**Residents’ Assembly on Data and AI Innovation Distress Protocol**

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**Adapted from the University of Manchester’s Distress protocol - Patient and public involvement and engagement (PPIE)**

Whilst it is unlikely that participation at the Residents Assembly will result in a distressing situation, it is important to follow this protocol for any potential distress for participants and staff.

## **Before the Assembly**

Prior to taking part in the Assembly participants will be fully informed that they are working in a safe environment. A formal University risk assessment has been conducted prior to the Assembly in collaboration with the venue.

Each table facilitator will undergo at minimum three additional hours of training including training on this distress protocol and how to manage difficult conversations. Each table facilitator is a University of Liverpool staff member with qualitative research conduct or public facilitation experience and training.

## **During the Assembly and Induction**

Every participant will receive a 1-hour induction to ask questions. The participant information sheet will be provided to all participants at least one week prior to that induction.

*During the induction and the first discussion session of the Assembly, the facilitators will explain the process if a participant would like to take a break. We will explain that it can be common for people to feel this way and that it is absolutely fine if anyone needs to leave the group for a few minutes to take some time. A meeting room is available for participants who need time away, there is also a multi-faith prayer room available, and a quiet coffee space. Participants will be offered the opportunity to debrief if they request it after each assembly. The team will be available up to two hours after the session ends with space in the main meeting room for quiet discussion. These optional debriefs will always include two members of staff.*

**Participants will also be informed of and requested to follow a code of conduct, printed versions of the code of conduct will be listed on each table and included in the participant information sheet.**

**Residents Assembly Code of Conduct** (adapted from University of Liverpool’s The Academy Code of Conduct events guidance):

1. The facilitators are committed to providing a friendly, respectful and welcoming environment for all and to ensure a harassment-free experience for everyone. We request all participants be treated with dignity and respect.
2. Participants are encouraged to positively challenge, debate and engage in constructive dialogue in an environment where ideas can be safely shared and discussed.
3. Harassment of participants in any form will not be tolerated at any point during talks, workshops, breaks, sessions or on online media.
4. If a participant engages in behaviour that falls outside of the code of conduct, the facilitators may take any action they deem appropriate, including warning the individual(s) or expulsion from the session.
5. Participants must not share any personal information shared by other participants in the session outside of the session.
6. If you are being harassed, notice that someone else is being harassed, or have any other concerns, please contact a member of University staff immediately. University staff will be identified at the start of the session.
7. The facilitators aim to create a collaborative environment where everyone’s voice can be heard and thank you for your cooperation.

**Distress protocol**

Should a participant report or show signs of distress or feel uncomfortable (e.g. getting upset) during the Assembly, the following actions will need be taken by the staff contact. **In all instances please seek support from the primary facilitator: Emily Rempel.**

## **Step 1**

* Suggest that they take a break, have a drink of water, go to a separate room etc.
* Ask them how they are feeling, listen with empathy and offer support. If the participant doesn’t want to discuss something or doesn’t want to take a break then they must be respected. We will not try to get more information on that subject or delay the break.

**Step 2**

* If they would like to continue, explain that they can take a break from the Assembly at any time. The table facilitator will offer continued support and/or signpost them to further support external to the University.
* If the participant would like to stop or appears highly distressed please follow the actions in **Step 3.**

## **Step 3**

* Facilitators should stop the table discussionfor:
  + **Mild distress:** Encourage the participant to speak to **Dr Emily Rempel or Grace Reed** for support OR offer to do so for the participant.
  + **Moderate distress:** Immediately inform or offer to call a family member or friend andask them to come and collect the participant.Stay with the participant until they arrive.
  + **High distress that does not put staff at risk of harm:** Staff contact to phone hotel security (contact number available in the conference room) and then immediately 999 if necessary for assistance. Remain with the participant until they arrive unless it is unsafe for the facilitator to do so.
  + **Unsocial behaviour and/or high distress that puts staff at risk of harm:** the facilitators may take any action they deem appropriate, including warning the individual(s) or expulsion from the session.
    - **Staff must follow official University guidance on seeking immediate help and safety**

1. If you are in immediate danger or seriously injured call 999
2. If you call 999 and are unable to talk remain silent and press 55. There will be a recorded message and you must press 55 to confirm you need help.
3. Do not intervene in any situation if it is not safe to do so, do not put yourself at risk.

