

VOLUNTEERS / FRONTLINE OFFICERS:

Persons Experiencing Agitation

Action

There can be numerous triggers behind a person's agitation. Keep in mind that agitated persons perceive their triggers as reality. Do not dismiss their thoughts or ridicule it. When interacting with agitated persons, take note of the following actions.

- **Remain calm and composed**
- **Approach slowly**

You may say

I can see that you are angry, do you want to share what is making you feel this way?

- **Do not challenge their delusion**

You may say

I can't see them but I know you can and I am here to help you.

Avoid saying

*It is all in your head, you are not well!
You need to see a doctor!*



Saying "It's not real" can stop communication or make things worse.

- **Avoid sudden movements**
- **Remove any objects that could be used as weapons or cause harm**
- **Use verbal commands to calm situation**

Speech

Once we've established a reasonable rapport with the person, try to involve him or her in problem solving.

Be honest, express your feelings and ask questions respectfully. Acknowledge their feelings without reinforcing their beliefs.

- **One message at a time**
- **Keep statements short, specific, and clear.**
- **Be honest and use "I"**

You may say

- ***I'm concerned by what you are seeing.***
- ***How may I help you?***

- **Avoid using confrontational statements**
- **Identify the cause and remove the trigger**
- **Don't panic if you make a mistake**

You may reattempt by saying

I'm sorry if I said the wrong thing. Can we start again?

Safety

- **Scan the environment for potential hazards as well as establish an exit point**
- **When required, keep safe distance, and move away from the situation if needed**
- **Refrain from attending to the person alone**

If there are safety concerns for either yourself or the person, contact the authorities or the police for help.

If you are aware of any safety concerns beforehand, do prepare a safety plan before engaging the person. The safety plan should include contacting the authorities and / or escorting the person to the A&E for medical assistance.