New Road Psychotherapy

New Road Psychotherapy Health and Safety Policy

Introduction

This policy outlines New Road Psychotherapy's (NRP) commitment to protecting the health, safety and well-being of staff, practitioners, clients and visitors. It sets out the arrangements and responsibilities for maintaining a safe working environment.

General Health and Safety Principles

- NRP will identify and assess health and safety risks and take appropriate steps to manage them.
- Safety measures will be reviewed regularly and updated in line with relevant requirements and changes to the premises or working arrangements.
- Staff and practitioners will be provided with relevant safety information and are expected to follow agreed procedures and report concerns.

Safe Environment

- All areas must be kept clean and free from obstructions.
- Regular safety checks will be conducted on equipment and facilities.
- Proper ventilation, heating and lighting must be maintained.

Hygiene

- Regular cleaning of all surfaces will be conducted to maintain hygiene.

Accessibility

- Our consulting rooms require stairs to access. Unfortunately, there is currently no wheelchair access. Online therapy is also available.

Mental Health and Well-Being

- NRP aims to provide a supportive working environment where staff and practitioners can raise concerns about their well-being.

- Staff and practitioners are encouraged to consider their workload and work-life balance and to seek support when needed.
- Supervision, peer support and access to relevant resources can help support well-being and address the emotional demands of therapeutic work.

Confidentiality

- All client information will be handled confidentially and in accordance with data protection requirements.

Support for Staff and Practitioners

- Regular supervision and opportunities for professional development will be offered in line with each person's role and agreed arrangements.
- The well-being of staff and practitioners will be prioritised, acknowledging the emotionally demanding nature of the work.

Procedures for Critical Incidents

These procedures cover critical incidents, including violent or aggressive behaviour, to protect the safety and well-being of everyone on the premises.

Critical incidents are events that pose a significant risk to health or safety, such as physical violence, verbal threats or behaviour that may lead to harm.

Response Procedures

- If safe to do so, de-escalation techniques should be used, including calm communication and maintaining a safe distance.
- If a situation cannot be safely de-escalated, staff and practitioners must prioritise their safety and that of others. They should leave the premises if safe to do so, alerting other people in the building where safe and appropriate.
- Once at a safe distance, emergency services should be contacted if necessary, with clear details of the incident and location provided.

Incident Reporting

- All critical incidents must be reported promptly to the Centre Manager and documented in the Critical Incident Report Log.
- A formal incident review will be conducted to identify any improvements needed to safety measures, procedures or training.

Emergency Procedures

These procedures cover emergencies such as fires and medical incidents, with the aim of protecting safety and minimising harm.

First Aid

- First-aid kits will be accessible, and staff will be trained in basic first-aid procedures.

Evacuation Plans

- Clear evacuation procedures will be established and regularly reviewed.
- Fire safety equipment must be maintained and tested regularly.

Incident Reporting

- All accidents and incidents must be reported promptly to the Centre Manager, and appropriate records must be maintained.

Lone Working

NRP recognises that practitioners may work alone at either of our premises when providing therapy, undertaking administrative tasks or working outside core practice hours. We are committed to assessing and managing the risks associated with lone working, in line with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and to supporting practitioners to work safely.

Flexible Working and Scheduling

- Practitioners have access to the practice diary and are responsible for managing their own schedules and booking sessions in accordance with their availability and professional commitments.
- Practitioners can choose when they work and whether to offer appointments at times when they may be working alone. Practitioners are not required to work alone and should consider their own circumstances, comfort and safety when arranging appointments.
- Practitioners are responsible for being aware of when they may be working alone and for following the procedures set out in this policy.
- Placement students must work within the requirements of their placement, their level of experience and the supervision arrangements agreed with NRP. Students should not work alone on the premises unless this has been agreed in advance with the Centre Manager.

Safety Precautions When Working Alone

- Practitioners should ensure they have a charged mobile phone available and accessible while working alone.
- Practitioners should familiarise themselves with the premises, emergency exits, evacuation procedures and available first-aid facilities.
- Consulting rooms should be arranged so that the practitioner has a clear route to the door.
- The practice door should remain secured, and unknown or unvetted visitors should not be admitted to the premises.
- Practitioners should consider any known risks associated with a client and discuss concerns through supervision or with the Centre Manager before proceeding with a session where appropriate. Where little is known about a new client, practitioners should consider holding initial sessions when others are in the building, or online.
- Where a practitioner is concerned about a client's behaviour or feels unsafe, they should prioritise their safety, end the session if necessary, leave the premises if safe to do so and contact emergency services on 999 where appropriate, in line with the Procedures for Critical Incidents above.
- Practitioners should make the Centre Manager aware of any health condition that may affect their safety when working alone, so that suitable arrangements can be agreed.

Check-In and Communication

- Before working alone, practitioners should let a nominated contact, such as a colleague, the Centre Manager or a trusted person of their choosing, know which premises they are working at, their expected finish time and how they will confirm they have left safely.
- If an expected check-in is missed, the nominated contact should try to reach the practitioner by phone. If contact cannot be made within an agreed time, they should contact the Centre Manager and, if there is still no contact and cause for concern, call the emergency services with the practitioner's location.
- Practitioners and their nominated contact may agree a code word or phrase that can be used during a call to signal that help is needed without alerting the client.
- Practitioners should always know who to contact if they need assistance and what steps will be taken if an expected check-in is missed.

Incident Reporting

- Any incidents, near misses or concerns relating to lone working must be reported to the Centre Manager and recorded in the Critical Incident Report Log so that appropriate action can be taken.

Responsibilities

- NRP will assess and review risks associated with lone working, provide relevant safety information and procedures, and respond to reported concerns. The flexibility offered to practitioners does not remove NRP's responsibility to assess and manage workplace health and safety risks.
- Practitioners are expected to follow agreed safety arrangements and take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their work.
- Lone-working arrangements will be reviewed as part of the annual policy review and as necessary, including following an incident, a significant change in working arrangements or the identification of new risks.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to reflect changes in legal requirements, working arrangements or identified risks.

Conclusion

Maintaining a safe environment is a shared responsibility. NRP encourages staff and practitioners to raise concerns promptly so that risks can be addressed and appropriate support provided.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy, please contact the Centre Manager at:
admin@newroadpsychotherapy.com

Effective Date:
4 June 2024

Last Updated:
September 2026