

## **Zero tolerance policy and procedure**

**Introduction:** The purpose of this policy is to provide a safe environment for staff, patient and anyone who is visiting the practice from any type of abusive behaviour whether verbal or physical from any member of staff, patient or visitor.

### **Policy:**

The practice recognises that they have a legal duty to ensure that health, safety and welfare of their employees so far reasonably practical.

Violent incidents do not have to cause physical harm, they can include Threats, Verbal abuse, Gestures and Stalking. The causes of violence could be physical or mental disorder to alcohol or drug abuse.

**The practice operates the same zero tolerance policy as followed by NHS wide; where abuse of any type is not tolerated towards staff and people who use the services.**

A 'Zero Tolerance' poster is displayed on reception for patient information. Any displays of violent/abusive behaviour will not be tolerated and will be dealt with immediately and appropriately

**NHS organisation does not expect staff to place themselves at risk in order to deliver care.**

**Employer responsibility:** To provide training to all staff to identifying the potential risks of abusive/violence situation and managing them adequately according to practice protocol.

### **Individual responsibility:**

Everyone working at the practice must be aware that the prevention and avoidance of violence is of paramount importance and that the active defence will be a last resort. The emphasis must be on safeguarding everyone from harm According to health and safety at work Act; all employees have a personal responsibility for their own safety and that of others in the premises.

This is only a summary, for full guidance please read paper based policy.

### **Practice Procedure to deal with violent/aggressive situation**

Make sure that Patients, Visitors and staff must be removed/evacuated to a safe place within the practice at the time of incident (within a locked room/area). Safety is paramount for everyone.

If someone is being verbally aggressive/abusive

- a verbal and written warning will be issued that this action is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in future.

- Patient will be given the opportunity to raise concerns with the Practice Manager should they have any
- The practice can remove patient if the above warning is ignored and communication between clinician and patient irretrievable.

If the level of abuse accelerated to threatening to staff or patient then

- ask the person politely to leave the premises, otherwise police will be called
- If above is not adhered to and the situation is getting dangerous, the person is showing violent nature then police intervention is required.
- Evacuate the room, remove patient and staff to a safe room and close door and window.
- Press/activate panic button to alert the police or Ring Police (999) and wait for police assistance to arrive
- Then an incident will be documented and a zero tolerance incident report form will be completed requesting removal of patient immediately and faxed to LASCA on 01772 221447
- Violent patient will be removed from the practice list according to PCT policy.
- LASCA have a policy that 'known violent' patients will not be assigned to the surgery with at least two GPs

### **Risk assessment**

In making a risk assessment the following may indicate that there is a risk of violence:

- Intoxicated or distressed
- Patients suffering from mental illness or stress
- Patients confused /disoriented/ suicidal/ known criminal history
- With holding/withdrawing a service

Talking about contentious issues such as complaints or staff working alone.

### **Take practical steps to eliminate and reduce the risk**

through safe working practices and training

On line personal safety and security training to be completed by all staff.

Maintain an effective reporting system.

Be ware of all NHS updates on people who may present at the surgery with a history of violence sent to the surgery by email from the NHS.

Awareness of arrangements to ensure that systems are in place to treat violent patients both inside and outside normal working hours.

Procedure for dealing with an abusive patients and what to do if the incident escalates in the surgery. GP /Nurse door locked when finished with session.

Police assistance should be sought where the presence of drugs/weapons has been detected or to deal with violence or threatened/suspected violence.

### **Monitoring**

Procedure for reporting an incident of actual or threatened violence.

- A Zero Tolerance Incident Report Form is completed and sent by fax to Lasca on 01772 221447

- Significant Event form is completed and given to the Practice Manager
- The offender will be written to and told he/she will be removed from the surgery list immediately.

### **Panic alarms**

This alarm is raised when an incident escalates in the surgery and police need to be involved. The following steps will be adhered to:-

- Panic Alarm activated
- All staff/Doctor alerted
- Reception Window shut, doors locked

All staff is aware of location and operation of panic alarms within the practice.

Located in Practice Nurse room, Doctors consulting room and in reception.

Operated by inserting 2 fingers below the box and pushing.

Keys to turn off are attached to the unit.

### **Evacuation procedure volatile and abusive situation**

- Careful and quickly remove yourself and others from the incident room to a safe place
- Lock the door/window behind you
- Alert everyone in the premises
- Call police/activate panic alarm
- And wait for police assistance to arrive

Review due: 12.11.2013