

### AHS' Prevention of Harassment and Violence Program Patient-and Family-Centred Language for Addressing Behavioural Concerns

#### Principles

- Your safety matters. You do not need to accept harassment or violence. You are empowered to set safe and healthy boundaries.
- While we cannot always prevent harassment and violence, how we approach people can make a difference.
- Practicing patient-and family centred-care and demonstrating empathy can help us communicate safely with patients, clients, families and visitors.

*Empathy is communicating the message, "You're not alone."*

#### Actions and Scripts

- Always take action to ensure your safety when behavioural emergencies happen (i.e. call for help from Protective Services or law enforcement).
- Consider your body position and the tone of your voice.
  - Be aware of your environment. Know where your exits are. Notice any safety hazards.
  - Check your boundaries. Be aware of the physical space between you and the patient.
  - Take a deep breath before starting the communication. Feel grounded.
  - Have your shoulders back, head up. Make eye contact. Smile.
  - Introduce yourself warmly and with confidence
  - Use "NOD" (Name, Occupation, Duty) or explain your purpose in being there
- If a patient is irritable or frustrated, check in with them. If you can, address their needs before your care goals.
- When addressing behaviour – follow three steps:
  - 1) **Validate** how they are feeling
  - 2) **Relate** to what they are experiencing
  - 3) **Collaborate** for safety

Step 1: Validate	Step 2: Relate	Step 3: Collaborate
<p>"You seem frustrated. How are you doing?"</p> <p>"We're here for you. It's important that you talk to us so we can help address your concerns."</p> <p>"What about this experience are you finding the most difficult?"</p> <p>"What matters to you right now?"</p> <p>"Needing healthcare is tough. You're not alone."</p> <p>"This really stinks and it is ok to feel bad about it."</p>	<p>"That sounds really difficult. I can see why you're feeling that way. If I were in your situation I'd likely feel frustrated as well."</p> <p>"I hear you are feeling _____ because _____. I'd like to see what we can do to make this easier for you."</p> <p>"The [yelling/swearing/etc] is making it hard for me to assist you, and makes me feel unsafe."</p> <p>"This is really difficult - but you still have some control. It is your choice how we proceed with _____"</p>	<p>"Is there anything you need that would be helpful?"</p> <p>"Have you had a hard time managing your anger and frustration in the past?"</p> <p>"When you have stopped [yelling/swearing] and I feel safe to do so, I will continue to assist you with this issue."</p> <p>"Our time together will go well if we both follow some rules. I will respect you – and please respect me. It is important to me that we each say please and thank you. I am happy to help you but please ask, not demand things of me."</p>