

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE



SOP Number:

SOP Title: Handling staff complaints about patient behaviour

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	NAME	TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE
Author	Joanne Fox	HR Manager		October 2023
Reviewer				
Authoriser				

Effective Date:	
Review Date:	

READ BY			
NAME	TITLE	SIGNATURE	DATE

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1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this SOP is to provide staff with the information of how to report a complaint about patient behaviour and who is responsible for any actions at the various stages of handling the complaint.

2. INTRODUCTION

Front-facing staff as well as those who speak over the telephone with patients will unfortunately from time to time, be exposed to unacceptable behaviour from patients. In order to protect and support staff from such behaviour, a process is required to make sure necessary steps are taken to limit this exposure and to reinforce the organisation's policy of zero tolerance towards such behaviour from patients.

3. SCOPE

This SOP covers all staff employed by Priory Medical Group, as well as temporary, bank, locum, agency, and contractors.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 Priory Medical Group will be responsible for this standard operating procedure ensuring it is implemented across all locations and that it is regularly reviewed.
- 4.2 All staff must be aware of the process involved in notifying the relevant parties of a complaint and follow the process at all times when necessary.
- 4.3 HR upon receipt of the complaint from the staff member are responsible for notifying any other relevant parties including the Partners that the incident has taken place.
- 4.4 HR will be responsible for signposting staff to any further support they need following exposure to an incident of unacceptable behaviour from a patient. They will also be responsible for notifying in writing the patient of any action or warning deemed necessary following their unacceptable behaviour.
- 4.5 Partners will be responsible for determining the action to be taken against patients found to have displayed any unacceptable behaviour towards a member of staff.
- 4.6 The staff member concerned is responsible for notifying the police if any of the behaviour shown towards them can be deemed a criminal offence.
- 4.7 Where the patient behaviour meets certain criteria and police have been notified, HR are responsible for the patient's removal from the practice's list of patients as well as referring the patients to **Special Allocation Scheme**.
- 4.8 Any appeals from patients against action taken, are the responsibility of the Partners to be considered. The outcomes of such appeal consideration will then be the responsibility of the Partner's to be communicated to the patient either in person, over the telephone or by letter.

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5. SPECIFIC PROCEDURE

- 5.1 Staff completes [Unacceptable Patient Behaviour Complaints Form](#) following an incident of unacceptable behaviour from a patient within 1 working day of incident occurring. Staff member to email Patient name and address to HR Team

hnyicb-voy.access-hr@nhs.net.
- 5.2 If the behaviour constitutes a criminal offence, for example threatening behaviour, physical violence, member of staff effected to report incident to police immediately.
- 5.3 HR to notify Partners of incident and any other relevant parties and reach out to staff member with relevant details of further support available them within 1 working day of notification (if appropriate).
- 5.4 **Any physical evidence for example Klinik or CCTV to be reviewed by Partners to make decision on action to be taken against patient. Relevant CCTV footage is to be saved should further investigations be required.**
- 5.5 If behaviour is serious enough to warrant immediate removal of patient from patient list and referral to Special Allocation Scheme, Partners to notify HR within no more than 2 working days (**and in total no more than 8 days since incident**) to complete request for removal of patient from practice list form.
- 5.6 HR to complete form and obtain Partner sign off and email to pcse.patientremovals@nhs.net asap once notified of Partner's decision to remove patient. If the removal for whatever reason can't be processed as an immediate removal then an 8-day removal is to be actioned
- 5.7 HR to notify effected staff member of patient's removal from patient list.
- 5.8 If behaviour is less serious/first offence / extenuating circumstances exist, Partner to determine appropriate outcome and advise HR to send out 1st warning letter/final warning letter to patient. HR to send out letter to patient within 7 working days of original incident where possible.
- 5.9 Staff member notified of action taken by HR. If no action is to be taken then a written explanation of the reasons for this stance are to be given to the staff member by Partners/HR.
- 5.10 Copies of actions taken to be held on shared drive for future reference and archived appropriately in line with GDPR legislation.

