

PRACTICE SERVICES - ZERO TOLERANCE,
8 DAY AND IMMEDIATE REMOVAL
TEMPLATE LETTERS SOP

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**Re. Incidence of Abusive, Threatening or Violent Behaviour
Removal from Patient List**

Further to the warning letter sent to you on [REDACTED], one of our staff members has reported that you displayed the following abusive behaviour towards them on [REDACTED]:

[REDACTED]

GPs and their staff have a right to care for patients without fear of being abused, threatened or attacked. We ask all of our patients to treat our GPs, nurses and administrative staff courteously at all times. To this end and, in line with our partners in the wider NHS, we have introduced a policy of zero tolerance of abusive, threatening or violent behaviour towards our staff.

As advised in the warning letter, we have requested that NHS England remove you from our patient list and they will be contacting you in the next eight days to arrange for you to register with another service.

In the interim, we will continue to provide you with any medical services you may require.

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ZERO TOLERANCE , 8 DAY AND IMMEDIATE REMOVAL

What do patients do to have a zero-tolerance letter.

Any behaviour, verbal or physical, which causes staff to feel uncomfortable, embarrassed or threatened is totally unacceptable.

We have a legal obligation and duty of care to provide a safe workplace for our staff that is free of threats of abuse or violence.

There are 3 levels of behaviour responses

- Zero tolerance – Warning Letter
- 8 Day Removal
- Immediate Removal

On all occasions staff need to ensure that there are notes added to EMIS and that they are hidden. A task should be sent to the Team Leaders who will issue the letter and add to the zero-tolerance spreadsheet so a record can be kept of all letters that are issued.

Staff who have been the target of this behaviour need to send an E Mail on EMIS to the GROUP Named Zero Tolerance. Members of the Group can then pick up from this box and assess the information provided. We must listen to the calls and assess if it meets the above criteria and discussions at this stage are added to the E Mail chain.

A note is added to EMIS warning and a spreadsheet is updated and saved.

Example of a zero-tolerance letter is below.

Scope

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) applies to all BrisDoc Practice Services staff who encounter, manage, investigate, or respond to incidents of unacceptable patient behaviour.

This SOP covers:

- Zero Tolerance Warning Letters
- Eight-Day Removal Requests
- Immediate Removal Requests
- Recording and management of incidents on EMIS
- Communication with PCSE and other relevant agencies
- Monitoring and governance arrangements

This SOP applies to all permanent, temporary, agency, bank, and contracted staff working within BrisDoc Practice Services.

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Roles and Responsibilities

Staff Member Involved in the Incident

The staff member who experiences or witnesses unacceptable behaviour must:

- Ensure their own safety and the safety of others.
- Record a factual account of the incident in the patient's record.
- Hide any confidential safeguarding or management notes where appropriate.
- Submit an incident report in accordance with BrisDoc incident reporting procedures.
- Send an EMIS task or email to the Named Zero Tolerance Group within one working day of the incident.
- Provide a witness statement if requested.

Named Zero Tolerance Group

The Named Zero Tolerance Group is responsible for:

- Reviewing all referrals.
- Gathering and reviewing supporting evidence.
- Listening to call recordings where available.
- Assessing whether the incident meets the criteria for a warning, eight-day removal, or immediate removal.
- Ensuring decisions are proportionate, fair, and appropriately documented.
- Maintaining the Zero Tolerance Register.
- Issuing correspondence to patients.

Team Leader or Manager

The Team Leader or Manager is responsible for:

- Supporting affected staff.
- Ensuring appropriate incident reporting has taken place.
- Providing evidence to support investigations.
- Escalating serious incidents where required.

Clinical Lead / Senior GP

A Clinical Lead or Senior GP must approve:

- Eight-day removal requests.
- Immediate removal requests.

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- Any decision where there is significant clinical risk, patient vulnerability, or disagreement regarding the appropriate action.

Examples of behaviour are as follow but not limited to:

Abusive and harassing behaviour

- Aggressive or abusive language, including shouting and swearing
- Racial, sexual, or other discriminatory remarks
- Sexual harassment
- Bullying or intimidating behaviour
- Offensive or derogatory non-verbal gestures

If the patient has been sent a warning within the last 12 months and there is a repeat of the behaviour we can then issue a 8 day removal and the patient can be removed from the practice.

Investigation and Decision-Making Process

All reported incidents must be reviewed before a decision is made.

The review should include:

- Review of the staff member's account.
- Review of EMIS records.
- Review of telephone recordings, where available.
- Review of any witness statements.
- Consideration of previous incidents or warnings.
- Assessment of patient vulnerability and equality considerations.
- Assessment of any mitigating circumstances.

The outcome shall be recorded within the patient's record and within the Zero Tolerance Register.

