

4.6 Violence at Work Policy

Executive Summary

Bryn Melyn Care believes that, regardless of the reason, violence is an unacceptable behaviour in any form and that no member of staff should consider the suffering of violence to be an acceptable part of their employment.

This policy standard sets out the minimum requirements for eliminating the acceptance of any type of violence in the workplace. It specifically addresses requirements around risk assessment; reporting and recording; training and support to staff involved in an incident.

Any assault on a member of staff will be treated extremely seriously.

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Regulation and Standards

England

- **Regulation 11: The positive relationships standard**
- **Guide to the positive relationships standard**
- **Regulation 21: Privacy and access**
- **Regulation 22: Contact and access to communications**
- **Regulation 37: Other records**

Wales

- **Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014**
- **Regulation 15: Personal plan**
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/15/made>
- **Regulation 27: Safeguarding policies and procedures**
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/27/made>
- **Regulation 21: Standards of care and support**
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/21/made>
- **Regulation 18: Provider Assessment**
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2017/1264/regulation/18/made>
- **Statutory Guidance on Regulated Services (Service Providers and Responsible Individuals) (Wales) Regulations 2017**
<http://gov.wales/docs/dhss/publications/180201statutory-guidanceen.pdf>

1. Introduction

This policy deals only with violence from non-employees, e.g. young people or other members of the public, this does not cover bullying, harassment and violence by colleagues and employees. Guidance on this can be located within the Employee Handbook.

Violence at work is an occupational hazard for many staff working in the residential care sector. Physical attacks are the most serious form of violence, but verbal abuse and threats are much more common and can have long term health effects.

Violence at work is not acceptable and should not be seen as part of the contract of employment, simply put down to bad luck, incompetence or the result of individual personalities. It is work related, arising directly out of staff member's jobs and the circumstances in which they have to work.

The risk of work-related violence is often foreseeable, e.g. where previous incidents have occurred. In managing violence in the workplace an assessment of the risks should be undertaken and risks removed where possible, and where it is not possible to eliminate them, comprehensive strategies to control them should be introduced.

2. What is Violence at Work?

In order to address the problem of violence at work it is important to have a clear understanding of what it is. This is an essential step in the investigation, management and prevention of work-related violence.

For the purpose of this policy Violence is defined as "incidents where persons are abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work, involving an explicit or implicit challenge to their safety, well-being or health". Violence at work may include assaults or verbal abuse by children and young people, or members of the public and co-workers. Examples of violence include:

- Verbal abuse, offensive language;
- Racist or sexist remarks;
- Obscene gestures;
- Threatening behaviour;

- Stalking;
- Physical attacks including spitting and throwing objects.
- Damage to property, fixtures etc resulting in unsafe environments:
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- Damage to clothing
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3. Employer's Legal Duties

There are no specific laws relating to violence at work, but the general duty set out in the Health and Safety at Work Act (HSWA) to protect the health and safety of employees, applies to risks from violence, just as it does to other risks at work.

In addition, the Management of Health and Safety at Work (MHSW) Regulations require employers to assess health and safety risks in order to identify measures needed to reduce them. Where the risk of violence is identified, it must be eliminated or reduced to the lowest level possible.

Employers must also:

- Establish procedures to be followed in the event of serious or imminent danger;
- Provide information and training on health and safety risks identified and the control measures in place.
- People who use our Service with the potential to exert violent or aggressive behaviour will have been identified through the risk assessment process. Such persons will be made known to all members of staff through the review/management process for the people who use our Service.
- The Service Manager will identify any specific events which are likely to cause specific violent reactions with people who use our Service. Wherever possible, these events will be avoided or the processes will be adapted to reduce the incidence of violence or aggressive behaviour.
- The policy intent of Bryn Melyn Care Community Service is to reduce the risk of a violent or aggressive situation occurring with people who use our Service by ensuring that all care staff are fully aware of each individual person's behaviour patterns and trigger points.
- Staff are expected to be trained sufficiently so as to avoid confrontational situations. Violent or aggressive behaviour can be diffused by calm, confident actions, which convey the message to the person that such behaviour is unacceptable.
- Where a particularly aggressive or violent person is residing in a Service, the Service Manager will identify through a risk assessment, any situations where one member of staff would not be sufficient and a minimum of two Care Workers would need to be present.
- Where members of staff have encountered a violent, aggressive or verbally aggressive situation with a person who uses our Service (or any other person), they must inform the Service Manager or senior person on duty immediately and enter the details on the appropriate record. Any physical injuries will need to be assessed by the first aider and where necessary, the employee (or other person) will need to be taken to hospital.