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6. REFERENCES

6.1 External References

British Medical Association

<https://www.bma.org.uk/advice-and-support/gp-practices/managing-your-practice-list/removing-violent-patients-and-the-special-allocation-scheme>

<https://www.bma.org.uk/advice/employment/gp-practices/service-provision/removal-of-patients-from-gp-lists>

NHS - England

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/contact-us/privacy-notice/how-we-use-your-information/safety-and-quality/if-you-are-a-patient-assigned-to-the-special-allocation-scheme/>

7. CHANGE HISTORY

SOP no.	Effective Date	Significant Changes	Previous SOP no.

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Appendix 1

PRIMARY CARE SUPPORT ENGLAND REQUEST FOR REMOVAL OF PATIENT FROM PRACTICE LIST

Please send (email) as soon as possible with type of removal in subject line to Primary Care Support England pcse.patientremovals@nhs.net

Incomplete forms will not be actioned.

PRACTICE NAME: **Practice Code**

Practice Address:

.....

TYPE OF REMOVAL (tick applicable box)

- ☐ Immediate removal – *this will result in the patient not being able to freely register at another GP practice of their choice, and being placed on a Special Allocation Scheme*
- ☐ 8-day removal

The General Practice Committee (GPC) of the British Medical Association (BMA) have published guidance for GP practices on these types of removal, which you may find useful to consult.

PATIENT DETAILS

NAME:	
DOB:	
NHS NO:	
ADDRESS:	

The above-named patient is being removed because of the following:

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1. Threats of violence/actual violence/verbal abuse to doctor or staff



2. Breakdown of relationship



For breakdown of relationship, please provide details below.

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8 Day Removal Requests:

I confirm the contractor has notified the patient of its specific reason for requesting removal (see paragraph 24(1)(b)

and 22(2) or statement of irrevocable breakdown of patient/doctor relationship. YES ☐
NO ☐

The patient being removed has previously received a warning in writing within the past 12 months explaining that they were at risk of removal. YES ☐ NO ☐

If yes please give date(s) of first warning DD / MM / YYYY Subsequent warning (if applicable) DD / MM / YYYY

If No please indicate with a ✓ which of the following apply:

1. It is not practicable to issue such a warning
☐

Please provide details why

2. Such a warning would be harmful to the physical or mental wellbeing of the patient ☐
3. Such a warning would put the safety of the GP or staff at risk
☐

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4.

Please provide details why

N.B Where a warning has not been issued the Area Team may require reasonable evidence of why this has not taken place.

GP/PM Actual Signature:.....

Date:...../...../.....

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TO BE COMPLETED FOR IMMEDIATE REMOVALS ONLY *this will result in the patient going on to the Special Allocation Scheme (SAS)*

Please complete this form in full for the removal of a patient following a violent incident towards a GP, a member of staff, a patient or property, and submit within 7 working days via email to pcse.patientremovals@nhs.net. The incident must be reported to the Police within 24 hours, in-order for the patient to be removed. If the incident has not been reported to the Police, then the removal will be done as an 8-day removal and not as an immediate removal.

If you have obtained a Police Incident Number, please record it on this form. If one is not available at present, please provide it within 7 working days to the email address above; although please note it is not mandatory to obtain one and it will not delay the removal process.

Details of the Incident	
Date of Incident	
Time of Incident	
Location of incident (Surgery/ Patient's address)	
Type of Incident (Please tick appropriate box)	Non-physical violence i.e., threats of violence etc. ☐ The Health Circular 2000/01 defined. violence in the primary care context as: 6.4.4.2 "Any incident where a GP, or his or her staff, are abused, threatened, or assaulted in circumstances related to their work, involving. an explicit, or implicit, challenge to their safety, well-being, or health". Physical Violence ☐ i.e., assault, thrown objects etc. Aggravated Physical Violence ☐ e.g., use of weapons Vandalism to Premises ☐ Vandalism to Vehicle ☐
Date Incident Reported to the Police (MUST BE REPORTED TO POLICE FOR SAS)	

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Police Incident Number (please provide within 7 days, if not available immediately)	
Please a full incident description (Please continue on separate sheet if necessary)	
GP signature (Actual signature must be provided):	