



Mind in Croydon Limited

POLICY ON THE MANAGEMENT OF VIOLENCE

1. Principles

- 1.1 Violence can take the form of both verbal and physical abuse. Knowledge of general risk factors and of how individual clients have reacted in the past will help staff to be alert to potential sources of violence and to take steps to help the person concerned to find alternative outlets for their feelings.
- 1.2 Mind in Croydon acknowledges all who work for the organisation, whether paid or unpaid. The term 'staff' used in this policy includes any person working for Mind in either a paid or voluntary capacity who is carrying out duties authorised by the Board of Mind in Croydon.
- 1.3 Mind in Croydon recognises and accepts its responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act to provide as far as is reasonably practical a working environment which is conducive to the prevention and containment of violence.
- 1.4 The emphasis in managing violence will be on avoidance and prevention. Whenever possible the aim will be to de-escalate a potentially violent situation. Only as a last resort, for the preservation of one's own safety or that of others, may force be used to restrain anyone, while appropriate assistance is obtained.
- 1.5 Personal safety and the safety of other clients must be of paramount importance. Staff are expected to call the police as soon as they believe there is a possibility that they may not be able to control the situation.
- 1.6 Violent behaviour will result in the immediate temporary suspension of or withdrawal of service from the perpetrator by the Mind project concerned. Permanent suspension or withdrawal of service, when appropriate, will be a matter for decision by senior management.

2. Support for Staff

- 2.1 Mind will provide appropriate support and advice to any member of staff who has either been a victim of attack or who has lent assistance during a violent incident, provided the individual has acted in good faith. It is accepted that the level of restraint and/or defence needed will be a matter of personal judgement made by staff at the time.
- 2.2 Unless the staff member objects their relatives should be informed so that support can be offered at home.
- 2.3 A person who has been attacked will need sensitive debriefing. It is vital that they feel valued and supported by someone who is senior to them and who has the authority to arrange for the person to take time off if necessary. In some circumstances it may be necessary to instruct the person to take some time off even if they do not wish to do so.
- 2.4 The victim of an attack should be helped to complete an incident report form or entry in the accident book by another member of staff as having to recall details of an attack can be distressing.

- 2.5 A staff member who becomes incapacitated for work as the result of a violent incident will be paid in accordance with the normal sick pay arrangements.
- 2.6 The provision of counselling for staff who have been the victim of an attack is described in Mind in Croydon's **Stress at Work** policy.
3. **Training**
- 3.1 All staff will be offered appropriate training.
4. **Recording and review**
- 4.1 As soon as possible after a violent or potentially violent incident an investigation will be carried out by the senior member of staff at the project concerned.
- 4.2 A full report of the incident should be compiled for the Chief Executive, Risk sub-Committee and Chairman.
- 4.3 In order to comply with Health and Safety legislation an entry should also be made in the accident book.
- 4.4 Reviews of incidents will be undertaken to determine any action that needs to be taken.
5. **Liaison with Statutory Agencies**
- 5.1 Mind in Croydon will require all referrers to disclose any history of and/or potential for violence of any client referred by them. Refusal to do so will mean the referral will not be accepted.
- 5.2 Liaison with the relevant statutory agencies (health and Social Services) will be crucial in dealing with service users who threaten or carry out acts of violence and in obtaining support for the Mind staff and project concerned. These agencies have responsibility for the user's care plan, which may need to be amended in the light of the actual or threatened violence.
- 5.3 Wherever possible the consent of the user should be obtained before an approach is made to their statutory carers but there will be occasions when this is not possible. In such circumstances the approach should still be made.
- 5.4 A refusal of supportive action on the part of the statutory agencies concerned is not acceptable. Mind staff must not allow themselves to be put off with excuses and any refusal or delay should be reported to the staff member's line manager and ultimately to the Chief Executive.
6. **Involvement of the Police**
- 6.1 The assistance of the police should be sought at the earliest opportunity when staff believe that they may be unable to manage a violent or potentially violent situation. They are there to help and are trained to deal with violent situations. It is better to call them when their assistance turns out to be unnecessary than to risk harm to self or others.
- 6.2 It is Mind in Croydon's policy to report all incidents of actual violence towards other people committed on Mind premises to the police.

Reviewed and Amended October 2010.