

## Unacceptable Behaviour Policy

We believe that if you are making a complaint about a service, you have a right to be heard, understood and respected. Our service is independent and impartial and we work hard to be open and accessible.

However, the behaviour or actions of some users of our services can make it very difficult for us to deal with their complaint, as their conduct can go beyond what is acceptable. In a small number of cases, behaviour is unacceptable because it involves abuse of our staff or the way we work. When this happens, we must take action to protect our staff. We also have to consider the effect of this behaviour on our ability to do our work and provide a service to others. This policy explains how we will deal with these situations.

We understand that you may be angry about the issues you have raised in your complaint. However, we do not tolerate unreasonable behaviour towards our staff. Examples of unacceptable behaviour include:

- aggression, rudeness, abuse and threats of violence;
- excessive or unreasonable levels of contact with, or harassment of, our staff; and
- making unreasonable demands of our staff.

It is important to note that what matters is how the person you are being unreasonable towards is made to feel, not whether your behaviour was intended.

### **Aggression, rudeness, abuse and threats of violence**

Unacceptable behaviour (including aggression, rudeness, abuse and threats of violence) will not be tolerated. Anyone displaying such behaviour can be told that a telephone call will be terminated unless more moderate language is used, that threats are unacceptable and may be reported to the police, that rude and intemperate correspondence may not be answered or may be returned, or that special contact arrangements will be implemented.

### **Unreasonable levels of contact or harassment of staff**

If unreasonable or persistent levels of contact with staff occur, CEDR is ready to say 'no'. For example, CEDR can advise that a complaint will not be considered any further, an unproductive telephone call will be terminated, or no further correspondence in relation to the complaint will be answered. The consumer may be advised that their complaint is best dealt with in another forum.

### **Unreasonable demands**

If a consumer repeatedly raises issues that are beyond CEDR's remit, insists that more time be spent on a complaint than is warranted or directs CEDR on how to handle the complaint, CEDR will consider these demands to be unreasonable.

If a person makes unreasonable demands, CEDR will review which issues will be considered and



how communication should occur between the consumer and CEDR.

Any member of our staff who directly experiences aggressive or abusive behaviour has the authority to deal with it immediately in a way they consider appropriate and in line with this policy. This may include ending or refusing to accept phone calls. Our staff will tell one of our senior managers about any behaviour they consider unacceptable. The manager may authorise further action, including restricting any future contact from you to written correspondence only, or as a last resort deciding to have no further contact with you. We will always try to make sure that any action we take is the minimum necessary to deal with the problem, and we will take into account any relevant personal circumstances, including how serious your complaint is and your needs.

We will always tell you in writing what action we are taking and why. We will also record all incidents of unacceptable behaviour.

