

Front Street Surgery aims to provide high quality healthcare and we will treat all patients with respect and dignity.

As a Practice we are very aware that visiting your GP can, be stressful and concerning for patients. Delays in obtaining appointments and delays in surgery times, due to unforeseen emergency appointments, can also be added to those concerns.

The NHS ensures that doctors and healthcare staff have a right to care for others without fear of being attacked or abused.

Patients also have a right to access services without fear of violence at their practice. In line with this policy, we have a zero-tolerance approach to aggression, abuse, violence or anti-social behaviour.

What do we mean by zero tolerance?

We understand that when patients feel ill, they do not always act in a reasonable manner and will take this into consideration when trying to deal with a misunderstanding or complaint. We ask you to treat healthcare professionals and practice staff courteously and act reasonably.

Whilst it is not possible to list all types of incidents, some examples of unacceptable behaviour are provided below:

- offensive language, verbal abuse and swearing
- racist and hate comments
- loud and intrusive conversation
- unwanted or abusive remarks
- negative, malicious or stereotypical comments
- carrying weapons or using objects as weapons
- damage, defacing or vandalism of NHS property
- threats or risk of injury to NHS staff
- intimidation
- stalking
- unreasonable behaviour and non-cooperation

This relates to any form of abuse from patients or staff which includes (but is not limited to) sexism, racism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and ageism, or harassment or abuse on basis of disability, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief.

Such behaviour or verbal abuse causing distress and or constituting harassment will not be tolerated and could lead to the person being removed from the practice list. In extreme cases the police will be contacted if the patient is posing a threat to staff or others.

Removal from the practice list

A good patient-doctor relationship, based on mutual respect and trust, is the cornerstone of good patient care. The removal of patients from our list is an exceptional and rare event and is a last resort in an impaired patient-practice relationship.

When trust has irretrievably broken down, it is in the patient's interest, just as much as that of the practice, that they should find a new practice. An exception to this is on immediate removal on the grounds of violence e.g. when the Police are involved.

Removing other members of the household

In rare cases if there is a possible need to visit patients at home, it may be necessary to terminate responsibility for other members of the family or the entire household.

The prospect of visiting patients where a relative who is no longer a patient of the practice by virtue of their unacceptable behaviour resides, or being regularly confronted by the removed patient, may make it too difficult for the practice to continue to look after the whole family.

This is particularly likely where the patient has been removed because of violence or threatening behaviour and keeping the other family members could put doctors or their staff at risk.