

Guidance for Talk Down Training

Safewards Victoria

As the champion for this intervention it is recognised that you are skilled in de-escalation.

The *Talk Down* poster displays some techniques to help people feel calmer, and more in control, during times when they are very agitated, angry or upset. Practising these techniques can help us to avoid the use of containment measures such as restraint or seclusion.

The length of the training is up to you, it could be very simple and take just 15-20 minutes to talk through with each person (or recap if they have already attended a training workshop), or you may have some other ideas about how to do it.

1. Explain the aim of the poster giving examples of situations where these techniques can be employed.

2. Briefly summarize the poster

Example: This poster illustrates a three stage process of de-escalation, which should be implemented in a controlled way, with respect and empathy for the patient.

3. Talk through the central part of the poster. Spend most of your time on this bit; it is the most important part and is comprised of three stages:

- **Delimit:** Gain control over the situation.
- **Clarify:** Work out what the problem is.
- **Resolve:** Find a solution to the problem

Talk the person through each step, and cover each point, explaining the reasons behind the techniques:

Example (Delimit): People don't like giving way in front of their peers, so moving to a more private area will mean you can talk without someone feeling they have to lose face.

Example (Clarify): Use the person's name. This immediately establishes an interpersonal relationship.

When administering the training you might want to talk about times when you have successfully used these techniques, or give examples of how not to do things:

Example (Clarify): Ask "what's going on Len? You seem very upset and angry?" rather than "what's all this about? Are you complaining about the food again? We've already told you there is nothing we can do about it!"

It might also help to ask questions during the training:

Example (Delimit): Why do you think it might help to sit down with someone, rather than talking whilst standing?

4. Spend about five minutes discussing the sections 'Respect and empathy' and 'Control yourself'. Without these things, the process of de-escalation will not work. You do not have to cover each point here, instead pick a few that you think are the most important. For more information on how to 'control yourself' refer staff to the Safewards document '*Staying calm, poised, confident, unworried, open, friendly and positive towards patients*'.

5. At the end of training give a summary, and answer any questions.