

Self-harm and Self Injury Policy

Version 7

September 2023



Self-harm and Self-injury Policy

Title	Self-harm and Self Injury Policy
Version	7
Author	Francesca Hill, DCEO
Date first published	November 2019
Previous review dates	November 2022
Next review date	November 2024
Review schedule	This policy will be reviewed every year, or in line with organisational or legislative changes.
Responsibility	Board of Trustees
Responsibility for development, review and implementation	Executive Leadership Team, Senior Leadership Team and Operational Delivery Team, led by the Mind in Bradford Accountable Officer for Safeguarding and the Operational Safeguarding Lead
Target audience	All staff, volunteers, clients, students on placement with Mind in Bradford, visitors to Mind in Bradford, our funding bodies, job and volunteer applicants and the Board of Trustees
Accessibility	Staff: OneDrive – Shared Staff Folder – Policies & Procedures Volunteers: People HR Clients and others: Mind in Bradford website If you would like this policy in another format, such as large print or audio, please contact us on 01274 730815 or at email admin@mindinbradford.org.uk or speak to a member of staff
Associated policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding Children • First Aid • Confidentiality Policy • Risk Management Policy • Client Code of Conduct Policy

1. Purpose of policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for staff, volunteers and clients. They will all be referred to as people within the policy. This policy guides how we, as a company approach self-harm and self-injury. Self-harm, for the purpose of this policy is defined as intentional self-poisoning or injury, irrespective of the apparent purpose.

Self-harm can occur in people of all ages. Very young children can demonstrate self-harm and self-destructive behaviours.

2. Principles

Mind in Bradford upholds non-judgmental attitudes towards self-harm. We operate in a therapeutic environment and approach, and believe this is key to minimising risks of self-harm and self-injury. Mind in Bradford has found that trust, space and time to talk

can reduce the need to self-harm/self-injure. It can also allow space where disclosure of self-harm and self-injury may occur.

Individuals who have self-harmed will be treated with the same care, respect and privacy as any other injury. In addition to this, staff will take full account of the likely distress associated with self-harm.

MiB does not accept or allow people to self-harm on their premises or premises in which MiB services are being accessed. Safe Spaces (MiB crisis service) will not accept a referral for a client who is believed to have actively self-harmed or taken an overdose.

2.1 Principles for assessment and care of people who self harm or self injure

Mind in Bradford understands that providing treatment and care for people who have self-harmed is emotionally demanding and requires a high level of communication skills and support. All staff undertaking this work will have

regular 1:1 meetings and clinical supervision in which the emotional impact upon staff members can be discussed and understood.

2.2 When a person presents with self-harm

Treat the person with respect, dignity and compassion, with an awareness of cultural sensitivity

Work collaboratively with the person to ensure that their views are considered when making decisions

Address any immediate physical health needs resulting from the self-harm, in line with first aid training; if necessary, call 111 or 999 or other external medical support

An up to date list of First Aiders is located on the wall under the first aid cupboard.

Seek advice from First Response or 111 as appropriate

If the person is a client, document all actions on their MYMUP and complete and incident report form. For any other person, complete an incident report form.

MiB cannot detain people who have self-harmed or taken an overdose. They will immediately escalate.

2.3 If the person who presents with self-harm is a child

This is immediately a **safeguarding** concern and the practitioner must refer to the Children's Safeguarding Policy. Staff need to assess the level of risk for the child and appropriately refer to other agencies.

2.4 If a person discloses self-harm through a telephone contact

If a person is receiving phone support and they disclose that they have self-harmed gently try to explore the severity of the harm.

Depending on the level of injury or intention to injure it may be necessary to escalate to emergency services or First Response.

If a person is receiving phone support and they disclose that they have self-harmed gently try to explore the severity of the harm.

Depending on the level of injury or intention to injure it may be necessary to escalate to emergency services or First Response.

Active suicide plans

If a client discloses an active suicide plan it is vital that staff members take this seriously, take them aside into a 1:1 room to understand a little more of their intentions. It is the responsibility of the staff member to contact 999 and seek help from the emergency services. This must be followed up by completing an incident form.

Disclosure of overdose

If there is a disclosure of overdose to a staff member, staff must find out as much information as they can about what the person has taken and contact emergency services on 999. The individual must not be left unaccompanied at any time once disclosure has been made.

The staff member must endeavour to understand;

When the overdose was taken, how much medication over what period. They must ask if any other substance, i.e. alcohol or household products have been ingested.

Cuts, scratches, hitting self, banging head and self-injury

Mind in Bradford does not allow cutting, scratching and self-injury on the premises; however, it is recognised that this is a coping strategy for some clients and therefore a supportive and non-judgmental attitude is paramount.

In instances where a client injures themselves by hitting, punching or banging their head, first-aid and medical attention will be offered. Monitoring clients that suffer physical trauma is important and advice from First Response, 111 and/or 999 should always be considered. It is advisable for the client to seek medical attention as soon as possible.

When a client presents a self-injury, first aid and medical attention will be offered. Clients are encouraged to tend to their wounds and to self-care as much as possible to minimise risk to staff members. Where necessary, First Response, 999 or 111 may be called for advice and support.

In the instance of a third party being contacted, the staff will discuss this and the client's consent be sought; however, the final decision lies with the staff.

Where appropriate, an alternative to self-injury may be discussed and tried, such as:

- the use of an ice pack
- alternative distraction and coping methods
- punching a cushion
- breathing exercises
- verbalising angry feelings

Alcohol and substances

Consumption of alcohol and substances is not permitted on the premises.

On occasion where alcohol and/or substances have been consumed prior to attending Mind in Bradford or Safe Spaces, staff will endeavour to ascertain how much and what was consumed. The frequency of such use and any conditions or complications which may need to be considered will be explored. For example, do they have capacity to engage in the session and is there a potential risk to staff and other clients on site.

If the client can engage in a safe way, one to one may follow with monitoring for changes in the welfare of the client.

First Response and/or an ambulance (999) may be contacted at the workers and Service Managers discretion where necessary if there is a concern that the client is without capacity or has taken an overdose. In the instance of a third party being contacted, the staff will discuss this with the client; the client consent will be sought.

Regular clients must be made aware of the policy. Clients who consistently disregard this policy will be asked to meet with two of the staff team to find out how best to support them.

Signposting to agencies to help with alcohol or substance misuse will be provided at an appropriate stage.

Further information/support can be found at:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng225>



Your local mental health charity in Bradford, Airedale, Wharfedale and Craven