

## Process for Debriefing Challenging Interactions

Challenging Interactions that are severe in nature should be debriefed shortly after the event, while the details and observations are still fresh in the minds of everyone involved.

As a team, it is important to come together for all voices to be heard, and have all voices heard in order to not only support the individual served, but to support each other.

The goal of this session will be to both learn from the experience, and provide better support for each other and the person served in the future.

When proceeding with the debriefing process, the environment should be in private, and should not set a tone to place blame or create feelings of defensiveness with anyone involved.

Leadership should ensure that for all parties to learn and grow from the event that occurred, everyone should feel that they are mutually supported. It is crucial to create a feeling of safety in participation of this debrief, and a feeling of safety with the presenter of this debrief.

Much can be learned when we re-trace our steps, and start back at the beginning. Creating a time-line of the entire shift leading up to the event can often provide helpful or crucial information that may have been initially missed or overlooked. One suggestion would be to utilize a dry-erase board or any other medium that would be easy to review as a team, and follow the suggested outline below:

1. Create a visual time line starting from the time the staff involved started their shifts until the end of the challenging interaction, and the person served/environment have both returned to baseline.
2. As a team, circle the actions and words of staff that we like, and things we would use again.
3. As a team, looked for subtle cues that may have been prompting events/triggers.
4. As a team, circled (with a different color) the actions and words of staff that we think made the situation worse, not better. Brainstorm together why these actions/words were not effective.
5. Come up with some new proactive ways to attend to our person, ways you can reduce demands that were placed, ways you can improve positive interactions in the future, and some ways to communicate to your person that "you are safe and you are cared for" to use during the heat of a potential future situation.
6. Create ways staff can begin to feel safer in this environment.

Another option for debriefing with staff is to follow the Debriefing Tool which is attached with this handout. Next, we will identify some questions to ask while in the debriefing process.



### Questions that can be asked during the debriefing process:

- What happened?
- What was going on leading up to the incident/challenge?
- Was there a schedule of activities or structure in place? Were you able to follow it?
- What else was going on in the environment (noise level, activity, other people)?
- How did you intervene with the challenging behavior/interaction?
- How did the person served respond to your intervention?
- What was done to help make the person feel safe afterward?
- What do you think went right during your interaction?
- Is there something said/done that possibly made the situation worse than it could've been?
- Is there something that could've been said/done that might have made the situation better?
- Was there any indications that the person was not feeling safe?
- Is there something that could have been done earlier to prevent the situation?
- Were there other staff present during the incident? What was their level of involvement?
- Is there anything staff can do to better support each other on shift?
- What training/support can we provide to help you feel safer should this situation occur in the future?

