

Principle - Purpose

When staff understand the treatment outcomes expected for an individual who is sometimes assaultive, they are better able to provide therapeutic interventions to meet the treatment objectives.

If staff members do not have a clear understanding of what the individual is expected to achieve, they risk reacting to physically injurious behaviour rather than following the treatment plan.

In the absence of an effective treatment plan, the emergency plans become the primary form of treatment, and the individual receiving services is unlikely to benefit from treatment.

Alternate Wording:

When workers understand that beneath difficult or aggressive behaviours there is a message or a reason for the behaviours, workers will be less likely to react negatively to the behaviours and more likely to respond in ways that assist the individual to express their needs more effectively. This will lead to better outcomes.

Principle - Professionalism

Staff members who understand their motives for working with potentially dangerous individuals are less likely to be cynical and pessimistic about treating assaultive behaviour.

Staff attitudes which frequently aggravate assaultive incidents include:

- *cynicism*
- *pessimism*
- *other destructive staff attitudes.*

Alternate Wording:

Workers who understand why they have chosen to work in the field or the job they do are less likely to become cynical and pessimistic about dealing with difficult behaviors.

Principle - Preparation

Staff members who prepare to respond to assaultive behaviour before they enter the treatment environment are less likely to injure or be injured during an assaultive incident than staff members who are not. The fully prepared staff member has:

- *proper attire;*
- *adequate mobility;*
- *well-practiced observational strategies; and,*
- *an organized plan for self-control.*

Alternate Wording:

Workers who are prepared to respond to challenging behaviors before they get to work, are less likely to injure or be injured than workers who are not prepared. The fully prepared staff member considers their attire, level of mobility and well-practiced observational strategies. A self-control plan will reduce the chance that you will contribute to the assaultive situation.

Principle - Identification

From time to time, even best laid (treatment) plans fail. Staff members who are able to examine the reasons for these failures from a variety of perspectives are better able to understand and prevent assaultive incidents.

The better we understand the many contributors to the occurrence and potential for violence the more likely we will be to prevent those incidents.

Alternate Wording of Principle:

Workers who are prepared to respond to challenging behaviors before they get to work, are less likely to injure or be injured than workers who are not prepared. The fully prepared staff member considers their attire, level of mobility and well-practiced observational strategies. A self-control plan will reduce the chance that you will contribute to the assaultive situation.

Principle - Response

Staff members who are able to match their responses to the level of dangerousness presented by the individual's behaviour are less likely to use too much or too little force.

Principle - Recording

The primary purpose of written reports is to promote communication among team members. Clearly written reports about assaultive incidents, which are complete and accurate, provide the treatment team with needed information. Such reports enable the team to modify treatment plans when necessary. These reports also assist with developing preventive measures by communicating clearly what precipitated the assaultive incident.

Properly written reports can also protect professionals and their agencies from misrepresentation of staff performance during an assaultive incident.