



## **Introduction**

The practice has a duty to provide a safe and secure environment for patients, staff and visitors. Violent or abusive behaviour will not be tolerated and decisive action will be taken to protect staff, patients and visitors.

This policy has been written with consideration given to the Violence Prevention and Reduction Standard where appropriate.

The purpose of this policy is to address instances of unacceptable behaviour which may cause harm or the fear of harm to any person within the Practice. The scope of this policy is therefore:

Instances of violence, abuse or aggression committed by: -

- Any person, whether patient, visitor or any other person working within the Practice

Against:-

- Any patient, visitor, or other person working within the Practice

## **Policy Details**

Violence and aggression are defined as: -

- Violence is the use of force against a person and has the same definition as "assault" in law (i.e. an attempt, offer or application of force against the person). This would cover any person unlawfully touching any other person forcefully, spitting at another person, raising fists or feet or verbally threatening to strike or otherwise apply force to any person.
- Aggression is regarded as threatening or abusive language or gestures, sexual gestures or behaviour, derogatory sexual or racial remarks, shouting at any person or applying force to any Practice property or the personal property of any person on the Practice. This would cover people banging on desks or counters or shouting loudly in an intimidating manner.

**The following are examples of behaviour, which are not acceptable to the Practice:**

- Excessive noise e.g., loud or intrusive conversation or shouting.
- Threatening or abusive language involving excessive swearing or offensive remarks.
- Derogatory racial or sexual remarks.
- Malicious allegations relating to members of staff, other patients or visitors.
- Offensive sexual gestures or behaviour.
- Abusing alcohol or drugs (all medically identified substance abuse problems will be treated appropriately).

- Drug dealing.
- Willful damage to practice property.
- Theft.
- Threats of violent behaviour.

This policy applies throughout all practice premises, including any car park and grounds. It also applies to any employee or partner away from the practice but only in so far as it relates to the business of the practice.

All instances of violence and/or aggression by a patient will be documented on the patient's medical record.

Following any incident by a patient, the patient will receive a letter detailing the incident, explaining that their behaviour is unacceptable and explaining the expected standards of behaviour, which must be observed in the future. If the behavior continues, a final letter will be issued and notification of the removal of the patient from the practice list. The patient will be informed in writing of the practice decision and how to locate future medical services.

Zero tolerance poster	 Zero tolerance poster.docx
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Appendix 1 – Zero Tolerance template letter

Our ref: *EMIS Number*

Long date letter merged

**PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL**

Title Initial Last Name

Home Full Address (stacked)

Dear Title Last Name

**Re: Zero Tolerance Policy**

I have been informed about an incident (*at James Preston Health Centre/at Ashfurlong Medical Centre/on a home visit/on a telephone call*) on *[date]*, in which you *[describe incident/behaviour/staff involved/witnesses]*.

In accordance with our practice policy, such behaviour is not acceptable and you are now therefore formally warned that if there is any repeat of this or similar behaviour at any time in the next 12 months the practice, in line with our contract with the NHS, will give you 8 days notice before removing you from the practice list of patients and you will need to find and register with another practice.

If you do not agree with the description of this incident or if you believe there were extenuating circumstances, you have the right to appeal against the issuing of this notice and you should do so by writing to me.

If I do not receive a response from you within **[x]** days I will assume you do not wish to appeal or dispute the details of the incident.

Yours sincerely

Leanne Hoye

**Practice Manager**

## **Patient Document - Zero Tolerance on Threatening Behaviour**

This Practice considers **threatening behaviour** to be either attempted or actual, aggressive threatening physical actions made towards any member of Staff; or the use of aggressive or abusive language, (including raising of the voice, swearing and cursing), which threatens or intimidates any member(s) of Staff.

**Any behaviour, verbal or physical, which causes staff to feel uncomfortable, embarrassed or threatened, is totally unacceptable.**

### **PROCEDURE**

All instances of threatening behaviour will be reported to the Practice Manager. If the offender does not heed staff warnings to remain calm or matters escalate, the police will be called.

Any instance of **physical abuse** will be reported to the police.

The offender will be removed from the premises immediately and their name will be taken off our Practice list within 24 hours. This will be confirmed in writing and Shared Services notified. Shared Services will then inform the offender of the need to register with the Special Allocation Service Practice.

Any incident of **verbal abuse**, whether in person or on the telephone, will be reported immediately to the Practice Manager. Any direct threats, by telephone or face to face, will be reported to the police. Escalating verbal abuse on practice property, where a person refuses to leave the practice when asked, will result in the police being called.

In the case of a first offence, a warning letter signed by the practice manager will be sent to the person concerned informing them that any further abusive behaviour will result in them being removed from The Manor Practice Patient List. A copy letter will be filed with their medical record.

If a second offence is recorded within 12 months of the first, the patient will be sent a *final letter* informing them of their breach of this Zero Tolerance Policy and their consequent removal from the patient List. They will no longer be treated by The Manor Practice and if the dismissed person presents for treatment, they will be refused and asked to leave the premises. Refusal to leave could result in the Police being called.

### **RELATIVES OF AGGRESSIVE PATIENTS**

The continuing treatment of innocent relatives of a person removed from the Patient List will not be affected. However, a home visit to treat such an innocent relative at the address of that removed person may require the supervision of the police.

### **INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS**

A poster outlining this 'Zero Tolerance on Threatening Behaviour' Policy is displayed on the premises. The Zero Tolerance Policy is designed to protect patients as well as practice staff.