

Trauma Informed Approaches

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Author:	Jan De-Vyott
Reviewed By	Tom O'Boye
Verified By	Toni Nye
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1. **Introduction**

- 1.1. A trauma-informed approach can be implemented in any type of service setting or organisation and is distinct from trauma-specific interventions or treatments that are designed specifically to address the consequences of trauma and to facilitate rehabilitation and healing. Trauma-informed approaches are ways of supporting people that recognise specific needs they may have because of previous or ongoing trauma. Trauma can arise from many places and past experiences; anyone can suffer the effects of trauma at any time within their lives and the impacts of this are subjective.
- 1.2. This policy aims to ensure the people who use and work within our service are treated in line with a trauma informed approach, are protected from intentional re-traumatisation and each person's psychological safety and well-being is maintained through informed practice.

2. **Aims**

- 2.1. The aim of providing a Trauma Informed Approach policy shows that Keystage Housing are committed to delivering services rich in the principles of being trauma informed. This will ensure that staff and service users accessing our services are less likely to suffer the impact of trauma or behaviours which are a trigger for becoming re-traumatised.

3. **Scope**

- 3.1. The aim of this policy is to ensure that throughout the work of Keystage Housing services we will safeguard and promote the welfare of staff and service users through trauma informed practices.
- 3.2. All Keystage Housing services are committed to implementing this policy and the approach that it sets out. The services will provide learning opportunities and make provision for appropriate Trauma Informed Approaches training to all staff. This policy will be made widely accessible to staff.
- 3.3. This policy addresses the responsibilities of all employees. It is the responsibility of the senior leadership team, to monitor the agenda relating to Trauma informed approaches and to lead all staff on their responsibilities under the policy.

4. **Philosophy & Delivery**

- 4.1. Trauma-Informed Practice has a strengths-based approach, which seeks to understand and respond to the impact of trauma on people's lives. The approach emphasises physical, psychological, and emotional safety for everyone and aims to empower individuals to re-establish control of their lives. Environments are viewed as an overall underpinning factor when discussing the approach, therefore, psychologically informed environments (PIEs) are services where the day-to-day running has been designed to take the psychological and emotional needs of people with these experiences into account.
- 4.2. Having a basic understanding of how stress can affect an individual is important. Knowing this will make us less likely to fuel other people's stress levels. This means paying attention to 'how' we engage with other people, as well as to 'what' we do. It also means thinking about what may have happened to someone, rather than judging what is 'wrong' with them.
- 4.3. For an organisation to be Trauma Informed will mean that they acknowledge that:
 - 4.3.1. Trauma is subjective and defined by the individual's unique experience of an event or situation.
 - 4.3.2. Trauma can occur as a result of experiences that may have been repeated throughout a person's life – this is known as complex trauma.



4.3.3. Trauma can impact a person's emotional, psychological, physiological and social wellbeing.

4.3.4. Anyone can suffer the symptoms of trauma.

4.4. According to the concept of a trauma-informed approach, "A program, organisation, or system that is trauma-informed:

4.4.1. Realises the widespread impacts of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery;

4.4.2. Recognises the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system;

4.4.3. Responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices; and

4.4.4. Seeks to actively resist re-traumatisation."

5. **Core Principles**

5.1. A trauma-informed approach reflects adherence to five key principles rather than a prescribed set of practices or procedures. These principles may be generalised across multiple types of settings, although terminology and application may be setting- or sector-specific.

5.1.1. Safety – Ensuring psychological & physical safety

5.1.2. Trust & Empathy – Developing understanding and caring relationships which are boundaries.

5.1.3. Choice – The individual has choice control.

5.1.4. Collaboration – Making decisions together and sharing ideas.

5.1.5. Empowerment – Creating an environment where the individual feels validated and acknowledged.

5.2. Keystage Housing is a Trauma Informed organisation which follows the philosophy and principles of the approach. The company delivers services which are aligned to Trauma Informed Care (TIC) complimenting the overall Psychologically Informed Environment (PIE) within all of our services.

6. **Training**

6.1. Keystage Housing will ensure that all staff receive training in Trauma Informed Approaches. This training will teach staff what the principles of the approach are, how to recognise trauma and the reasons for its prevalence and how to effectively develop their skills and contribute to building a service-wide psychologically informed environment. The training will also address how staff can develop and implement proactive, usable strategies for service users who may have suffered multiple traumas as well as acknowledging personal trauma. On occasion additional specialist or outsourced training may have to be sourced and provided for staff.

7. **Monitoring and Review**

7.1. Line Managers and team leaders will be responsible for general monitoring of these guidelines. Transgression will be reviewed with individual staff members, but in some cases, it may be appropriate to record examples for discussion as part of staff training or discussion at team meetings.

7.2. Significant and/or repeated breaches of this policy will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

