**AI Policy Blueprint: A Roadmap for Smart Adoption**

Artificial intelligence (AI) is no longer a futuristic idea—it's a powerful tool available today that can streamline operations, improve engagement, and save staff time at older adult centres and Seniors Active Living Centres (SALCs). AI-powered tools like ChatGPT, Google Gemini, and Microsoft Copilot are already transforming program development and communication for organizations like yours.

However, without clear guidelines, AI use can become inconsistent, raise privacy concerns, and create uncertainty among staff. A well-structured AI policy ensures responsible use by aligning AI with organizational goals, promoting ethical practices, enhancing efficiency, and protecting both staff and members from risks like bias, misinformation, and data misuse.

This guide outlines a step-by-step approach to developing an AI policy so your team can confidently and responsibly integrate AI into daily operations.

**Why Your Organization Needs an AI Policy**

Using AI without a policy is like navigating without a map—it leads to confusion and risks. A clear AI policy ensures AI enhances a centre's operations by providing structure, preventing misuse, protecting data, and maintaining trust between staff and older adult members. A strong AI policy helps by:

**Setting Clear Guidelines** – Defines where AI should and shouldn't be used.
**Protecting Privacy & Data** – Prevents unintentional sharing of sensitive member information.
**Ensuring Ethical Use** – Encourages transparency and bias detection in AI-generated content.
**Building Staff Confidence** – Reduces uncertainty and helps staff use AI effectively.

**Five Steps to Developing an AI Policy**

**1. Assemble a Planning Committee**

Choose a name that reflects your centre's culture and mission, such as the AI Integration Success Team. This committee should include key staff, volunteer IT specialists, and representatives from the older adult community to ensure a well-rounded perspective on AI adoption. Their mission is to collaboratively research, draft, and refine your organization's AI use policy. With a dedicated team in place, the next step is to determine exactly how AI will be used—and where it shouldn't be.

**2. Define Your AI Goals & Boundaries**

Before introducing AI, identify how it will benefit your centre. Everyday use cases include:

- **Automating administrative tasks** (e.g., scheduling, email responses, data entry).
- **Enhancing program development** by brainstorming activities for older adults.
- **Improving communication** with AI-drafted newsletters and announcements.
- **Supporting staff training** with AI-generated learning materials.
- **Assisting with grant writing** by drafting proposals and reports.

While AI can be a valuable tool, it's important to set clear limits to prevent misuse. AI should NOT be used for:

- **Processing member health, financial, or personal data** – This could lead to privacy violations and non-compliance with data protection laws.
- **Generating legal or sensitive documents without human review** – AI may produce inaccuracies or overlook critical legal nuances.
- **Replacing human judgment in key decision-making** – AI should support, not replace, human expertise.

Now that you've defined AI's role in your centre, it's time to set guiding principles that ensure it is used ethically and effectively. These principles will shape responsible AI use and help staff understand expectations from the start.

## 3. Establish Core AI Principles

A strong AI policy should focus on:

**Transparency** – Staff and members should know when AI is used.

**Accountability** – Staff must check AI-generated content for accuracy and bias. AI is a tool, not a decision-maker.

**Security & Privacy** – Personal, financial, or health data should never be entered into AI tools. Staff must be trained on data protection and privacy laws.

With a solid foundation of AI principles in place, the focus now shifts to staff training. Providing clear guidelines and hands-on experience will help staff use AI effectively and responsibly.

## 4. Train Staff & Provide AI Guidelines

Many professionals hesitate to use AI due to concerns about accuracy, bias, data privacy, and job security, but proper training and clear guidelines can build confidence and encourage effective use. Your policy should include:

**AI Training** – Teach employees how to use AI tools responsibly.
**Bias & Misinformation Awareness** – Staff should fact-check AI outputs.
**Clear Dos and Don'ts** – Provide examples of proper vs. improper AI use.
**Testing & Feedback** – Allow staff to experiment with AI in low-risk situations.

Practice as a team by using AI to draft a newsletter, then review it together—fact-checking, refining, and discussing its strengths and weaknesses. Throughout the process, explore how AI can further enhance the content, continuously improving until the final version. This hands-on exercise provides a practical example of how to effectively integrate AI into daily tasks.

Training is just the beginning—ongoing support and monitoring will ensure AI remains a valuable and well-managed tool.

## 5. Implement & Monitor AI Usage

Once your policy is in place, take action:

**Host a Team Meeting** – Ask the planning committee to explain the AI policy and answer questions.
**Provide Quick-Reference Guides** – Summarize best practices in a one-page checklist.
**Monitor AI Use** – Regularly review AI-generated content and update guidelines as needed.

For long-term success, designate an AI coordinator or team to oversee adoption, evaluate ongoing use to ensure alignment with goals, and address staff concerns as they arise.

### Final Thought: Don't Wait—Start Today!

Setting up an AI policy now will help your centre smoothly adapt to the latest AI innovations. The sooner you start, the easier it will be to stay ahead. A clear policy gives your team confidence, makes daily tasks more efficient, and prepares your organization for the future.