The decision must be clearly documented, including:

- The behaviour observed.
- Evidence reviewed.
- Decision reached.

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- Individual authorising the decision.
- Date of decision.
- Action taken.

Equality, Diversity and Vulnerability Considerations

Prior to issuing a warning letter or requesting patient removal, consideration must be given to whether the patient's behaviour may have been influenced by:

- Mental health conditions.
- Learning disabilities.
- Autism spectrum conditions.
- Dementia or cognitive impairment.
- Communication difficulties.
- Sensory impairment.
- Language barriers.
- Acute illness, distress, or pain.
- Other protected characteristics as defined within the Equality Act 2010.

The existence of a vulnerability does not excuse threatening, violent, abusive, or discriminatory behaviour. However, these factors must be considered when determining the most appropriate and proportionate response.

Where uncertainty exists, advice should be sought from a Clinical Lead or Senior Manager before action is taken.

Clinical Risk Assessment Prior to Removal

Before an eight-day removal request is submitted, consideration should be given to any potential risks associated with removing the patient from the practice list.

Particular consideration should be given to:

- Patients receiving end-of-life care.
- Patients undergoing active cancer treatment.
- Patients with significant mental health needs.
- Patients subject to safeguarding arrangements.
- Children and vulnerable adults.
- Patients requiring regular medication monitoring.

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Any identified risks and mitigating actions must be documented within the patient record.

8 Day removal

Eight-day removal requests are initiated by the GP as a result of a breakdown in relationship between the GP and the patient.

Before submitting a request you should ensure that the criteria outlined in the NHS England [Primary Medical Care Policy and Guidance Manual \(PGM\)](#) (Section 3. Removing a Patient from a Practice List) has been met.

GP Practices should provide the patient with a prior warning, before requesting a deduction unless there are extenuating circumstances – please refer to the PGM. If a request is received that does not meet the criteria it will be rejected by PCSE with any additional information requested. Upon receipt of a valid request, PCSE will process it within 24 hours and the patient is notified. Any prior warning should be within 12 months of the eight-day removal request.

After a request has been validated and the deduction has been initialised within PCSE, the patient is notified immediately via letter, delivered first class. The patient notification informs them of the practice's decision to remove them, the date the deduction will be finalised and advises them of what action they now need to take, to register elsewhere.

PCSE will notify the GP that the request has been processed. The patient will be deducted after 8 days, unless a registration is received from another practice sooner.

If you require any further guidance in regards to eight-day removals, please contact your local commissioner. Please note that PCSE do not hold lists of commissioner details.

Immediate Removal

The patient is violent towards staff, is very aggressive to staff or makes threats of violence to staff or buildings.

An immediate removal can only be requested when an incident involving the patient has been reported to the police by your practice.

The removal of a patient in these circumstances results in them being allocated to a provider of the Special Allocation Scheme (SAS).

A request to remove the patient should be made to the Patient Registrations team at PCSE via the [Contact Us](#) page.

Please note: the Police Incident number must be supplied to PCSE either immediately or within 7 days of the removal request (if not available when the request is submitted). Please ensure this is clarified on the removal request if not immediately available.

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Before submitting a request you should ensure that the circumstances meet the criteria set out by NHS England in the [Primary Medical Care Policy and Guidance Manual \(PGM\)](#) - Section 7. Special Allocation Scheme. PCSE is not responsible for determining if a patient meets the criteria for immediate removal, other than confirming the incident has been reported to the Police, this is the responsibility of the reporting practice.

Where the information provided does not meet the criteria the request will be rejected by PCSE and the GP directed to the PGM for further guidance on how to proceed. If you require any further guidance in regards to immediate removals, please contact your local commissioner. Please note that PCSE do not hold lists of commissioner details.

Patients who have been immediately removed are placed on the Special Allocation Scheme and can only access their health care via the BRI (Clinics are run from the BRI Safe Facility which is run on Tuesday's. Please advise the patient to call us directly and we will be able to advise where specifically they need to go when attending their appointment.) Patients are informed of this by PCSE by letter.

If a Special Allocation Scheme patient attempts to register with a mainstream GP Practice, no warning or preventative message would be received by the practice's clinical system. However, once the registration is received via the GP link, the flag on the patient's record warns PCSE that the patient is subject to the Special Allocation Scheme.

PCSE will then reject the registration with a rejection note stating the patient is on the scheme, and to remove the registration from their clinical system.

The patient will then be contacted by PCSE via letter to say that as they are still subject to the Special Allocation Scheme, they are unable to register at a practice of their choice and that their registration with your practice has been cancelled.

If you need to contact us about Patient Removals, the quickest and most efficient way is to use the dedicated [Patient Removals form](#).

