Managing Challenging Behaviours

Merylin Cross, Heather Bridgman, Joy Hills, Mark Kirschbaum, Judy Spencer | April 2014
Introduction

This learning resource package provides:
- Learning materials aimed at the individual clinician/student seeking to update his/her skills in managing challenging behaviours.
- A lesson plan and accompanying resources for health professional facilitators to conduct workshops on managing challenging behaviours.
- Opportunities for clinicians, students and facilitators to introduce, include and practice interprofessional learning in the practice setting.

The package consists of:
- *Managing challenging behaviours* booklet (this one).
- *Managing challenging behaviours: PowerPoint presentation.*
- *Managing challenging behaviours: Recommended readings.*
- *A Guide to Developing Simulated Interprofessional Learning Activities.*

The package is written for:
- Clinicians and students seeking to individually update their knowledge and skills related to identifying triggers and managing challenging behaviours.
- Workshop facilitators presenting workshops in managing challenging behaviours. The package aims to foster interprofessional learning (IPL) where appropriate to recognise the issues and perspectives of others and harness the knowledge and insights of other members of the health care team.

The material presented incorporates evidence available at the time of compilation in 2013 when the learning resources and workshops were piloted.

What do you want to do?

**Update my skills and knowledge about managing challenging behaviours:**
- Read and watch the material presented in the *Managing challenging behaviours: PowerPoint presentation.*
- Read the recommended readings, section of this booklet and *Managing challenging behaviours: Recommended reading.*

**Facilitate a workshop on managing challenging behaviours:**
- Read this *Managing challenging behaviours booklet*; tailor the workshop materials provided at the back of the booklet to suit your purpose, organisational policies and current evidence.
- Adapt the *Managing challenging behaviours: PowerPoint presentation* as the basis for your workshop.
- Read the *Managing challenging behaviours: Recommended reading.*

**Learn more about developing simulated interprofessional learning activities:**
- Read *A Guide to Developing Simulated Interprofessional Learning Activities.*

**Suggest that my workplace hosts a staff development session for staff who want to update their understanding and ability to manage challenging behaviours.**

The *Learning resource package: Managing challenging behaviours* is a professional development learning resource aimed at health care workers and students wishing to develop and/or update their knowledge and skills regarding dealing with people presenting challenging behaviour.
Workshop Plan

1. Description of the Activity

From time to time, it is likely that in rural and remote practice settings as in any health care setting, that you will experience situations where people display challenging or even threatening and aggressive behaviour. Sometimes staff, clients, their family members, friends or community members have a range of issues that they carry with them which can cause them to become emotionally fragile or volatile; particularly when under duress. As health care workers you need to recognise this and be sensitive to situations that can trigger, exacerbate challenging behaviour or escalate conflict such as: irritation, frustration, anger, fear or arousal. The agency you work with will have policies and procedures for dealing with conflict, aggression, verbal abuse, bullying and violence which you need to be familiar with to ensure the safety of all involved.

As workers in remote and rural health care services you will need knowledge, skills, and tools to assess, monitor and manage a range of people presenting with challenging behaviours related to a variety of issues. The types of people manifesting challenging behaviours may include: children, youth, adults, elderly, demented, mentally unwell, drug or substance-affected or addicted, psychotic, disabled, intellectually impaired, and culturally and linguistically diverse clients as well as their family members and friends. Assessing and managing challenging behaviour is an important function of health care work as it assists staff to: work with colleagues in a healthy and harmonious workplace environment; understand clients and their issues; and to identify and manage challenging behaviours of a clients’ family or friends such that people and property are not harmed.

There are both formal and informal methods to observe, assess and monitor behaviour, the selection and use of which will depend on the practices, policies and procedures of the agency you work with.

Part 1a provides general tips for:
- Understanding the personal, environmental, physiological, pharmacological and mental health factors that trigger and/or influence challenging behaviour;
- Developing strategies to assess challenging behaviour;
- Making appropriate decisions to prevent, defuse, de-escalate challenging situations based on organisational policies and procedural requirements; and
- Seeking back-up support and/or specialist advice and/or referrals.

