

Disruptive Behaviour Policy

Purpose

Bipolar Edinburgh aims to create an environment where everyone feels safe, valued and respected. We have a duty of care towards our service users, trustees, staff, contractors, and volunteers. Maintaining high standards of behaviour will benefit everyone by establishing calm, safe and supportive environments conducive to peer support and learning.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide guidance as to what constitutes disruptive behaviour;
- describe the actions that staff, facilitators and volunteers should take if such disruptive behaviour is judged to have occurred;
- help staff, facilitators and volunteers to respond to disruptive behaviour consistently and fairly;
- describe what actions might be taken to restore acceptable behaviour; and
- explain the appeals process.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Comfort Agreement and the organisation's safeguarding policies and procedures. All warnings and exclusions will be recorded and kept in accordance with Bipolar Edinburgh's records management procedures.

What constitutes disruptive behaviour?

Disruptive behaviour includes:

- perceived threats to the safety of any person through verbal or physical abuse or sexual harassment;
- inappropriate behaviour, confrontation, oversharing or conflict;
- disrupting meetings, programmes or socials;
- diminishing the appeal of meetings, programmes or socials for existing and potential attendees;
- breaking confidentiality; and
- bringing Bipolar Edinburgh into disrepute.

Examples of disruptive behaviour include a lack of restraint when speaking, raising your voice, arguing with others and/or needlessly moving around the room when presentations are in progress.

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Responding to disruptive behaviour

Staff, facilitators and/or volunteers will try to resolve disruptive behaviour informally wherever possible. However, more serious and repeated disruptive behaviour will be dealt with in stages, with sanctions of increasing severity:

- Stage One: Written warning
- Stage Two: Temporary exclusion from meetings, programmes & socials
- Stage Three: Permanent exclusion from meetings, programmes & socials

Stage One: Written warning

Where informal attempts to resolve disruptive behaviour have been unsuccessful, a printed sheet should be shown to the disruptive person(s) after the talk, if possible, with the message:

Please come with me quietly. Please bring your things with you. I will explain.

The staff member or facilitator should encourage and guide the person out of the meeting room to a place beyond hearing of other attendees. The staff member or facilitator should encourage the disruptive person to read the reverse of the sheet:

We have asked you to step outside the meeting because we believe your behaviour has been disruptive just now and may have caused distraction or upset to other group members.

You are asked to go home safely now.

You can join us at the next group meeting, programme or social event.

Stage Two: Temporary exclusion

A printed sheet should be shown to the disruptive person, with the message:

You are requested not to attend group meetings, programmes or social events for one (1) month. You are welcome to attend these events again after one month, provided you do not behave in a disruptive manner. Repeat infringements may result in permanent exclusion from attending future meetings, programmes and socials.

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If you believe this exclusion action has been unjustified, an appeal process is available to you. You must wait at least 24 hours after the end of this event. If, after 24 hours have lapsed, you do wish to appeal, you can do so by emailing info@bipolaredinburgh.org.uk.

Fuller details of our appeals procedure are available on our website:
www.bipolaredinburgh.org.uk.

We look forward to welcoming you back in the future. Thank you.

Stage Three: Permanent exclusion

Serious or repeated disruptive behaviour may lead to a person being excluded permanently from attending all future meetings, programmes and socials. This action will only be taken as a last resort once other avenues for resolution have proved unsuccessful. The Executive Director will write to the person:

- Confirming the decision to exclude them permanently;
- Setting out the grounds for permanent exclusion;
- Communicating they will no longer be entitled to attend future meetings, programmes and socials organised by Bipolar Edinburgh; and
- Providing information about the appeals process.

Appeals

Individuals who have been excluded temporarily or permanently have a right to appeal the decision to the Chair, Board of Trustees. An appeal is used to review a decision and consider whether it should be changed. You can raise an appeal if you think:

- The decision is too severe;
- Part of the decision-making process was wrong or unfair; or
- You have new evidence to show.

The Chair will:

- Acknowledge your appeal in writing;
- Hear your appeal;
- Carry out an investigation, if necessary;
- Consider whether a different outcome is appropriate; and
- Provide the final outcome in writing, as quickly as possible.

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All appeals must be made in writing by emailing chair@bipolaredinburgh.org.uk, setting out the grounds for your appeal. The Chair's decision will be final.

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Document version control

Version number	Change or update	Author or owner	Date
1.0	First version	Chair	14/04/2023
1.1	Added test	Executive Director	26/04/2023
1.2	Appeals process	Executive Director	09/05/2023