

Patient Behaviour Policy

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the standards of behaviour expected from patients, whānau, caregivers, and visitors while interacting with staff, clinicians, and other patients at St Albans Medical Centre.

Our aim is to provide a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for everyone and to ensure staff can deliver high-quality care.

2. Our Commitment

We are committed to:

- Providing care in accordance with the **Health and Disability Commissioner (HDC) Code of Rights**.
- Creating a welcoming, culturally safe environment for all patients and their communities.
- Treating everyone with dignity, respect, and fairness.

3. Expected Behaviour

We expect patients and visitors to:

1. **Treat staff and other patients with respect**, including using appropriate language and tone.
2. **Follow staff instructions** related to health and safety, clinical processes, and administrative requirements.
3. **Attend appointments on time** or notify the practice if they cannot attend.
4. **Provide accurate information** needed for care and administration.
5. **Respect practice property**, equipment, and facilities.
6. **Follow infection control measures**, such as mask use or isolation procedures when required.

4. Unacceptable Behaviour

The following behaviours will not be tolerated:

- **Verbal abuse**, including yelling, swearing, intimidation, threats, discriminatory remarks or undermining staff members.
- **Physical aggression** or threatening behaviour.
- **Harassment**, bullying, stalking, or inappropriate comments.
- **Repeated or insistent points being made**; not engaging with staff in a positive way, including undermining behaviours.
- **Being pushy or trying to intimidate** staff.

- **Hostile or aggressive behaviour.**
- **Damage to property** or theft.
- **Disruptive behaviour** that interferes with staff duties or patient care.
- **Drug or alcohol impairment** that poses a risk to staff or others.
- **Refusal to comply with safety instructions** (e.g., mask use when requested by the team).
- **Any mention or display of any object that could be used as a weapon**
- **Using Recording Devices** in the practice without prior approval from the clinical team or the Practice Manager.
- **Missing Appointments** on a repeated basis

5. Managing Unacceptable Behaviour

Depending on the severity of the behaviour, the practice may take one or more of the following actions:

1. **Verbal warning** and reminder of behaviour expectations.
2. **Request to leave the premises** immediately.
3. **Involving security or NZ Police** in cases of threats, intimidation, or violence.
4. **Restricting access** to the practice (e.g., phone-only or supervised appointments).
5. **Ending the doctor–patient relationship**, in accordance with Medical Council of New Zealand (MCNZ) guideline.
6. **Issuing a trespass notice** where required for safety.

All incidents of aggression, threats, or harm will be documented and may be reported to appropriate authorities.

6. Zero-Tolerance for Violence

St Albans Medical Centre has a **zero-tolerance policy** for violence or aggression towards staff or patients. Any act of violence or serious threat may result in:

- Immediate removal from the premises
- Police involvement
- Permanent exclusion from the practice

7. Cultural Safety and Equity

We acknowledge Te Tiriti o Waitangi and are committed to upholding its principles by:

- Ensuring culturally safe interactions
- Avoiding discrimination in all decisions regarding patient care and access
- Offering support such as whānau involvement, advocacy, or translation services whenever possible

This policy is designed to protect both staff and patients while also recognising the diverse needs and backgrounds of the community we serve.

8. Communication of Policy

This policy will be:

- Displayed in the waiting room and on the practice website
- Provided to patients upon request
- Referenced when discussing behaviour concerns with patients or whānau