

Unreasonably Persistent & Unacceptable Behaviour Policy

Our Commitment To You

At Kingsbridge Healthcare Group, we are committed to providing high-quality care to patients. Everyone who contacts us has the right to be treated with courtesy, respect and professionalism. In return, we ask that our staff are treated in the same way.

We understand that anyone can feel worried, distressed or frustrated when seeking help. Most patients and their families behave reasonably even when they feel strongly about an issue. However, unfortunately in a small number of cases, behaviour can become unacceptable or unreasonably persistent. When this happens, it can affect staff wellbeing and prevent us from delivering fair and timely services. This policy explains how we manage such situations.

Principles

We expect staff to be treated with courtesy and respect. While patients or their families may feel distressed or frustrated when raising concerns, Kingsbridge Healthcare Group will distinguish these normal emotions from behaviour that becomes unreasonably persistent or unacceptable.

What we consider unacceptable behaviour

It is difficult to provide a strict definition of what constitutes unacceptable behaviour, but broadly:

Abusive or inappropriate behaviour, this includes:

- Offensive, discriminatory or demeaning language.
- Aggressive, threatening or intimidating behaviour.
- Harassment of staff.

Abusive communication in any form (in person, by phone, or in writing).

- Unreasonably persistent behaviour, this includes:
- Excessive or repeated contact that places undue pressure on staff.
- Resubmitting issues after they have been fully investigated.
- Refusing to accept clear outcomes, explanations or evidence.
- Demanding actions outside our processes or remit.

We always distinguish between someone who is distressed and someone who is acting unreasonably.

How we manage unacceptable behaviour

Telephone contact – if behaviour becomes unacceptable during a call, staff will explain why and ask the caller to change their approach. If the behaviour continues, the call may be ended.

Written or email contact – we will address the issue raised, but we will also inform the patients / service users and / or their families if the language or behaviour used is unacceptable.

Formal warnings – if concerning behaviour continues, a manager may contact the patients / service users and / or their families to explain:

- Why the behaviour is unacceptable.
- Its impact on staff and service delivery.
- What will happen if it continues.

A reminder may also be issued. In serious cases, restrictions may be applied immediately without prior warning.

Possible restrictions

To protect staff and ensure fair access to our services, we may apply reasonable and proportionate restrictions. These may include:

- Limiting contact to a single method (e.g., letters only).
- Restricting contact to certain staff or times.
- Only accepting communication via a representative.
- Responding only when new, relevant information is provided.
- Limiting the issues we correspond on.
- Asking the patients / service users and / or their families to agree to specific conduct expectations.

Refusal of service

In cases of serious, repeated, or threatening behaviour, Kingsbridge Healthcare Group may suspend or withdraw access to our services, where legally appropriate and in line with our duty to protect staff wellbeing and safety. We will always inform the patients / service users and / or their families in writing when such a decision is made, except in situations where there is an immediate risk to staff.

Review and appeals

Any restrictions, including withdrawal of access are normally reviewed after 12 months. We will assess whether restrictions should be continued, amended or removed. Patients / service users and / or their families can request a review by a senior manager.

If behaviour poses a significant risk to the safety of our staff or premises, we may contact the police or take legal action without prior warning.

New complaints or enquiries about unrelated issues will be considered on their own merits.