

## **POLICY and PROCEDURE**

### **Zero Tolerance**

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#### **INTRODUCTION:**

At Richard House the safety and wellbeing of our staff is of vital importance. We treat our service users, their families, our customers and our partners with courtesy and respect and in return our people can expect the same. All staff, working in all areas of the hospice and our shops have the right to work in a safe environment, free from verbal abuse, threats, intimidation, aggression, racial or sexual abuse, discrimination and physical assault. Under no circumstances will such behaviour be tolerated and we will always pursue the most serious sanctions against any perpetrators, including, if appropriate, involving the police. Our Zero Tolerance approach is in line with most healthcare providers.

#### **DEFINITION OF VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION:**

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines work-related violence as:

*Any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work.*

This can include verbal abuse or threats as well as physical attacks.

As such, we define violence and aggression as:

- Actual or threatened physical assaults on staff
- Psychological abuse of staff, including intimidation
- Verbal abuse, which includes shouting, swearing and gestures
- Threats against staff
- Racial or sexual abuse or discrimination

### **PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION:**

We recognise that those accessing our services often do so at times of acute stress in their lives. We therefore aim to provide a compassionate and supportive service and understand that sometimes disagreements can occur. This approach does not condone violence or aggression. Nor do we tolerate or condone violence or aggression in any other areas of our work.

To help prevent violence and aggression we will:

- Inform all service users and their families of our Zero Tolerance Policy and expectations.
- Carry out risk assessments of potential conflict situations to determine the control measures necessary to protect staff. This is particularly important when staff become aware of any predisposing risk factors such as:
  - Previous convictions for violence
  - A history of threats and/or violence towards staff
  - Known violence/domestic violence

The outcomes of risk assessments should be discussed with the senior team within the relevant department.

- Ensure that our premises are kept secure.
- Train staff who may be exposed to violence or challenging behaviour.

**RESPONDING TO VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION:**

Any staff member who feels that their safety is at risk from an immediate threat of violence or aggression should contact the police on 999. Where possible they should then contact their manager or a member of the senior leadership team. If deemed necessary, the offending party will be removed from the premises.

Should there not be an immediate risk to safety then staff should contact their manager or a member of the senior leadership team. Richard House management have the right to request the offending party to leave the premises with immediate effect should this be deemed necessary.

**VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION IN THE FAMILY HOME:**

Prior to any outreach work, all available information must be considered and a risk assessment carried out. All staff must follow the Lone Working Policy. If there is any doubt about an individual's presentation on arrival, then the staff member should not enter the family home. Should the staff member become concerned about violence or aggression at any point during the visit then they should leave the family home and contact their manager or the police as appropriate to the level of risk.

**INCIDENT REPORTING:**

Any member of staff involved in an incident of violence and/or aggression has a duty to report it as soon as possible. This should be done using the Vantage online system. Please refer to the Accident and Incident policy for more details on how to report. All incident reports are submitted to the head of department to be reviewed. They will then carry out an investigation into the incident in order to understand factors leading to the incident, any next steps that need to take place (such as escalation to senior leadership), and any learnings.

**STAFF WELLBEING:**

Richard House understands the impact an incident of violence and/or aggression can have on the mental wellbeing of staff. We provide access to a 24/7 employee assistance programme which includes the option of telephone and face to face counselling. We encourage and support staff to take up these services when felt necessary. The helpline can be contacted on 0800 030 5182 or go online at [healthassuredeap.com](http://healthassuredeap.com). Username: Richard; Password: House.

## **SANCTIONS FOLLOWING AN INCIDENT:**

We recognise that violence against our staff is a crime and will seek full penalties for any offending parties under guidance from the police.

In addition, we may employ any or a combination of the following measures to ensure the safety of our staff:

- Immediate termination of services provided to a family.
- A formal written warning informing the persons involved that such behaviour will not be tolerated and that any further incidents will necessitate termination of services.
- A written behavioural contract stipulating the terms and conditions that will govern the person's continued access to our services.
- Terminating work with a partner.
- Barring individuals from our premises.

## **YOUR CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT:**

We make sure our policies are up to date and right for everyone at Richard House. With this in mind, this policy will change from time to time and it doesn't form part of your contract of employment.

## **FEEDBACK:**

Richard House Children's Hospice employees may provide feedback about this document by emailing [policyguardian@richardhouse.org.uk](mailto:policyguardian@richardhouse.org.uk)

## **APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS:**

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	<a href="#">Chief Executive Officer</a>
Advisory Committee to Approval Authority	<a href="#">Senior Leadership Team</a>
Administrator	<a href="#">Head of HR &amp; Volunteer Engagement</a>
Next Review Date	<a href="#">October 2020</a>

  

Amendment History	Details
Amendment Authority and Date	
Notes	