

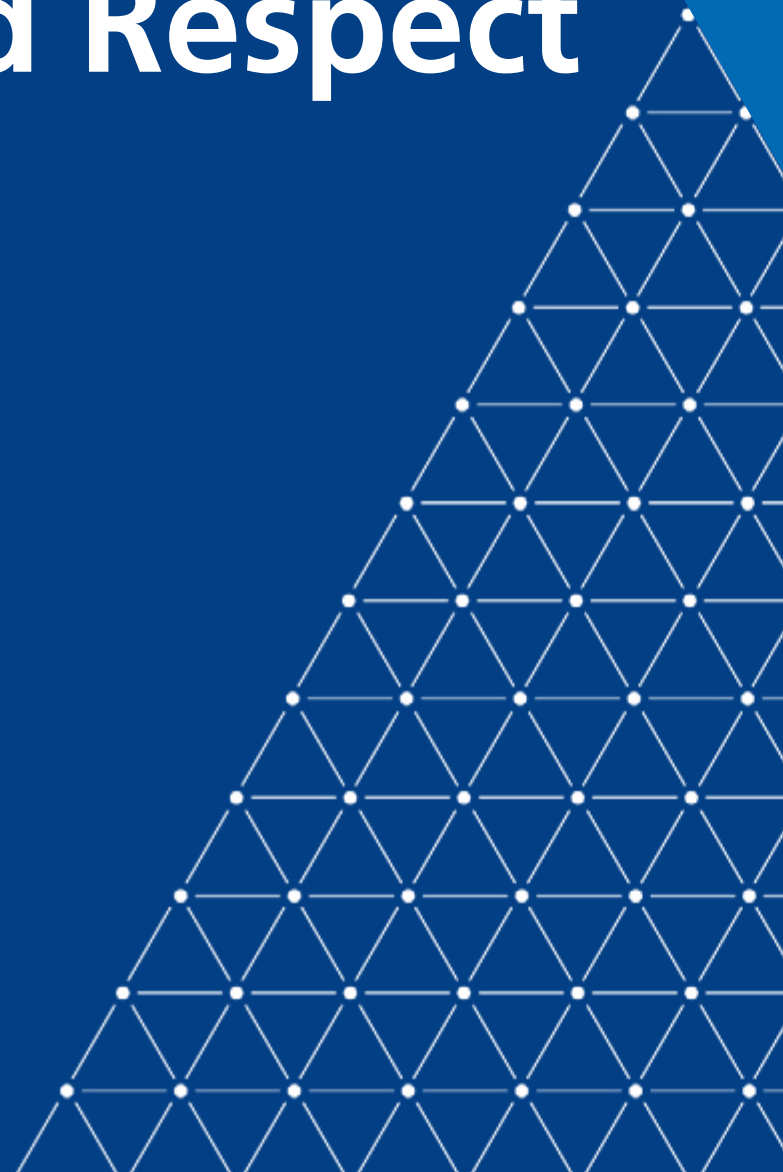
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University
Hospitals Sussex
NHS Foundation Trust



Civility and Respect Toolkit



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Introduction

University Hospital Sussex wants to create a culture where staff feel supported, valued and respected for what they do and where the values we seek to show to our patients are the same values we show to each other, in line with the NHS People Plan and Our NHS People Promise.

- The [NHS People Plan](#) 2020/21 places a compassionate and inclusive culture at the very heart of the NHS. The People Plan requires all employees to be responsible for tackling bullying and harassment and emphasises the importance of creating a civil and respectful culture.
- Our [NHS People Promise](#) is a promise we must all make to each other – to work together to improve the experience of working in the NHS for everyone. The themes and words that make up Our People Promise have come from those who work in the NHS. People in different healthcare roles and organisations have made it clear what matters most to them, and what would make the greatest difference in improving their experience in the workplace. For many, some parts of the Promise will already match their current experience. For others, it may still feel out of reach. We must all pledge to work together to make these ambitions a reality for all of us by 2024.



