

# Talk down methods

## Overarching approach

### Control yourself

#### Actions

- Act calmly and confidently
- Don't corner patients, threaten or make false promises
- Don't judge, criticise, show irritation, frustration, anger or be retaliative
- Let patient have the last word.

#### Body language

- Have slow and gentle movements
- Relax face, don't frown, or purse lips
- Relax body, no hands on hips or in pockets, don't finger wag or prod
- Have lowered, uncrossed arms and open hands.

#### Communication

- No hesitation or uncertainty of speech
- Don't argue or say they are wrong and you are right
- Don't defend or justify yourself
- Show no reaction to abuse or insults directed at you, ignore them or partially agree with them
- Prepare responses in advance to typical insults.

#### Emotions

- Breathe deeply and concentrate on situation
- This is not personal and it is not about you.

### Respect and empathy

#### Actions

- Be congruent: your actions should match your words
- Listen, hear, acknowledge feelings and needs
- Don't tell the patient what they should or should not be feeling
- Take time to hear the patient out, be patient and don't hurry them.

#### Body language

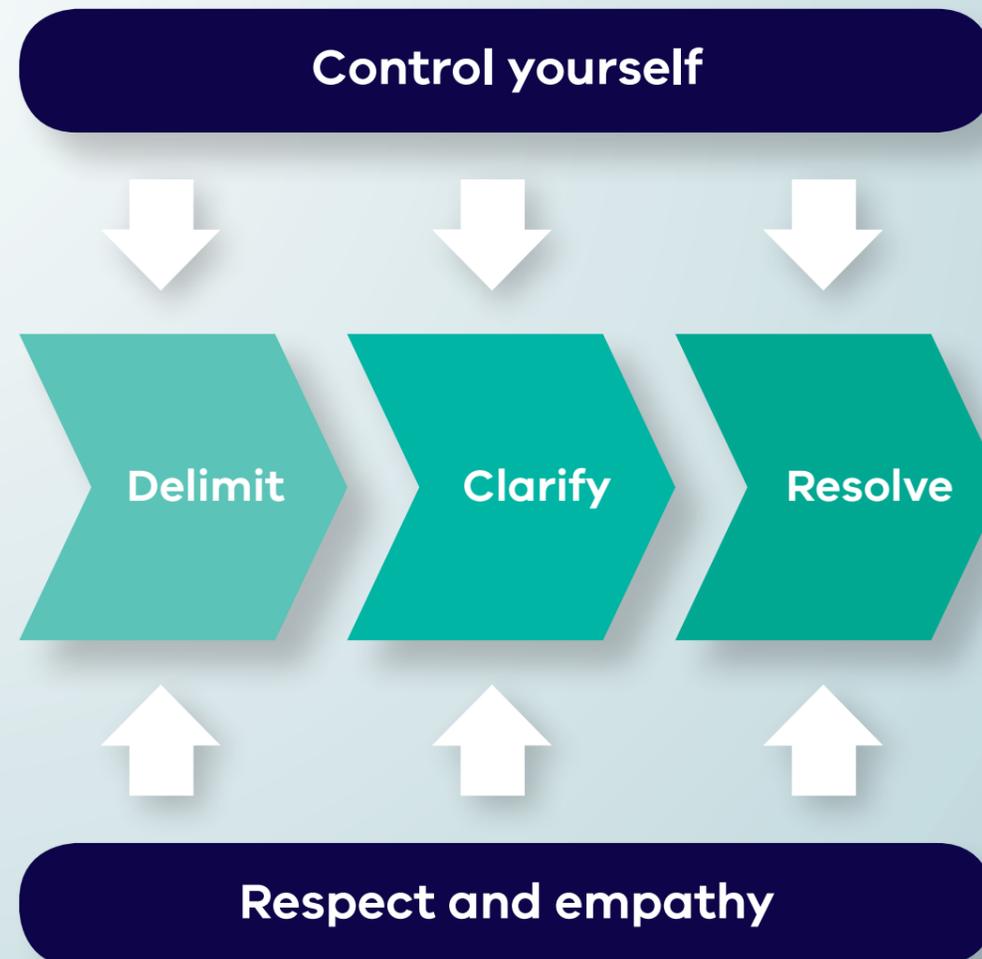
- Make eye contact (exercising care not to be confrontational).

#### Communication

- Extend self and thinking to understand patient viewpoint
- Have a concerned and interested tone of voice
- Don't yell or shout over people
- Answer all requests for information, however they are phrased.

#### Don'ts

- No advice giving and no orders, no "if I were you I would..."
- Don't overly smile as this can be condescending.



## Stages of de-escalation

### Delimit

- Invite person to move to a quiet place, away from others, audience, people at risk
- Invite patient to sit down
- Assess the need for support or backup
- Keep safe, maintain distance if required.

### Clarify

- Speak clearly, say who you are, use each other's names, remind of existing relationship, offer your help
- Use open questions to ask what's happening
- Listen attentively to patient
- Paraphrase and check what they have said
- Answer questions and clarify any misunderstandings.

### Resolve

- Give patient opportunity to self-regulate, remind person of Calm Down Box
- Be flexible, if possible problem-solve and compromise together
- Offer choices and options
- Give reasons, explain rules, reasoning behind them, be honest, express fallibility (or even agree that it's unfair)
- Deal with the complaint, apologise, make a change
- Make a personal appeal, remind them of any previously agreed strategy, summarise what's been said
- Ask if there is anything else you can do or say that will gain their cooperation, ending positively.