DOLAN'S PODIATRY

Lone Working & Personal Safety Policy

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1. Purpose

Dolan's Podiatry is a sole-practitioner service. I may work alone at my main clinic, pop-up clinics, community venues, care homes and other premises.

This policy sets out the arrangements I use to protect my own safety and the safety of patients when working alone.

2. General principles

I will:

- assess the suitability and safety of premises before providing treatment;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries;
- ensure I have access to a working telephone;
- ensure that emergency arrangements are known and accessible;
- avoid knowingly placing myself or a patient at unreasonable risk;
- trust my professional judgement if a situation feels unsafe;
- postpone, terminate or relocate an appointment where necessary for safety.

3. Before a clinic or appointment

I will consider:

- safe access and exit;
- lighting;
- whether doors can be opened safely;
- availability of a telephone signal;
- emergency exits and fire arrangements;
- privacy;
- whether there are other people present;
- whether the environment is suitable for the patient's needs;
- any known risks associated with the patient or location.

At pop-up clinics, I will familiarise myself with the venue's emergency procedures where these are available.

4. Patient-related risks

Where a patient presents a known or anticipated increased risk, I will consider whether additional arrangements are required.

This may include:

- arranging for another person to be present;
- asking the patient to bring an appropriate companion or carer;
- using a different appointment time or location;
- contacting another professional;
- declining or postponing treatment where it cannot safely be provided.

5. Aggression, threatening behaviour or unacceptable conduct

I have the right to end an appointment if a patient or accompanying person behaves in a threatening, abusive or otherwise unsafe manner.

I will remain calm, avoid confrontation and attempt to de-escalate the situation where possible.

If I believe that I or another person is in immediate danger, I will leave the area if safe to do so and contact the police.

Emergency: 999

6. Medical emergencies

If a patient becomes acutely unwell, I will provide appropriate immediate assistance within my competence and contact emergency services where required.

Emergency: 999

I will not allow concerns about disrupting a clinic or appointment schedule to delay necessary emergency action.

7. Lone working at home or other isolated locations

Where I am working alone in a location with limited immediate assistance, I will take reasonable precautions including:

- keeping my phone accessible;
- ensuring I know how to leave the premises;
- avoiding unnecessary personal information being disclosed to patients;
- maintaining professional boundaries;

- ending an appointment if I feel unsafe.

8. Incident recording

Any significant safety incident, threatening behaviour, accident, injury or near miss will be recorded and reviewed.

Where appropriate, I will also report the incident to the venue, insurer, police or another relevant organisation.

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner following a significant incident or change to the way the practice operates.

Signed: _____
Date: _____