## **Step 4**

## **Follow-up actions for mild or moderate participant distress:**

The following will be conducted by Emily Rempel and Grace Reed if a participant leaves a session due to mild or moderate distress:

* Offer to follow them up with a phone call the following day.
* Offer them the opportunity to withdraw from their involvement.
* Recommend the participant contacts external support services if they continue to feel distressed (see below for useful contacts)
* Consider whether any members of staff may require any emotional support and make the necessary arrangements.

## **Follow-up actions for unsocial behaviour and/or high distress that puts staff at risk of harm**

* Staff should follow the appropriate University procedures for reporting including informing line managers and additionally at: <https://reportandsupport.liverpool.ac.uk/>

## **Where to go for signposting, advice, and guidance:**

**Staff:** A list of University support services for staff and students: <https://reportandsupport.liverpool.ac.uk/>

**Participants:** University staff cannot offer direct recommendations below but can provide the following resources as potential sources of additional support beyond participant’s own support contacts. This list will be printed and available for participants to take with them, as well a printed copy will be available at each table.

* **The Hub of Hope**
  + An online resource, provided by Chasing the Stigma, developed to support individuals with mental health issues and to signpost them to local services. Users undertake a postcode search to find out what support services are available locally. Website: [hubofhope.co.uk/](https://hubofhope.co.uk/)
* **Urgent mental health support:** [**https://www.merseycare.nhs.uk/urgent-help**](https://www.merseycare.nhs.uk/urgent-help)
  + Free, confidential, 24/7 text message support:
* **Liverpool and Sefton**
  + HEAL text service - Text HEAL to 85258 for immediate support, available 24/7.
* **Halton, Knowsley, St Helens and Warrington**
  + REACH text service (for children, young people and adults) - Text REACH to 85258 for immediate support, available 24/7.
* **Samaritans** – free confidential 24-hour listening service for any individuals feeling distress or despair. You can call them for free on: 116 123 or email them on jo@samaritans.org. You can also find out more information about the Samaritans’ services at www.samaritans.org.
* **MIND** – provide excellent advice on what services are available for people with mental health problems as well as provide links to information and real-life stories from survivors. Visit www.mind.org.uk or call the helpline on 0300 123 3393 which is open between 9am and 6pm Monday to Friday.
* **Carers** **UK** – provide a range of advice from financial help to information about local carer support groups. For more information, visit www.carersuk.org or call their advice line for free on 0808 808 7777 between 10am and 4pm on Mondays and Tuesdays.
* **SHOUT** - the UK’s first 24/7 text service, free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. If you’re anxious, worried, or stressed, text 85258 for help.
* **CALM** (Campaign Against Living Miserably) – provides support for men who want to improve their mental health. Please visit www.thecalmzone.net or call the free helpline between 5pm and midnight on 0800 58 58 58.
* **42nd Street** is a reputable charity offering a social work and counselling service for under 25s. For more information, visit http://42ndstreet.org.uk/.
* **Support after suicide** – a helpful website that can give emotional and practical support at www.supportaftersuicide.org.uk.
* **Sanline** – is a national mental health helpline providing information and support to people with mental health problems and those who support them. Call them on 0300 304 7000 between 4:30pm and 10:30pm or visit http://www.sane.org.uk.
* **StepChange** – is a debt charity that can provide useful information and links to resources when you need emergency help with money and food. Visit the website for more information: https://www.stepchange.org/debt-info/emergency-funding.aspx.
* **Citizen’s Advice Service** – a website to provide information and resources on topics such as debt, housing problems, immigration and health concerns. Visit the website for more information: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>.