

# Headway North Staffordshire (Head Injuries Association) Ltd

Headway House, Elder Road, Cobridge, Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 2JE  
Tel: 01782 280952



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## **Headway North Staffordshire** **Challenging/Violent Behaviour Policy**

### **General Policy Statement**

Headway North Staffordshire believes that aggression and violence of any description is unacceptable within the organisation, this policy and procedure therefore reflects the importance of this belief.

Headway North Staffordshire recognises the responsibility it has to its employees/volunteers under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 'to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees' and also the provisions of the management of the Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

Violent and challenging behaviour may often be at the level of constant verbal abuse or sometimes exhibited through non-verbal behaviour towards others. However rarely or often it occurs, all staff/volunteers need to know how to deal with it.

No one is expected to tolerate it or the threat of it. Where such fear exists, every encouragement is to be taken to discuss the problem so that proper preventative action can be taken.

Headway North Staffordshire is as concerned for those who instigate or commit violence as those who are its victims.

### **Definitions of violent and challenging behaviour**

An act of work related violence or challenging behaviour is defined as any incident in which a person is verbally or physically abused, or threatened in any circumstance whilst undertaking duties expected of them in their course of employment, regardless of the location at which it occurs.

This may include acts of violence or challenging behaviour instigated by other members of staff, the public, members, relatives or visitors and includes any such act that may be racially or sexually motivated.

Further definitions, the reasons for and trigger factors of violent or challenging behaviour may be found in Appendix A.

### **Staff Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the Chief Officer, Day Services Manager/Assistant Day Services Manager and Outreach Manager to ensure that all staff, volunteers and members are made aware of this policy.

- To ensure that safeguards are in place to protect the interests of the members.
- To receive reports in relation to incidents of violence and challenging behaviour and ensure there is consultation and communication with the Staff Team and Trustees.

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- To take every measure recommended in this policy and procedure and avoid incidents of violence and challenging behaviour.

## **All Staff and Volunteers**

- To adhere to this policy and seek guidance/advice from the Chief Officer, Day Services Manager and Outreach Manager as necessary.
- To obtain help from senior management and staff where a difficult situation is appearing to emerge.

## **Scope of Procedure**

This policy and procedure covers violent and challenging behaviour towards employees, members, visitors, volunteers and trustee's working within Headway North Staffordshire.

## **Procedure – General Principles**

- Preventative measures will be adopted to create a climate in which all people concerned can feel secure from the occurrence or recurrence of violent/challenging behaviour.
- Any threat or action of violence will be taken seriously by the senior staff member and acted upon. Any fear of violence/aggression expressed will be given due regard and attention by the senior staff member concerned.
- A working environment will be achieved within Headway North Staffordshire in which no-one is discouraged to report an act of violence or challenging behaviour, or to share the threat of one.
- Prompt and comprehensive support will be offered to any member, employee, volunteer or visitor should any act of violence or challenging behaviour occur.
- Anyone subjected to violence or challenging behaviour within Headway North Staffordshire will be given ready assistance to use the Headway complaints or grievance procedures.
- Anyone subjected to serious violence or challenging behaviour by a member that results in damage or injury may be supported to receive guidance on bringing a CICA (Criminal Injury Compensation Authority) claim.
- Members who exhibit violence or challenging behaviour on a continual basis require the addressing of these issues through review procedures with all appropriate parties present. Only after all options have been explored will there be a recommendation for the member to seek a new placement.

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- All employees have a responsibility to record and report to the Senior Management/ Trustee's all incidents of violence or challenging behaviour. The incidence and nature of acts of violence and challenging behaviour should be monitored by the Chief Officer, Day Services Manager and Outreach Manager and reported to the Trustee's.
- The Trustee's will deal with an employee accused of, or thought capable of causing a violent act according to the Headway North Staffordshire Disciplinary Procedure. Under similar circumstances visitors and volunteers will be escorted from Headway premises.

## **Immediate Action Following an Incident**

- The Chief Officer, Day Services Manager or Outreach Manager should be informed of the incident as soon as possible after the occurrence; they will then endeavour to make a decision on appropriate action/intervention. This may involve contacting the Police, (It should be appreciated that internal investigation in such circumstances may prejudice the independent investigation which may be carried out by the Police).

