

## RACGP Alcohol and Other Drugs GP Education Program

### Whole of Practice Resources

### De-escalation flow chart

Consider pre-planned exit strategies to de-escalate a situation. For example, an excuse to leave the room due to duress/alarm. Do not tolerate abuse. Acknowledge your gut feeling and if feeling unsafe, leave the room and immediately alert staff. If you feel safe intervening and believe there is no risk to staff, then follow the following steps:

## Appear calm, respectful, confident

- Use reflective questions and use the patient's own words, to ensure you have understood.
- Watch the way you speak and avoid using medical jargon. Instead use simple language such as: 'I'd like to help you'.

# **Body language & previous trauma**

- Be aware of personal space and maintain as much physical distance as possible.
- Avoid too much eye contact.
- Enlist trauma informed care principles: safety, trust, choice, collaboration, empowerment, respect for diversity.

## Move to a safe, quiet place

 Introduce yourself. One person speaks at a time. Be calm, don't rush, take your time.

# Portray your actions as being in the best interest of your patient

- Actions in your interest may be inflammatory.
- Patient will undertake a 'cost-benefit analysis' and consider your suggestion vs dismissal.



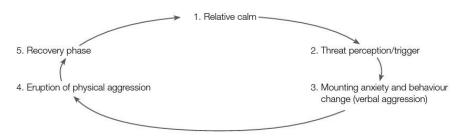
### Maintain a solution focus

- Calmly acknowledge the cause of the complaint. Be open to all solutions. Allow some venting.
- Seek as many solutions as the patient can think of.
- Use 'Yes'/'No' questions.
  Patients answering 'yes' to
  questions helps them to follow
  along on the journey, e.g. Is
  that what you mean?

## Enlist the patient's support person

 Enlist a support person: family, friend, or interpreter.

### The cycle of aggression - avoidance is key



#### Warning signs:

- veiled or overt threats
- outbursts of anger
- violent gestures or speech
- intense staring or avoiding looking at you
- refusal to communicate
- harmful, violent thoughts
- warning signs from early episodes of past history.

### References:

- 1. RACGP 2011, General Practice: A Safe Place: tips and tools, RACGP, viewed May 2022.
- 2. YouthAOD Toolbox, d. Employ diffusing techniques, The Centre for YouthAOD Practice Development, viewed May 2022.