Definition of civility

- Civility is the basic behaviour expected in a professional work environment.
- It requires connecting with others in a way that respectfully acknowledges differences and encourages empathetic listening.
- Being courteous and polite, whilst thinking about how your words and actions, including those of others, impact on others.
- It is about ensuring that everybody's voice is heard and caring for your own identity, needs and beliefs without degrading others in the process.



Examples of civility and incivility

| Incivility |
|----------------------------|
| Overtly Rude |
| Undermining |
| Gossiping |
| Attitude |
| Exclusion of others |
| Sending emails in meetings |
| Rolling of eyes |
| Raised voices |
| Sharp comments |
| Being overly critical |
| Tutting |

| Civility |
|--|
| Acting with regards to others feelings |
| Patience |
| Listening |
| Tolerance |
| Mutual respect |
| Disagreeing without disrespect |
| Treating others with dignity |
| Inclusive |
| Being helpful |
| Fairness |
| Saying "Thank you" |



Points to note

The examples of incivility may also be interpreted in the context of diverse communication styles:

- Individuals who experience difficulties and/or differences in executive function may be more likely to be interpreted as “overtly rude” due to impulsivity or ‘lack of filter’ when it comes to communication. Linguistic discrimination and unconscious bias may lead the recipient to interpret culturally diverse communication/accent/dialect/verbal expression as “overtly rude” where no such meaning was intended.
- **Undermining** – an autistic person may correct a more senior colleague due to the latter individual making an error – this is not done out of a sense of wishing to undermine or be insubordinate, but may be interpreted as so.
- **Attitude** – again, unconscious bias may result in those with diverse communication styles being interpreted as “having an attitude” – similar to “Angry Black Woman” stereotype (The “Angry Black Woman” Stereotype at Work (hbr.org)), and Yale Child Study Center’s findings regarding teachers’ bias towards Black schoolchildren.
- **Exclusion of others** – an autistic individual may be more likely to be interpreted as excluding others due to how their verbal, paraverbal (messages we transmit through the tone, pitch, and pacing of our voices), and non-verbal communication is perceived.
- **Sending emails in meetings** – some individuals may need to send messages more immediately due to short-term memory processing differences. Some neurodiverse individuals may need to undertake background tasks in meetings in order to be able to manage attentional differences and prevent/reduce more significant attentional differences.
- **Rolling of eyes** – could be related to tics.
- **Raised voices** – could be related to cultural/linguistic differences, and/or modulation differences resulting from executive function and/or sensory processing.
- **Tutting** – could be a tic, and/or have different cultural relevance, or a side-effect or outcome of another difference (medication causing dry mouth, extrapyramidal side-effects from psychotropic medication leading to physical actions causing tutting-like sounds).
- If incivility is arising from stress, there should be a focus on the environmental and system factors resulting in this, considering potential of links to moral disengagement and impact on patients.



Impact of incivility

Stress negatively affects the way we act towards each other. When we feel scared or anxious we are more likely to lose our tempers, be rude and say or do things we normally wouldn't. Sometimes we may not even be aware that we are exhibiting these behaviours. Research has shown that incivility within a clinical setting has a significant adverse impact on staff performance and patient health outcomes. To meet the challenges that face health and care, staff need to be curious, innovative and challenge when they think something is not right. For this to happen, you need to demonstrate that you welcome people speaking up about ideas, issues, problems, challenges, opportunities and innovations.

- Individual performance – people experience decreased functioning in cognitive abilities such as working memory, decision making, and task planning and execution.
- Team performance – staff stop backing each other up. They stop showing willingness to help each other out, to share workloads, to share feedback, collaborate and coordinate.
- Organisational performance – staff sense of commitment and loyalty to the organisation decreases, productivity nosedives, as do job satisfaction and job retention rates.



