



PRINTED COPIES ARE NOT CONTROLLED

Policy***Managing patients with difficult behaviour C 3.5 A*****Policy Statement**

Our practice recognises that patients may at times display difficult behaviour due to illness, pain, or frustration. While we strive to show empathy and provide supportive care, we maintain a zero tolerance policy toward any form of abusive or threatening behaviour directed at staff.

Abusive behaviour includes, but is not limited to:

- Shouting or raised voices
- Swearing or use of offensive language
- Aggressive gestures or physical intimidation
- Threats (verbal or physical)
- Name-calling or personal insults
- Inappropriate gestures or innuendo

Our staff have the right to feel safe and respected in their workplace at all times.

Procedure for Managing Difficult Behavior

When interacting with a difficult or distressed patient, staff should apply the following techniques:

1. **Remain calm** – Do not mirror the patient's heightened emotions.
2. **Listen actively** – Let the patient express their concern without interruption.
3. **Avoid personalisation** – Understand the behaviour is likely a reflection of the patient's situation, not of you.
4. **Maintain appropriate eye contact** – This shows engagement and respect.
5. **Reassure the patient** – Clearly state that you are here to help.
6. **Build rapport** – Attempt to understand the patient's frustration and acknowledge it.
7. **Set boundaries** – Make it clear that abusive behaviour will not be tolerated.
8. **Seek assistance** – If needed, contact the Practice Manager or a doctor immediately.

Response to Abusive or Threatening Behaviour

- Patients displaying abusive behaviour **will be asked to leave the premises.**
 - Ongoing care may be **terminated and transferred** to another practice.
 - If a patient **refuses to leave**, the **police will be called** to ensure staff and public safety.
-

Helpful Resources

- **Avant Factsheet: Managing Difficult Patients** – Available in the PracticeHub Resource Library or on the Avant website