



CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR POLICY

STATEMENT

Challenging Behaviour is any behaviour that challenges the service provided by Pillar Kincardine. Such challenges can take a number of forms – not all of them negative. For example, service users may challenge us to improve our service because they believe that we should be doing better.

However, for the purposes of this policy challenging behaviour is taken to mean *acts of violence and/or aggression towards other service users, volunteers or staff*.

All Pillar Kincardine staff, volunteers and service users have a right to be treated with respect and Pillar Kincardine will **not** tolerate violence (definition below). Pillar Kincardine will take all necessary steps to ensure that staff, volunteers and service users are safe while providing or using Pillar Kincardine services. This includes responding to critical incidents, managing challenging behaviour and putting in to place policies, procedures and practices that ensure that such incidents are eliminated or minimised. Pillar Kincardine will also record and review all incidents of such nature to ensure that its response is appropriate and in line with legal requirements and best practice.

Pillar Kincardine recognises that its service users, by virtue of the fact that they identify as having a mental health problem, will often be suffering from anxiety and other negative emotions that may lead them to behave in untypical ways and recognises that due allowance should be made in this respect. However, at all times the safety of Pillar Kincardine staff, volunteers and service users is paramount.

POLICY

Challenging Behaviour

For the purposes of this policy, challenging behaviour is defined as violent behaviour, or behaviour which has the purpose or effect of either violating another person's dignity, or making them feel intimidated, abused, threatened, degraded, humiliated, offended, vulnerable or helpless.

Pillar Kincardine recognises that challenging behaviour can take many forms.

This may include

- Verbal assault,
- Threatening and/or abusive messages by phone or text,

- Psychological abuse including intimidation, bullying, humiliation, harassment or emotional blackmail,
- Persistent refusal to observe agreed rules and guidelines,
- Threats of physical or sexual assault, or harm to property,
- Actual physical or sexual assault or damage to property, and
- Physical or sexual abuse.

Challenging Behaviour by members of staff or volunteers may be misconduct or gross misconduct and will be covered by the Pillar Kincardine Disciplinary and Grievance policy.

PROCEDURES

During the incident:

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to ensure their own health and safety. If a member of staff does not feel able to control or de-escalate a violent situation then they should not attempt to do so. Better to withdraw and call for assistance than to get involved and not be able to get assistance.

If possible, remove other service users and staff from the situation. Property can be rebuilt!

All staff and volunteers have a responsibility to pass on information or concerns regarding the potential for violent incidents to occur. Such information must be taken into account when deciding how to deal with any person who is displaying violent or aggressive behaviour.

Immediately following the incident:

Any member of staff or volunteer who has been involved in an incident should inform the Service Manager (or if not available, the Chairperson).

Classification of Incident:

The Service Manager will determine (in consultation with the Chairperson and other Board members if necessary) whether the event is to be treated as low level, moderate or serious.

Low Level – single incident of challenging behaviour which has the purpose or effect of making the recipient feel intimidated, abused, threatened, degraded, humiliated, offended, vulnerable or helpless.

Moderate Level – repeated, persistent or sustained behaviour which has the purpose or effect of making the recipient feel intimidated, abused, threatened, degraded, humiliated, offended, vulnerable or helpless; threatening body language or behaviour, damage to property.

Serious Level – direct threats, physical aggression, assault, serious damage to property.

These are guidelines.

Actions:

1. The Service Manager will record the incident in the Violent Incident Sheet. The record will include all details including date, time, place of incident, those present, who perpetrated the incident, circumstances leading up to the incident, any weapon used, and its classification and action planned.

2. Personal safety is paramount and the Service Manager will normally suspend visits and contact until a decision is made whether the service should be withdrawn from the service user.
3. **Low Level Incidents** – Informal discussion, or no action, may be appropriate.
4. **Moderate Level Incidents** – Formal discussion, involvement of service users and/or staff involved in incident, possible temporary exclusion from Pillar Kincardine services.
5. **Serious Level Incidents** –
 - a) The Service Manager will notify the Chairperson as soon as possible.
 - b) If a crime has been committed such as assault or criminal damage, Pillar Kincardine will report that to the police.
 - c) The individual responsible will be excluded with immediate effect from all Pillar Kincardine services and a notification to this effect will be sent to all staff and Board members.
 - d) A letter will be sent to the perpetrator advising them that they are permanently excluded from all Pillar Kincardine services and that the police may be called if they try to attend any of its services.
 - e) The Service Manager will submit a report at the next scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors who will consider whether any further actions are necessary and whether any changes to operational policies, procedures and practices is necessary to prevent a reoccurrence.
6. Debriefing should be done by the Service Manager as soon as possible after the incident. The support of other colleagues is crucial in the management of an incident and coping with the stresses involved. The development of skills and awareness in this area needs to be enhanced in supervision, team meetings and training.

Debriefing *must include*:

- How staff feel now.
 - How they might feel in a few days.
 - A discussion about what can be done to support the member of staff.
 - A discussion about what can be done to support the other person(s) involved in the incident.
7. Action to be taken by Service Manager:
 - Offer support to assaulted members of staff.
 - Consider ongoing support and debriefing for service users involved.
 - Consider any training implications.
 - Discussion with colleagues which may be useful learning opportunity.
 - Consider any learning/development implications of incident.
 - Consider practical implications of incident.