Difference between incivility and bullying

- Incivility can occur due to the working environment, working at a fast pace and long hours. These factors can cause stress and fatigue and display as rudeness and discourtesy where the intent to cause harm isn't always clear.
- **Bullying** can be, but is not always, intentional; it happens with more frequency and intensity and is carried out in an effort to offend, distress and humiliate an intended recipient.
- The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) definition of bullying is '*any unwanted behaviour that makes someone feel intimidated, degraded, humiliated, or offended. It is not necessarily always obvious or apparent to others and may happen in the workplace without an employer's awareness. It can be between two individuals, or it may involve groups of people. It might be obvious, or it might be insidious. It may be persistent or an isolated incident. It can also occur in written communications, by phone or through email, not just face-to-face.*'
- If initiators of incivility are left unchecked, they can go on to influence others with acts of incivility and we are likely to see an escalation of behaviours.



How to manage uncivility

| | |
|--|---|
| Discuss with the team member in private and make your feelings known | Chat with them, calmly and politely expressing your feelings about their behaviour. They may be unaware that their actions have been offending, so by directly addressing the situation it will help them to understand and allow them to change their behaviour. |
| Consider the cause of the behaviour | Is there something at work or in their personal life that is causing stress and affecting them. Understanding the situation they are in can help you to empathise and offer support to help your colleague. |
| Check with trusted colleagues and see if they mention the same thing | Has someone else noticed the team members behaviour. Colleagues may also be able to help offer advice on the best way to support. If you find that it is only you who has taken offence, have you misinterpreted their behaviour. |
| Limit your interactions with them as much as possible | Dealing with them when necessary can help to reduce negative feelings. By removing yourself from these situations, you can focus more comfortably at work, and take a more positive approach to your tasks. |
| Try not to react to them rudely, but rather, kindly | When dealing with and engaging with an employee who's being rude to you, it can be easy to react to them similarly and behave rudely back to them. It is best to remain calm and approach them in a collected manner. If you react rudely, you may make the situation worse and create further tension between you and your office. |
| Document repeated rude behaviour | If your colleague is behaving rudely on a continuous and repeated basis, you may wish to take a record of their rude behaviour. Not only can this help you to detach yourself from the general situation, but you can also bring up this record if their behaviour suddenly escalates. |
| Try not to take it personally and observe the situation objectively | It is most likely that your colleague generally behaves rudely and is not just doing it to you as a result of some fractious relationship between you both. They may also believe that their behaviour is normal and act in the same way towards all of their colleagues. When you are directly and closely involved, you may find that you are becoming emotionally involved in the situation. |
| Talk to your manager or supervisor | You can always discuss the colleague and their behaviour with a manager, supervisor or human resources member if you feel their behaviour is contributing to a hostile work environment and affecting the morale of other colleagues. Whoever you speak to may even be able to offer some guidance regarding how to deal with them. |



Support

Support can be accessed via:

Human Resources Department

You can contact the Employee Relations team on uhsussex.employee.relations@nhs.net or ext. 67611, 85722 or 32605.

Staff Psychological Support Service

We offer free confidential, one-to-one Counselling, Psychotherapy, EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitisation & Reprocessing) and CBT (Cognitive Behaviour Therapy) to staff.

Our dedicated team work face-to-face across Brighton, Princess Royal, St Richards and Worthing sites, and provide therapy over Microsoft Teams and telephone.

For self-help guides, leaflets & worksheets please access: [Mental wellbeing support for staff](#) If you have been experiencing anxiety, depression, stress, burnout, grief, trauma, or other distressing life events, please self-refer to the service.

Alternatively, contact:

Worthing, St Richards, Southlands Hospitals: **01243 788122 ext. 31624**

Royal Sussex County, Brighton General, Princess Royal Hospitals: **01273 696555 ext. 63692**

Email: uhsussex.staffpsychologicalsupport@nhs.net

ViVUP Employee Assistance programme

The Vivup team are there to listen and support with all personal issues from day-to-day challenges at home, to mounting pressures in the workplace.

This is a 24/7 counselling and online support service where staff can access up to six sessions including the provision of online CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) workbooks and additional support.

To access the service call **0330 380 0658** or go online:

[Access for staff at Worthing, St Richard's, Southlands Hospital.](#)

[Access for staff at Royal Sussex County, Brighton General, Princess Royal Hospitals.](#)

