

THE ATRIUM HEALTH CENTRE POLICY

Title: Zero Tolerance Policy

Review Date: March 2023

Version: 1.1

Introduction:

The Atrium Health Centre has a duty to provide a safe and secure environment for patients, staff and visitors. Violent or abusive behaviour will not be tolerated and decisive action will be taken to protect staff, patients and visitors and this policy has been developed in the context of the government's national Zero Tolerance initiative against violence in the NHS.

The purpose of this policy is to address instances of unacceptable behaviour which may cause harm or the fear of harm to any person within the Practice. The scope of this policy is therefore:

Instances of violence or aggression committed by:-

- Any person, whether patient, visitor or any other person working within the Practice

Against:-

- Any patient, visitor, or other person working within the Practice

Policy Details:

Violence and aggression are defined as:-

- Violence is the use of force against a person and has the same definition as "assault" in law (i.e. an attempt, offer or application of force against the person). This would cover any person unlawfully touching any other person forcefully, spitting at another person, raising fists or feet or verbally threatening to strike or otherwise apply force to any person.
- Aggression is regarded as threatening or abusive language or gestures, sexual gestures or behaviour, derogatory sexual or racial remarks, shouting at any person or applying force to any Practice property or the personal property of any person on the Practice. This would cover people banging on desks or counters or shouting loudly in an intimidating manner.

The following are examples of behaviour which are not acceptable to the Practice and contravene the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010:

- Excessive noise e.g., loud or intrusive conversation or shouting.
- Threatening or abusive language involving excessive swearing or offensive remarks.
- Derogatory racial or sexual remarks.
- Malicious allegations relating to members of staff, other patients or visitors.
- Offensive sexual gestures or behaviours.
- Abusing alcohol or drugs (all medically identified substance abuse problems will be treated appropriately).
- Drug dealing.
- Wilful damage to Practice property.
- Theft.
- Threats of violent behaviour.

This policy applies throughout all Atrium Health Centre premises, including any car park and grounds. It also applies to any employee or partner away from the Practice but only in so far as it relates to the business of the Practice.

Following any incident the Patient Services Manager should be informed. She will speak to the staff member involved in the incident and a partner to determine if a letter should be sent or a note on the patient's record is sufficient for this instance. Where agreed, the patient will receive a letter explaining that their behaviour is unacceptable and their expected standards of behaviour. If the behaviour continues, an informal warning will be given about the possible consequences of any further repetition. Failure to subsequently desist within the next 12 months will result in the removal of the patient from the practice list. All details as above will be placed on the patients' medical record.