

# Expectations of Service Users Protocol

Guidelines  
Version 2.0

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A Company-wide guideline recommended for use

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Version Information

Version No	Updated By	Updated On	Description of Changes
1.0	Rachel Austwick	28/03/2023	Original document that supersedes the fair use protocol and zero tolerance protocols combining fair use protocol and newly produced zero tolerance protocol.
2.0	Kim McCready	April 2024	General review and minor update

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## Introduction

Teladoc Health UK Ltd (“**THUK**”) is committed to providing excellent service to all our patients by ensuring that the use of our services is fair and reasonable. However, we recognise that sometimes we may get things wrong or are unable to help patients in the way they would like.

We treat any expressions of dissatisfaction seriously and value feedback from our patients which may help us identify learning points and improve our services.

Our Expectations of Service Users Protocol outlines what we expect from our patients so that we can continue to deliver safe and excellent care.

We meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 to make ‘reasonable adjustments’ for disabled patients. Patients may have a disability that makes it difficult to either express themselves or communicate clearly and/or appropriately. Where this may be the case, we will consider the needs of the patient before deciding how best to manage the situation.

## Our commitment to you

We will:

- Treat all patients equally, with dignity and respect.
- Aim to provide a personal, friendly, and high-quality service.
- Aim to keep patients informed of our services, their rights, and other information which directly affects the way our service is provided.
- Offer access to our services in line with the patient’s assessed need.
- Monitor and improve our systems to ensure we operate as efficiently as possible within the resources available to us.
- Welcome and consider all feedback from our patients.

## Our request to you

We ask that you please:

- Attend appointments in a quiet, secure location, with minimal distractions.
- Dress appropriately if attending a video consultation.
- Treat us with respect. Abuse of any kind is not expected or tolerated.
- Refrain from unreasonable behaviour.

## Unreasonable behaviour

THUK takes it very seriously if a member of staff is treated in an abusive or violent way.

The company supports the government's '**Zero Tolerance**' campaign for Health Service Staff. This states that staff have a right to care for others without fear of being attacked or abused. To successfully provide these services a mutual respect between all the staff and patients/members of the public must be in place.

Unreasonable behaviour can occur in any interaction with any member of our staff (over the phone, via video, in person, or in writing). We do not view the behaviour of patients as unreasonable simply because their communication is forthright or because they are determined in their approach. Our staff are trained to handle interactions with patients appropriately and are expected to make reasonable allowance for their behaviour.

Our staff aim to be polite, helpful, and sensitive to all patients' individual needs and circumstances. Our staff understand that illness can impact on a patient's communication style and will take this into consideration when trying to deal with a misunderstanding or complaint.

On occasion, however, the behaviour of our patients may go beyond what is reasonably acceptable. Examples of such unreasonable behaviour include (but are not limited to):

- Threatening behaviour (with or without a weapon)
- Verbal abuse in any form including unreasonable and / or offensive remarks or behaviour / rude gestures / innuendoes
- Derogatory or insulting personal remarks including using bad language or swearing at staff
- Harassment based on personal characteristics e.g., racism, sexism, or homophobia
- Obscene remarks
- Derogatory, abusive, or insulting comments made about our staff online or in the print media
- Harassing, abusing, or threatening our staff on social networks
- Physical intimidation or aggression
- Obtaining drugs and/or medical services under false pretenses
- Unreasonable or unrealistic demands that cause stress to staff will not be accepted. Requests will be met wherever possible, and explanations given where this is not the case

We ask that service users treat our staff courteously. Aggressive behaviour, be it violent or abusive, will not be tolerated and may result in access rights being withdrawn from the service user. If an incident occurs, this will be reviewed and where/when necessary, a warning letter will be issued.

## **The Legal Position**

As a responsible employer, the company has a duty to protect the health, safety, and welfare of our staff under Health & Safety at Work Act legislation. This includes a risk assessment of violence towards/abuse of staff and taking steps to mitigate this under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

## Fair use guidance

We reserve the right to review your access to our service. Decisions about restricting or denying your access to our service are made on a case-by-case assessment, however we would consider this (temporarily or permanently) if we believe:

- You have repeatedly booked appointments that we reasonably believe are clinically inappropriate;
- Your medical problems or needs are deemed to be too complex or unsafe for our service and we have repeatedly advised you of this;
- You have been responsible for any abuse, harassment, or inappropriate behaviour towards our staff.

## Removal from our services

The removal of patients from our service is an exceptional and rare event and is a last resort in an impaired patient-healthcare provider relationship. We value and respect good relationships based on mutual respect and trust. Where trust has irretrievably broken down, the company will consider all factors before removing a patient from our services and communicate to them that it is in the patient's best interest that they should find a new service provider.

In the event you do not follow any terms of the policy, we may take some or all of the following actions (this list is not exhaustive):

- Issue a warning to you;
- Agree specific limitations to your use of the service;
- Suspend or terminate our services to you with immediate effect where we consider this to be necessary
- Take legal action; and/or
- Disclose such information to law enforcement authorities if we reasonably believe this is necessary or if required by law.