- Any incident which results in a physical injury to a member of staff must be assessed to identify whether it is a reportable accident/incident or not. The Service Manager should do this. Should any situation occur which puts a member of staff at severe risk of personal injury, or other people who use our Service, the alarm shall be raised in accordance with standard emergency procedures. In all circumstances, actions shall be taken to “take the heat out of the situation”.
- All members of staff shall be aware of the risks of physical injury from items such as knives, heavy ornaments, sharp objects etc. These should be removed or kept secure (e.g. kitchen knives) when a risk assessment has identified that a person who uses our Service may have a specific tendency to utilise these items.
- Under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), employers must report all incidents involving physical violence on employees that result in death, specified injury or absence from work for seven or more days. RIDDOR does not cover threats, and verbal abuse or absences resulting from these. The duty under RIDDOR is separate from the duty to record all accidents in an accident book.

For more information please access the HSE Government website at www.hse.gov.uk

4. Assessing the Risk

The purpose of carrying out a risk assessment is to identify the:

- Extent and nature of the risks;
- Factors which contribute to the risks;
- Changes necessary to eliminate or control the risks.

Where the assessment shows a possibility of violence occurring, action must be taken to remove or minimise that risk.

Staff who carry out assessments should be competent, have the training, time, resources and decision-making authority to do the task effectively.

The exposure of staff to violence and aggression must be assessed in respect of each workplace, and supported by Individual Behaviour Management Plans (IBMP) Staff must be fully involved in the assessment procedure and where it is deemed appropriate the Health and Safety Officer is to be consulted and invited to participate.

Workplace assessments must be reviewed regularly to ensure they remain appropriate. A review of the risk assessment must take place immediately if any changes in the working environment, service provision, policy or the behaviours of a young person affect the level of risk.

Issues that should be considered as part of the risk assessment process include the identification of:

- Identification of staff vulnerability due to age, gender, ethnic origin, disability etc (this is not intended to isolate individuals but it must be recognised that each young person may have different triggers that could make some individuals more vulnerable than others).;
- Identification of jobs/tasks that are particularly vulnerable;
- Identification of vulnerable locations;

- Identification of vulnerable times of day, days or week, seasonal variations or special events;
- Identification of all practicable control measures, and an assessment of how reasonable they would be for the circumstance. These may include:
 - Means of avoiding risk completely;
 - Physical controls (e.g. secure premises, alarm monitoring, lighting, communication equipment);
 - Procedural controls;
 - Numbers of staff deployed;
 - Training requirements;
 - Recruitment procedures;
 - Working with Police and other interfacing organisations;
 - Identification of mitigation measures to minimise the impact should violence occur (e.g. debriefing or counselling).

Risk assessments should be reviewed and revised at appropriate regular intervals.

5. Training

Training is not a substitute for safe systems of work, but it is an essential part of any strategy developed to reduce work-related violence. All residential care staff are trained in Protecting Rights in a Caring Environment, (PRICE) which is the behaviour management model used by Bryn Melyn Care. PRICE incorporates a range of verbal and non-verbal strategies to assess and de-escalate potentially violent and threatening situations. The PRICE training includes physical breakaway training and also the safe use of physical restraint.

All appropriate staff will receive PRICE training during their induction period and will receive refresher training every 12 months (rolling). It is the responsibility of Registered Care Managers to ensure that all staff have been trained in PRICE and receive regular refresher training.

Additional support and training is available for specific individuals/homes/regions should the needs of a young person sufficiently change the level of risk. This training can be considered in conjunction with the Registered Care Manager, Regional Manager and Learning & Development Business Partner.

To further support staff should they encounter violence in the workplace, all residential care staff are also trained in First Aid during their induction period and receive regular refreshers.

