

Telford Mind Policy on Challenging Behaviour

Telford Mind recognises that people with mental health issues present little or no risk to the personal safety of others. However in circumstances where challenging or aggressive behaviour *is* being demonstrated by a service user the organisation has an obligation to ensure that reasonable measures are taken to manage the situation, prevent harm and to maintain the welfare of all parties.

Staff are not expected to use any form of physical intervention in the normal course of their duties. Staff engage with service users to help to stop situations developing in the first place. Where situations occur, staff will try to diffuse the situation without recourse to physical intervention. Staff have experience and training in dealing with challenging behaviour. Only in exceptional circumstances, in a situation where there is a serious and immediate threat to the well being of an individual, or in which failure to act would involve failing in duty of care, should the use of physical intervention be considered. In these circumstances only the minimum reasonable force should be used. Potential users with a history of violence may be refused a service.

When service users develop or display unacceptable patterns of behaviour including aggression directed at staff or other service users, the service user will be informed that their behaviour is causing distress and asked to modify their behaviour in the way that is needed. If the situation becomes potentially unsafe or if the behaviour persists then the service user will be asked to leave if attending a service at Telford Mind, or the service will be withdrawn in the case of befriending. If the situation is extreme staff ring emergency services or use the alarm (if accessible) for police assistance.

Follow up will be either:

- a) a letter to the service user explaining what has happened and why.
- b) contact will be made by other appropriate means for that service user.
- a) or b) will inform them that they can come to talk to a member of staff who will help to determine appropriate support (unless the severity of the problem makes this inappropriate).

When staff and the user are confident that the service user's behaviour is acceptable again then normal participation in services can be resumed.

Basic preventative strategies to reduce the risk of harm and to effectively manage challenging or aggressive behaviour will include:

- Where referral is from statutory services guidance is taken on history and risk assessment prior to initial contact with service users
- Ensuring that other staff are aware of situations which have been known to provoke violence, aggression or self-injury in the past
- Ensuring that there is a clear, consistent and well communicated individual management strategy for dealing with known patterns of challenging or aggressive behaviour.
- Encouraging service users to recognise trigger factors and to develop alternative coping strategies.
- Identifying individual relapse indicators and developing clear management strategies in response to declining mental health
- Maintaining an accessible record of emergency psychiatric service contacts
- Creating opportunities for service users to engage in meaningful activities which offer choice, fulfilment and a sense of achievement
- Reviewing support plans and risk assessments regularly to ensure that needs can be safely met and that continued offer of service remains appropriate.

Signed:

Date / / 08