



## **Batten Disease Family Association CIO Third-party Abuse and Harassment Policy**

Third-party means anyone that the BDFA members of staff interact with as part of their role but who is not employed by the BDFA, for example, service users, contractors, and anyone else BDFA is connected to or do business with.

The BDFA has a zero-tolerance approach to any incident involving harassment or abuse against our employees in line with the Equality Act 2010 and the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974). Any form of abuse is unacceptable, and the BDFA is committed to taking the strongest possible action to tackle any incidents and protect employees.

The BDFA is responsible for ensuring that the working environment for staff is one in which all staff are treated with respect, and any abuse or harassment by third parties is not tolerated. At no point are employees expected to tolerate third-party abuse and harassment and everyone is encouraged to report any abuse immediately through the appropriate reporting channels.

Third-party abuse or harassment can have a severe impact on staff and can lead to feelings of anxiety or fear in the workplace as well as undermine an individual's self-confidence. This in turn can lead to a wide range of issues including physical and/or mental health problems, and in some cases result in staff leaving the BDFA. Whilst the Managers of the BDFA have a responsibility to take action to prevent abusive incidents or harassment, this policy is victim-centered to ensure that victims have a high degree of control over what type of actions are taken to protect them in their role.

BDFA will ensure the safety, protection, and welfare of our staff at all times by:

- Reducing the risk of harassment or abuse of staff
- Making sure arrangements are in place to assess the risk of harassment or abuse against our staff

- Taking appropriate action against the third party who perpetrated the harassment or abuse
- Providing appropriate training and information for staff
- Making sure our management standards are applied consistently
- Making sure staff are aware of their responsibilities
- Providing appropriate support to staff following an abusive or harassing incident
- Maintaining robust recording and management systems for all abuse or harassment incidents Making sure staff who have experienced or witnessed incidents feel able to report them and have the matter treated seriously and dealt with effectively

The BDFFA Third-party Abuse and Harassment policy covers any kind of unwanted behaviour from third parties that humiliates, victimises, or threatens any of our staff, for example:

- Verbal and physical abuse such as spreading malicious rumours without foundation, or insulting someone by word or behaviour
- Abuse and harassment via social media
- Racial slurs
- Unwelcome sexual advances such as touching, standing too close, displaying offensive materials or asking for sexual favours
- Violence or threat of violence
- Discrimination
- Imagery or graffiti
- Jokes or banter
- Copying memos that are critical about someone to others who do not need to know
- Ridiculing or demeaning someone
- Exclusion or victimisation
- Unfair treatment
- Misuse of power or position
- Acts affecting a person's surroundings
- Physical behaviour towards a person or their property

The BDFFA has a legal responsibility to protect their employees from abuse and harassment. If a BDFFA member of staff is at immediate risk steps will be taken to protect the individual and anyone else at risk, including



reporting the incident to the Anti-Social Behaviour Action or Community Safety Teams and the Police.

### **Withdrawing Services**

Services could be withdrawn when there have been:

- Abusive or threatening behaviour towards staff
- Persistent intimidation, bullying or harassment of staff or other service-users despite warnings; and/or
- An actual physical assault on a member of staff or another service-user

The list is not exhaustive.

Date: 01<sup>st</sup> August 2024