Part 1b looks at strategies for communicating effectively with staff, clients and family members/friends, identifies triggers and provides opportunities to practice problem-solving techniques and negotiation skills.

Part 2 will assist you to understand and develop skills to handle challenging situations and prevent the escalation of violence. It provides some basic tips that will help you to protect yourself and others, access assistance, self-care and enlist follow-up support.

Simulation (such as role play) provides a safe and effective environment for a student/health professional to learn and practice new skills, or refresh and update existing knowledge and skills.

2. Participants

This learning resource package will be available to medical, nursing and allied health professionals and non-clinical staff employed at University of Tasmania Rural Health Teaching Sites. Students who are undertaking a rural or remote placement at one of these sites will also be invited to participate or undertake this learning package.

3. Simulation/Scenarios

The activities used in this session are based around case studies, group activities and role plays.
4. Learning objectives/outcomes
On completion of this activity participants should be able to:
1. Manage challenging behaviours with more confidence.
2. Describe how your behaviour can affect others.
3. Use skills to defuse challenging situations with the aim of negating the need for physical interventions.
4. Describe and explain the common causes/triggers of challenging behaviour.
5. Describe the importance of working within the law and of following your organisation’s policies relating to conflict, aggression and challenging behaviours.
6. Explain the importance of the debriefing process and self-care following critical incidents.

Interprofessional learning objectives/outcomes
Having completed this activity participants should be able to:
1. Develop a broad evidence-based knowledge of managing challenging behaviours and respect the contribution of practitioners from other disciplines.
2. Appreciate the benefits of working effectively with people from other disciplines and backgrounds.
3. Communicate appropriately with other members of the health care team to maintain harmonious working relations and a safe working environment for patients/residents, staff and community members.
4. Listen to and evaluate the views of others such that decision-making is informed and you respond appropriately to de-escalate challenging situations.

5. Teaching and Learning Methods
- Face-to-face lecture or tutorial
- Simulated learning experiences (role play)
- PowerPoint presentation
- Case studies/scenarios
- Feedback and debrief
- Group discussions
- Online short video clips

6. Activity and Required Equipment
For this simulated learning activity role play, paper-based scenarios and video clips are utilised.

7. Program (teaching/learning plan)
The workshop program (teaching/learning plan) has been developed as a four hour session that can be held at a time that best suits the organisation and staff scheduling. The introduction includes instructions to participants and an outline of the sequence of events. The learning activities in this workshop are based on principles of adult learning and therefore participants will be required to take an active role in their preparation for the event. The teaching and learning plan is discussed further in 3.8, 3.9, and 3.10 of the Guide to Developing Simulated Interprofessional Learning Activities (part of this learning DVD). A sample program for a morning or afternoon session is shown overleaf.

Participants will be asked to complete an attendance record a) for their individual professional portfolio and b) so that the organisation can meet formal reporting requirements. They will also be asked to complete an evaluation form to ascertain the relevance and usefulness of the workshop.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0900 hrs or 1300 hrs</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0915 hrs or 1315 hrs</td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
<td>Part 1a: Understanding factors that trigger challenging behaviour and strategies to assess and manage challenging behaviours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000 hrs or 1400 hrs</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1015 hrs or 1415 hrs</td>
<td>60 minutes</td>
<td>Part 1b: Strategies for communicating effectively in challenging situations, identifying triggers, and practising problem-solving techniques and negotiation skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1115 hrs or 1515 hrs</td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
<td>Part 2: Skills for handling challenging situations, preventing escalation of violence and tips to protect self and others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1215 hrs or 1600 hrs</td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
<td>Debrief and evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Debrief

The plus-delta technique (Jolly, Nestel, Sprick, 2012 NHET-Sim program: www.nhet-sim.edu.au) is a simple two-step approach suitable for brief, in-house time-limited situations. This approach to debrief focuses on a) what worked well and b) what needs to be strengthened. It involves brainstorming and recording on a whiteboard/butcher’s paper various behaviours listed in two columns. The plus column is used to identify behaviours and actions that were successful during the simulation and the delta (Greek word for change) column is used to identify and discuss what can be improved and how the actions can be changed in the future (see Fanning & Gaba, 2007, in the Guide to Developing Interprofessional Simulated Learning Activities). A guide to debrief is described in 3.11 of the Guide to Developing Simulated Interprofessional Learning Activities.