*Please note: It may be that the attacker is mentally disturbed or has behavioural problems as a result of a brain injury or has some disease related reason for becoming violent or aggressive. In this case neither the police nor the employee would think of starting criminal proceedings. Seriously injured staff however may be entitled to seek compensation provided that the incident has been reported to the Police.*

- The manager to whom the incident has been reported should advise the individual, where applicable of their right to use the services of any appropriate advisory body.
- Implements used or relevant evidence should be retained wherever practicable and possible.
- The organisation's investigation following an incident should include a visit by the Manager to the scene of the incident. Where Police investigations are still proceeding care should be taken not to disturb the scene of the incident.
- Written statements from all parties involved, including witnesses are required using the critical incident reporting form (see Appendix B). This should be prepared as soon as possible and preferably on the day of the

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incident. Any individual has the right to contact a representative for support when preparing such written statements.

**The regulating authorities and Trustee's should be given a full and informed report.**

- Reports should be placed only on the file(s) of the member(s) and employee(s) directly involved in the incident.
- Where a member is considered a serious risk the case file should be completed accordingly.
- The holding of information must be kept confidential and only passed to third parties where clearly relevant, appropriate and on a 'need to know' basis.
- Managers should identify what information is required to enable them to monitor the incidence of violence/challenging behaviour and ensure that appropriate health and safety records are completed.

## **Post Incident Support**

- The persons involved should be offered counselling by suitably trained people, this may be external to the organisation.
- The relationship between those involved should be reviewed and a possible separation from future working situations should be considered.
- Managers may, with the agreement of the persons concerned, brief other relevant parties on incidents and seek the co-operation in providing adequate support.
- Managers may hold regular meetings with those concerned to ensure appropriate support and coping strategies are implemented.
- For employees, with their agreement, team meetings assisted by a facilitator may be used for supportive purposes.
- Positive links and co-operation with other agencies to minimise the risk of violence and challenging behaviours will be encouraged.

### Related Policies:

Safeguarding Policy  
Disciplinary Procedure  
Lone Worker Policy  
Incident Policy and Procedure

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**I have read and understood the Challenging/Violent Behaviour and I understand that by signing the following declaration I am agreeing to abide by the statement.**

*A copy of this signed statement will remain on my personal file in the Chief Officers office.*

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

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## Headway North Staffordshire Challenging/Violent Behaviour Policy

### Appendix A

Definitions of the types of violence and challenging behaviour that may be encountered:

- **Serious physical incident** – incident with or without a weapon resulting in actual physical harm at the level of bruising, cuts, laceration, hair pulling etc.
- **Physical incident** – incident with or without a weapon resulting in a person being hurt, but no actual physical harm.
- **Physical harassment** – conduct leading to fear that violence will be used, which does not result in physical harm.
- **Sexual incident** – resulting in actual physical harm at the level of bruising, cuts, lacerations or injury.
- **Sexual harassment** – verbal or non-verbal harassment and other forms of inappropriate sexual behaviour, which do not result in actual physical harm.
- **Racial incident** – incident based on racial grounds, resulting in actual physical harm at the level of bruising, cuts, lacerations or injury.
- **Racial harassment** – harassment and other forms of inappropriate behaviour based on racial grounds which do not result in physical harm.
- **Threat** – verbal and/or written to another person or property.
- **Other** – any form of incident, psychological harassment not contained in the above, which the recipient considers to be sufficiently serious to warrant concern.

### **There may be multiple reasons for violence and challenging behaviours but some things to consider may include:**

- The psychological effects of having a serious illness or disability (with the attendant loss of control or autonomy) are very powerful and can induce, in some people, immense frustration, anger or resentment towards different people or themselves.
- Physiological effects of disease.
- Inadequate training for staff in the management of violence and challenging behaviour.
- Management expectations of employee behaviour towards members.

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- Communication issues such as non-verbal signs, language, cultural expectations, unwritten rules and inability to articulate.
  - Lack of regular reviews.
  - Inadequate staffing levels and levels of competence to deal with members with complex issues.

## **Trigger Factors:**

- Provocation.
- Possible effects of clinical conditions – both physical and psychological.
- Lack of privacy.
- Certain times of date eg; meal times.
- Noise levels.
- Change to normal routine.
- Reaction to prescribed medications.
- Reactions to alcohol or drugs.
- Clash of personalities.

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## Headway North Staffordshire Challenging/Violent Behaviour Policy

### Appendix B

#### First Account Record

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person: \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:

GP:

Post code:	Telephone:
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Post code:	Telephone:
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#### Person reporting incident

Name:	Tel. No:
Relationship to person:	

Please write below a factual account of what you saw or heard. Please continue on a further sheet if required, number them, and sign & date the statement as it may be used as evidence.

Suggestions for inclusion include:

What happened? (tell me, describe to me, explain to me)  
When did it happen? Who is involved? Where did it happen?  
(Continue on extra sheet if required)