*Proforma acceptable behaviour agreement*

An acceptable behaviour agreement indicates that although a patient has acted unacceptably, the practice team is willing to continue a therapeutic relationship with the patient, provided the patient complies with the conditions outlined in the agreement. Acceptable behaviour agreements (otherwise known as doctor–patient contracts) can be a useful tool to modify behaviour.

It is recommended that where an acceptable behaviour agreement is used, it is introduced as follow up to a letter indicating that the provision of care by the practice will cease if the unacceptable behaviour continues. Even then, caution needs to be exercised and medical staff need to give careful consideration to the likely risks.

The stated consequences of stepping outside the set boundaries need to be things that the practice can and will carry out. In this context, it is important for the practice team to be in agreement with their practice’s acceptable behaviour agreement policy. The behavioural demands imposed by the agreement need to be reasonable, rather than unfair, excessively burdensome or disproportionate to the risk

For more information, including medico-legal issues associated with the active management of patient-initiated violence, please refer to the RACGPs [*General practice – A safe place: A guide for the prevention and management of patient-initiated violence*](https://www.racgp.org.au/FSDEDEV/media/documents/Running%20a%20practice/Security/General-practice-A-safe-place.pdf).

I, [insert individual’s name], agree to enter into an agreement with [insert practice name] (‘the practice’) based on the following conditions.

As a condition of the practice agreeing to continue my treatment, I promise that I will not whilst I am in the clinic:

• swear at staff or in the presence of other patients

• shout or make offensive remarks

• make verbal or physical threats

• attend when intoxicated with alcohol and/or drugs

• damage or steal property

• act in a manner that is likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress to others in the general

practice

• [insert other applicable conditions if needed].

If I breach this agreement I understand that:

• I may be asked to leave the practice

• police attendance may be requested by practice staff, and

• my future attendance at this practice may be discontinued and I may have to seek health

care elsewhere.

DECLARATION

I confirm that I understand and agree to the conditions of this undertaking.

I also acknowledge that the consequences of breaching the conditions of the acceptable

behaviour agreement have been explained to me.

SIGNED:

DATE:

WITNESS (GP, nurse or senior staff member):

DATE:

Source: Adapted from Sim M, Khong E, Rispoli P, Wain T, Hendricks, Rudd C. Practice kit: Managing behaviours safely in

general practice. Systems and Intervention Research Centre for Health, Joondalup, WA: Edith Cowan University & Osborne

GP Network Ltd, 2008. Available at www.ecu.edu.au/schools/nursing-and-midwifery/research-activity/projects/managingbehaviours-

safely-in-general-practice/practice-kit/related-content/downloads/practice-kit.pd [Accessed 17 September 2015].

Disclaimer

The information set out in this publication is current at the date of first publication and is intended for use as a guide of a general nature only and may or may not be relevant to particular patients or circumstances. Nor is this publication exhaustive of the subject matter. It is no substitute for individual inquiry. Compliance with any recommendations does not guarantee discharge of the duty of care owed to patients. The RACGP and its employees and agents have no liability (including for negligence) to any users of the information contained in this publication.

© The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners [2019]

This resource is provided under licence by the RACGP. Full terms are available at [www.racgp.org.au/usage/licence](https://www.racgp.org.au/usage/licence)

*We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands and seas on which we work and live, and pay our respects to Elders, past, present and future.*