

ZERO TOLERANCE PRACTICE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This practice operates a zero tolerance policy towards harassment and abuse of staff or patients, which includes (but is not limited to) homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, racism, sexism, ageism, or harassment or abuse on basis of disability, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief.

The Practice takes it very seriously if a member of staff is treated in an abusive or violent way.

The Practice supports the government's 'Zero Tolerance' campaign for Health Service Staff. This states that GPs and their staff have a right to care for others without fear of being attacked or abused. To successfully provide these services a mutual respect between all the staff and patients has to be in place.

Our Practice staff aim to be polite, helpful, and sensitive to all patients' individual needs and circumstances. They would respectfully remind patients that very often staff could be confronted with a multitude of varying and sometimes difficult tasks and situations, all at the same time. Our practice staff understand that ill patients do not always act in a reasonable manner and will take this into consideration when trying to deal with a misunderstanding or complaint.

However, aggressive behaviour, be it violent or abusive, will not be tolerated and may result in you being removed from the Practice list and, in extreme cases, the Police being contacted.

Examples of behaviour found unacceptable:

- Any form of physical abuse, including threatening or intimidating behaviour.
- Using bad language or swearing at practice staff
- Any physical violence towards any member of the Primary Health Care Team or other patients, such as pushing or shoving
- Verbal abuse towards the staff in any form including shouting, swearing, insults and threats
- Racial abuse and sexual harassment will not be tolerated within this practice
- Homophobic, biphobic and transphobic discrimination, harassment and abuse will not be tolerated within this practice.
- Persistent or unrealistic demands that cause stress to staff will not be accepted. Requests will be met wherever possible and explanations given when they cannot
- Causing damage/stealing from the Practice's premises, staff or patients
- Obtaining drugs and/or medical services fraudulently

We ask you to treat your GPs and their staff courteously at all times.

Possible consequences of unacceptable behaviour

Unacceptable behaviour which is deemed as a minor incident a warning letter will be issued to the patient, which will be kept on their medical records. On second offence the patient may be removed, however if a third incident occurs they will be removed. 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.