6. Behaviour Management Framework

The PRICE system incorporates a strategic framework to assess risk behaviour, and to document clear processes for managing individual potentially violent clients. PRICE provides the framework of Individual Behavioural Management Plan (IBMP) which must be completed for all children and young people living with Bryn Melyn Care. It is the responsibility of Registered Care Managers to ensure that individual Behavioural Management Plans (IBMP) are completed for young people and that all direct care staff have seen and understand the individual Behavioural Management Plan (IBMP). The IBMP should document what action should be taken if a violent situation occurs that involves a child/young person and what measures are in place to reduce the risk of violence during their care.

7. Staff Supervision

Bryn Melyn Care provides a high level of staff support for the children and young people in our care. The Registered Care Manager is responsible for assessing the risk of violence for children and young people in their care, where the risk is assessed as high then additional staff may be used to increase the staff/child ratio to 2:1 to provide additional support to reduce risks.

In circumstances of lone working then arrangements are identified by the Registered Care Manager to provide appropriate support for individual staff. During out of office hours periods, staff should contact the On Call Manager or a nominated person in another home as identified.

8. Recording and Reporting

It is essential that all incidents of violence and aggressive behaviour are recorded and reported. The following reporting methods should be used as appropriate:

- Daily Log Book;
- WISL;
- Incident Report;
- Accident Report Form;
- RIDDOR notification.

All cases of violence must be reported to the appropriate manager. In some cases the incident may need notification to the enforcing authorities.

Following an incident of violence, the manager will meet with the staff involved to ensure their welfare, examine the actual incident, the consequences of the incident and identify and implement any action that may be necessary to prevent the recurrence of similar incidents.

Managers are responsible for undertaking trend analysis of all reports of violence and pursue any actions considered necessary.

9. Additional Support

It is recognised that the role of looking after the children and young people at Bryn Melyn Care can be difficult and challenging at times. Bryn Melyn Care is committed to providing a package of support measures aimed at providing both practical and emotional support to employees. This includes:

- Individual Supervision;
- Team meetings;
- Clinical consults;
- A comprehensive training and development program;
- Counselling Service (Employee Assistance Program).

Staff injured as a result of violent incidents must be advised of the need to seek medical attention.

Managers will ensure that no blame attaches to the victim and agree time off work to seek medical care and obtain debriefing if necessary.

We recognise that whether injured or not, staff may be emotionally affected by the incident and in order to support this, staff will be offered support and debriefing.

Immediate counselling can be sought from Bryn Melyn Care's EAP provider. The EAP provider will assist in identifying any additional areas of support but as the service is wholly confidential, staff members are encouraged to discuss any support with their managers so that where appropriate, assistance can be given.

10. Responsibility and Authority

The Policy is issued under the authority of the C.E.O, Bryn Melyn Care Ltd. Responsibilities for implementation of this policy standard is set out below:

The CEO is responsible for:

- Making sure that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with violence and aggression at work;
- Providing resources for putting the policy into practice;
- Making sure that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents of violence and aggression and that the Board of Directors regularly reviews the effectiveness of the policy.

Senior and line managers are responsible for:

- Making sure that all staff are aware of the policy;
- Making sure that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly;
- Putting procedures and safe systems of work into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the likelihood of violence and aggression;
- Making sure that staff groups and individuals identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training (including training at induction, updates and refresher training when necessary);
- Making sure that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident of violence and aggression;
- Monitoring the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents;

All staff are responsible for:

- Taking reasonable care of themselves and other people who may be affected by their actions;
- Co-operating by following rules and procedures designed for safe working;
- Reporting all incidents involving verbal abuse, threats and physical assault;
- Taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of the policy;

- Reporting any dangers they identify or any concerns they may have about potentially violent situations or the environment in which they work.

11. Arrangements for Consultation and Communication with Staff

All employees are communicated with on an individual basis each month regarding health and safety. Any concerns regarding violence at work should be discussed with the employee's line manager.

12. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months or earlier as necessary.

Revision History

Date last updated: May 2020

Date of next review: May 2021

Date of release: December 2018

End

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