

ESSEX PARTNERSHIP UNIVERSITY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES

DEFINITION

The use of techniques (including verbal and non-verbal communication skills) aimed at preventing potential or actual behaviours of concern from escalating.

Restraint Reduction Network 2019

One member of staff should take the primary role in communicating with them. That staff member should assess the situation for safety, seek clarification with the service user and negotiate to resolve the situation in a non-confrontational manner. Its aim is to aim to build emotional bridges and maintain a therapeutic relationship.

Use of the following primary interventions may help the de-escalation process.

- Care plan
- Risk plan
- Positive behaviour support plans (PBSP)
- Existing therapeutic relationship
- Consider which de-escalation techniques are appropriate for the situation.
- Pay attention to non-verbal cues, such as eye contact and respond accordingly.
- Adopt a non-threatening but safe body posture.
- Appear calm, self-controlled and confident without being dismissive or over confident.
- The use of calm down methods to use the patient's own strengths and usual coping mechanisms to help them calm down.
- Manage others in the environment (for example removing other service users from the area, getting colleagues to help and creating space) and move towards a safe area.
- Explain to the service user and others nearby what they intend to do, giving clear, brief, assertive instructions.
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- Encourage the service user to discuss the issues at hand.
- Ask for facts about the problem and encourage reasoning.
- Attempt to establish a rapport emphasising co-operation.; offer and negotiate realistic options; avoid threats; ask open questions and ask about the reason for the service user's anger.
- Show concern and attentiveness through non-verbal responses.
- Do not patronise and do not minimise the service user's concerns.
- Listen carefully and demonstrate empathy.
- Ensure that staff non-verbal communication is non-threatening and non-provocative.
- Where there are potential weapons, the service user should be relocated to a safer environment and or attempt to remove the potential weapon without putting self or others at risk.
- If a weapon is involved ask for it to be placed in neutral location rather than handed over.

- Consider asking the service user to make use of a designated de-escalation area to help calm and diffuse their anger.
- At all times encourage the service user to discuss and negotiate their wishes.