

HANDLING CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR - GENERAL POLICY

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3. *Duty of Care to Staff:*

The Home acknowledges its responsibilities under the *Health & Safety at Work Act, 1974* and the *Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations, 1999*. This legislation places a duty upon the Home as an employer to conduct appropriate and adequate assessments of risk to the health and safety of employees (care staff) while they are at work. The following procedures are therefore in place to address these risks:

- 3.1 Detailed assessments of a service user's needs and wants prior to starting service delivery (see section B.4). In this way adverse clinical conditions such as challenging behaviour can be identified and the service user's Care Plan developed accordingly to address these issues as far as possible.
- 3.2 There is a comprehensive Risk Assessment Schedules for assessing the health of the service user. This is *Form No: 3-08*.

4. *Baseline Assessment of Needs before Admission:*

Form No: 3-07 provides for a detailed assessment of a service user's needs to be undertaken prior to admission to the Home. This will form the basis of the service user's Care Plan and it is at this point that careful consideration will need to be given to any aspect of the managing of challenging behaviour. It is the responsibility of the Home Manager to determine whether the Home is able to meet the specific needs of the prospective service user. In this respect, the following will be considered:

- 4.1 Whether the stated Aims and Objectives of the Home are applicable to this service user.
- 4.2 Whether the Home can meet the service user's developmental, care and support requirements.
- 4.3 Whether there are adequate levels of staff support to meet the service user's needs; for example, "doubling up" in high risk situations.
- 4.4 Whether staff have the skills and experience necessary to deliver the required service.
- 4.5 Where the Assessment of Needs have identified that physical intervention may be required, a service user risk assessment must be conducted to identify the benefits and risks associated with different intervention strategies and ways of supporting the service user (*Policy No: 345*).

5. *Specific Recommendations:*

The action that can be taken to manage the escalation, crisis and recovery stages of challenging behaviour (see section B.1) can vary widely, depending upon the type and intensity of the behaviour; i.e. challenging or severely challenging behaviour. The service user's Care Plan will often involve specialised professionals or outside agencies who may contribute to the Care Plan. The Home Manager should consider the following recommendations for reducing incidences of challenging behaviour to a manageable level for individual service users, as appropriate to circumstances. This can involve input from outside agencies or health professionals, as relevant:

- 5.1 Increased emphasis on all areas of health promotion for service users with mental health disorders.
- 5.2 Recognising that health and medical conditions can be a contributory cause to challenging behaviour, and organising regular health screening for service user's with mental health disorders.