



**Risk Management Plan**  
*For working with people with Challenging Behaviours*

**Working with externalizing behaviours.**

This risk management plan is for working with clients whose behaviours are often challenging, aggressive, defiant and lacking in emotional control, and directed towards others or objects.

Strategy	Actions
<b>Staffing, training and supervision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Recruitment processes ensure staff are skilled and or qualified in working with people with mental health issues and defiant behaviours.</li> <li>» Education regarding mental health is provided to all new staff and to existing staff annually.</li> <li>» Advice and information is provided to staff regarding new and emerging threats and trends.</li> <li>» Advice and education regarding mental health and support is routinely provided to clients.</li> <li>» Monitor compliance with this Behavioural Risk Management Plan.</li> <li>» Regular supervision is offered to all staff and incident debriefing is available when needed.</li> <li>» Clear protocols, including safety for other clients and staff, are in place for managing incidents from clients who act out.</li> </ul>
<b>Identify, assess and act</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Act calmly and with caution. Staff should avoid being judgmental, condescending or moralistic.</li> <li>» Validate feelings and provide space for de-escalation</li> <li>» Utilise 'Time Out' as necessary</li> <li>» Communicate with short and concise sentences. Speak slowly and clearly to elicit the client's needs. E.g., How can I best support you now?</li> <li>» Avoid raising your voice</li> <li>» Be flexible and supportive at all times.</li> <li>» Staff are to be alert and vigilant of their environment when working with clients, this includes:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Identifying exit routes in closed environments and ensuring that there is ease of access and exit;</li> <li>○ Enlisting the help of other staff when necessary, but ensuring they are seated in the music circle to reduce further escalation from crowding;</li> <li>○ Know your own limitations and do not try to interfere in major episodes;</li> <li>○ Engage the client in conversation to determine logic in speech; Observe the client signs (e.g. speech, orientation), perception (e.g. hallucinations) and behaviour (e.g. eye contact and cooperativeness, mood/affect, etc).</li> </ul> </li> <li>» Before working with clients, review their case notes for previous history and medications to assess the level of risk and anticipated behaviour.</li> <li>» Staff must ask specific questions regarding history (e.g. physical, mental or social health).</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» If workers are not familiar with the client history, consult with the client's case manager or more experience staff onsite.</li> <li>» Prepare preventative actions for clients with specific needs.</li> <li>» Ensure you are accompanied by another staff member when working with potentially violent, aggressive or other high-risk clients.</li> <li>» Contact emergency services by phoning <b>(000)</b> or the local mental health team <b>[insert number]</b> when appropriate.</li> <li>» Contact client emergency contact.</li> </ul>
<b>Prepare and communicate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Meet clients individually and assess whether they are suitable for group work prior to involvement.</li> <li>» Assess client's sensitivity to noise (drumming) one to one prior to working in a drumming group</li> <li>» Develop and prioritise actions for managing identified risks.</li> <li>» Be familiar with the organisations WHS Policy and Client Clinical Management Policy.</li> <li>» Plan activities to avoid triggers and dangerous situations.</li> <li>» Identify referral options for support for the client and the worker.</li> <li>» Notify the clients nominated family, carer or significant other.</li> <li>» Inform and brief other colleagues of the risks.</li> <li>» Complete an incident report ASAP, but within 7 days.</li> <li>» Complete case notes ASAP, but within 7 days.</li> </ul>
<b>Eliminate or reduce the risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Inspect the environment prior to the session and reduce items that could be over-stimulating (games, other musical instruments etc.)</li> <li>» Prepare a neutral and safe environment for the activity.</li> <li>» Ensure only hand drums are in the room and remove other articles that could be weaponized.</li> <li>» Ensure clients with previous histories of aggression towards each other are not placed in the same group</li> <li>» Set up and emphasise group guidelines early in session1 with a focus on emotional &amp; physical safety – display these prominently.</li> <li>» Use soothing exercises on the drum in the face of emotional arousal.</li> <li>» Have a care plan in place with the client exploring options for avoiding and/or managing similar issues in the future.</li> <li>» Engage the client's nominated family, carer or significant other as part of the care plan, where possible.</li> <li>» Ensure a capable, qualified co-facilitator is present at all times</li> <li>» Coordinate a simple alarm system.</li> </ul>
<b>Review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Ensure all incidents, concerns and significant observations are routinely and accurately documented.</li> <li>» If <b>[insert organisation name]</b> is not able to meet the client's needs, the organisation will support clients to access and connect with other services that are suitable and competent to meet their needs.</li> <li>» Consult staff to decide whether the risk control processes are effective.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Review any incident – triggers/underlying risk/actions that reduced symptoms.</li> <li>» Review the risk control process.</li> <li>» Review external factors of the risk.</li> <li>» Modify or change procedures, protocols and work practices.</li> <li>» Inform staff of changes, if any.</li> <li>» Client Care plan to be reviewed with the client to provide alternative treatments, if possible.</li> <li>» Review this Risk Management Plan and amend as needed.</li> </ul>
<b>Other strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on Fun.</li> <li>• Maintain routines,</li> <li>• Avoid room changes</li> <li>• Avoid personnel changes</li> </ul>