

# **Moira Replan**

## **Personal Safety Policy for Staff, Volunteers and Groups**

This policy is to minimise the risk of inappropriate, violent, or aggressive behaviour by people to people working or volunteering for Moira Replan. Staff and volunteers should be made aware of this safety policy as part of their induction to the Centre.

### **Assessing the risk – Lone working**

- It is in the nature of the work and services Moira Replan provide they will meet people they do not know or at all when there are no other people present
- Travelling alone on Moira Replan business particularly at night, attending meetings, events, or other projects
- Working alone at any time of the day make sure you sign in it is important that you tell someone what time you are leaving the Centre. Make sure you sign out and most importantly you also text or phone either the Centre Manager or a nominated person of your choice that you are leaving
- Working alone at night or if the Centre is closed to other users' extra care should be taken to lock all outer doors and gates as you arrive and follow the same procedure for signing in and out and inform the Centre Manager of your nominated person that you are home safely.
- Carrying money or other valuable items on behalf of Moira Replan
- Encountering in any context while working/volunteering for Moira Replan unpredictable outbreaks of aggressive behaviour by people which may relate to their mental health, drug, (prescribed or not), or alcohol abuse

In all these situations staff and volunteers are potentially at risk from the aggression of other people. Such risks cannot be eliminated completely but with a combination of awareness, sensible procedures, and practical aids they can be minimised

### **Prevention Procedures**

When staff or volunteers are working with an individual but feel uneasy about being alone with them, they should arrange for or seek out someone to be with them

- If staff or volunteers become concerned about someone's behaviour during a group session or meeting, they should alert another to their concern
- If staff or volunteers, feel uneasy about someone with whom they might be alone have the right to express this and will be supported in doing so.
- Working or attending Moira Replan in the evening there should always be at least two people and at the end of the evening always make sure no one is left alone in the building or leaves alone
- Good practice is to develop a system with another to confirm you are home safely and all is well
- Staff and volunteers should make clear who they wish to be informed in case of any emergency and how they can be contacted.
- Personal awareness: be aware of your surroundings, trust your intuition and listen to your feelings, be prepared, be observant

- Be aware of personal space, yours, and others as too close can either seem as aggressive to a vulnerable person or make them aggressive

### **Dealing with Aggression**

If you find yourself in a situation where someone is upset and becomes aggressive

- Try to stay calm if someone starts to get angry. Your body language, voice and response can help defuse the situation. Take a deep breath, keep your voice calm and try to help
- Offer any angry person a range of options from which they can choose the one they prefer. They will find it difficult to stay angry
- Do not be aggressive back – this is how aggression turns into violence
- Are you the best person to deal with the situation? Getting someone else is often helpful particularly if they can solve the problem that you cannot
- Get on the same level as the aggressor. If they are standing, so should you. It makes you less vulnerable and makes it easier to get help if necessary
- Do not touch someone who is angry
- Do not let your escape route be blocked keep yourself between the aggressor and your escape route so you can get help
- If you cannot get away then scream, yell or alert others in any way you can

Reviewed, agreed, and verified at AGM 2022

Signature of the Chairperson of the Trustees