If you are a patient on the Special Allocation Scheme (SAS), you can find out more on the [NHS England website](#).

Information Governance and Record Keeping

All records relating to Zero Tolerance incidents must be treated as confidential.

The following records must be maintained:

- EMIS documentation.
- Incident reports.
- Correspondence sent to patients.
- Witness statements.
- Call recordings where applicable.

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- Zero Tolerance Register entries.

Access to the Zero Tolerance Register shall be restricted to authorised staff only.

Information must be managed and retained in accordance with BrisDoc Information Governance policies and applicable data protection legislation.

Responsibilities

- Lead to ensure that notes are added to EMIS and hidden on all occasions
- Send a Task on Emis to the Zero Tolerance Team
- Zero Tolerance staff to ensure that this is checked daily and actions taken to investigate
- Note added to patient warnings
- Update the spreadsheet when the letter is issued

Staff Support Following Incidents

BrisDoc recognises the impact that abuse, aggression, threats, and violence can have on staff wellbeing.

Following a significant incident, managers should ensure that affected staff are offered:

- A manager debrief.
- Wellbeing support.
- Access to Employee Assistance Programmes where available.
- Occupational Health referral if appropriate.
- Time to complete incident reporting requirements.
- Ongoing managerial support.

Any staff member experiencing distress following an incident should promptly notify their line manager.

Zero Tolerance – Warning Letter Template

BrisDoc Healthcare Services
[Practice / Service Address]
Private and Confidential

[Date]

[Patient Name]

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[Patient Address]

Dear [Patient Name]

Re: Unacceptable Behaviour in BrisDoc Services

We are writing to you following an incident that occurred on [insert date], during your interaction with [insert service, e.g. the Out of Hours GP service / your GP surgery].

It has been reported that your behaviour included [briefly describe the behaviour, e.g. the use of offensive language towards staff / raised voice / racially discriminatory comments].

At BrisDoc, we are committed to providing a safe and respectful environment for our colleagues, patients, and visitors. We have a Zero Tolerance policy towards any form of violence, aggression, or discriminatory behaviour, whether verbal or physical. While we understand that medical situations can sometimes be distressing or frustrating, this does not excuse behaviour that puts others at risk or causes emotional harm.

This letter serves as a formal warning that such behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Should a similar incident occur in the future, further action may be taken, which could include:

- Implementation of a Good Behaviour Guidance Agreement
- Temporary or permanent exclusion from services
- Referral to the NHS Special Allocation Scheme (SAS), which provides care in a controlled environment for patients who pose a risk to staff

We strongly encourage you to reflect on this incident and to engage with our services appropriately in future. If you would like to discuss this matter or raise any concerns, please contact [insert manager's name and contact information].

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours sincerely,

[Service or Practice Name] BrisDoc Healthcare Services

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Re. **Incidence of Abusive, Threatening or Violent Behaviour Removal from Patient List**

Further to the warning letter sent to you on [REDACTED], one of our staff members has reported that you displayed the following abusive behaviour towards them on [REDACTED]:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

GPs and their staff have a right to care for patients without fear of being abused, threatened or attacked. We ask all of our patients to treat our GPs, nurses and administrative staff courteously at all times. To this end and, in line with our partners in the wider NHS, we have introduced a policy of zero tolerance of abusive, threatening or violent behaviour towards our staff.

As advised in the warning letter, we have requested that NHS England remove you from our patient list and they will be contacting you in the next eight days to arrange for you to register with another service.

In the interim, we will continue to provide you with any medical services you may require.

Immediate Removal

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One of our staff members has reported that you displayed the following abusive behaviour towards them on :



GPs and their staff have a right to care for patients without fear of being abused, threatened or attacked. We ask all of our patients to treat our GPs, nurses and administrative staff courteously at all times. To this end and, in line with our partners in the wider NHS, we have introduced a policy of zero tolerance of abusive, threatening or violent behaviour towards our staff.

Our staff understand that patients who are unwell do not always act in a reasonable manner and we do take this into consideration when trying to provide a service or to deal with a misunderstanding or complaint. However, the following behaviour will not be tolerated and is likely to result in a patient being removed from the Practice list:

- Abusive, threatening or violent behaviour towards any member of staff
- Theft of, or deliberate damage to, property belonging to the Practice or its staff
- Fraudulently obtaining drugs and/or medical services

As a consequence of the behaviour reported above, we must advise you that we have requested that NHS England remove you from our patient list with immediate effect. NHS England will be contacting you to arrange for you to register with another service.

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Version Control

Date	Version	Author	Change Details
14.10.2025	V1	Kerry Hall	
24.6.2026	V1.1	Kerry Hall	Updated Warning letter to match corporate policy