demonstrating

When helping a swimmer learn a new skill, you'll often what to demonstrate the movement to them. There are a few good ways of doing this:

1. Feel free to ask the committee member on the side of the pool to show the movement visually
2. Show the swimmer yourself, by ensuring they are safely in one place, then hopping out of the pool to demonstrate
3. Move the swimmers arms or legs through the movement so they can feel the pattern themselves.

Training section summary: the WeSwim Way

Medical details

When you're paired with a swimmer, you won't be told about the specifics of their disability or medical condition, so please don't ask. They may tell you if they want to.
We will let you know if your swimmer has a condition that could affect their swim, such as seizures or heart problems.

Seizures

If a swimmer you're working with has a seizure, follow the below procedure.

1. SHOUT for the lifeguard. Don't be polite about it. You need to get their attention immediately.
2. Keep their head above the water.
3. The lifeguard will hit the button to call another lifeguard, jump in and support you. A second lifeguard should arrive to help support them.
4. The lifeguards may keep them in the water until it passes, ensuring that airways are out of the water, and they can breathe. If it goes on for a long time (10 mins), consider getting the swimmer out so they don't get cold.
5. Pool protocol requires that an ambulance is called if someone has a seizure in the water, due to the risk of secondary drowning.

Training section summary: the WeSwim Way

Hoists & lifts

We highly recommend watching the video on this section to see the techniques used visually.

Helping a swimmer get into the water onto their front:

1. Make sure they have a float and angle their chair forward if needed.

Helping a swimmer get into the water on their back:

1. Place one hand under their shoulder blades and another under their legs
2. Make sure the chair is low enough, then gently lift them clear and float away

Helping a swimmer into a chair:

1. Make sure the chair is as low as possible. Place one hand under their shoulder blades and another under their legs.
2. As you push them towards the chair, bring their torso upright.
3. Gently hold their knees to keep them in place.

Helping a swimmer into a hoist:

1. Hold the front and top edges of the hoist
2. Pull the swimmer back and push the hoist down and forward, scooping it underneath them