

# HOW TO HANDLE CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

As healthcare professionals you are likely to encounter service users that display challenging behaviours but how should you handle such situations?

## What is Challenging Behaviour?

**Challenging Behaviour** is classed as any act that causes distress or danger to the service user or others. The most common type of challenging behaviours include:

- Self-harm including; poking, scratching, teeth grinding, eating things that aren't food.
- Aggressive actions including; screaming, spitting, hitting, biting
- Non – person directed including; destruction of property, hyperactivity, inappropriate behaviour, incontinence, lack of awareness
- Stereotyped including; rocking, repetitive speech and repetitive manipulation of objects, repetitive movements



## Preventing Challenging Behaviours



There are a wide range of situations that can be a trigger for challenging behaviour. These are often unpredictable and difficult to predict, however, there are a few things you can do to reduce the likelihood.

- Speak slowly and in a clear calm voice
- Explain your care actions
- Step back and assess the situation
- Act calmly
- Treat people with dignity
- Minimise boredom, social isolation and irritating factors in the environment such as noise, uncomfortable clothing.

## When Challenging Behaviour Occurs

When challenging behaviour happens

- Back off where possible.
- Keep calm.
- Call for help.
- Leave the person to calm down, if possible.
- Remove others from the environment, if possible.
- Be aware of body language and tone of voice used to the person.



## Newcross Policy & Training

If you're in doubt about how to handle a Challenging Behaviour incident be sure to contact your branch for training courses or check out myNewcross for the Challenging behaviour and interventions Policy.