9. Assessment of learning

For the purpose of this workshop there is no formalised assessment. A certificate of attendance will be given to each participant as evidence of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points. This is discussed further in 3.12 of the Guide to Developing Simulated Interprofessional Learning Activities.

10. Evaluation of learning activity

All learning activities should be evaluated to provide evidence of their efficacy and to justify the contribution they make to professional development, clinical learning and practice. Each participant will be asked to complete an evaluation form in relation to this workshop. This is discussed further in 3.13 of the Guide to Developing Simulated Interprofessional Learning Activities.

11. Relevant Readings

- Cady, C 1992, Training for personal safety at work, Gower, Aldershot, UK.
- Cava, R 2003, Dealing with difficult situations: At work and at home, Pan Macmillan Australia, Sydney.
• Cole, K 1993, Crystal clear communication: Skills for understanding and being understood, Prentice Hall, Adelaide, SA.
• Le Mon, C 1997, Assert yourself, Gower Publishing, Aldershot, UK.
• Malouf, D 2002, Power up your people skills: Communicating in the new millennium, Allen & Unwin, NSW.
• Merritt, L 2003, Talking the talk: communicate with persuasion, panache and passion, Choice Books, NSW.
Workshop Resources

These resources are attached on the following pages and are provided as MS Word files on the accompanying DVD. Please customise the materials by making appropriate substitutions where necessary (e.g. date, time, location and facilitators).

1. Sample Workshop Program (CB workshop program.docx)
2. Sample Workshop Certificate of Attendance (CB certificate of attendance.docx)
3. Sample Workshop Evaluation form (CB workshop evaluation.docx)
4. Sample Workshop Attendance list (CB attendance sheet.docx)
Resource 1: Sample Managing Challenging Behaviours workshop program
Resource 2: Sample Managing Challenging Behaviours workshop Certificate of Attendance

Certificate of Attendance

Insert Name

Participated in a 4 hour workshop

Managing Challenging Behaviours

at Insert Place on Insert date

Presented by Insert name
Insert presenter’s organisation

HealthWorkforce Australia
An Australian Government Initiative

UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

This project was possible due to the funding made available by HealthWorkforce Australia, an Australian Government initiative.
**Resource 3: Sample Managing Challenging Behaviours workshop evaluation form**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prior to the workshop I rated my competence in dealing with challenging behaviour as excellent</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The workshop improved my knowledge and skills in dealing with challenging behaviour</td>
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<tr>
<td>Following the workshop I can see ways to strengthen my practice in managing clients with behavioural problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Following the workshop I feel more knowledgeable and confident about dealing with challenging behaviours</td>
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<tr>
<td>I feel more confident about detecting problems before they arise and initiating suitable action</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would recommend this workshop to colleagues</td>
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<tr>
<td>The PowerPoint presentation was informative and easy to follow</td>
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<tr>
<td>The presenter was knowledgeable and informative</td>
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<tr>
<td>The presenter provided an environment that was conducive to my learning where I felt safe to ask questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>The activities and role plays were very valuable</td>
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<td>The simulated learning environment was a valuable learning tool</td>
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<tr>
<td>The video provided an effective illustration of challenging behaviour</td>
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<tr>
<td>The scenarios/role plays added to my learning</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The training was clinically and practically relevant to my workplace (staff only)</td>
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</table>

Other comments/Suggestions for improvement.
Resource 4: Sample Managing Challenging Behaviours attendance sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Staff/Student</th>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Year Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.g. Anne Doe</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>(Student only)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>