

Quick guidance card for responding to AOD presentations

These cards offer quick, practical guidance for kaimahi responding to AOD-related behavioural presentations.

They outline

- Essential safety checks
- Least-restrictive decision pathways
- De-escalation strategies
- Withdrawal considerations

The cards emphasise

- Mana-enhancing practice
- Involvement of cultural, peer, and whānau supports
- Clear steps for escalation, review, and handover

QR codes on the last card link to key resources for easy access.

Staying calm helps everyone – and if you are not feeling safe, you can always call someone within your team.

De-escalation (least restrictive first)

- Calm, slow, validating communication, ask what helps
- Offer choices (quiet space, water, walk, sensory tools)
- Peer support/whānau/cultural support (with consent)

If escalating despite support → return to crisis/safety pathway

Withdrawal screening

- Use tools appropriate to presentation
- Monitor pattern: tremor, agitation, sweating, vitals, mood, cravings.

Medical review & interventions

- Hydration, nutrition, cooling, rest
- Medications only per withdrawal protocol
- Increase observations if unstable



Staying calm helps everyone – and if you are not feeling safe, you can always call someone within your team.

Least-restrictive decision pathway

Is the person settling?

YES → Continue monitoring, comfort measures, withdrawal plan, whānau/peer support, document patterns for future care.

NO → Increase observations, involve AOD clinicians, and escalate to medical team.

One-to-one support

Use to maintain safety while avoiding seclusion.

- Stay calm, clear, non-threatening
- Continue offering choices
- Reassess vitals + mental state regularly

Seclusion / containment

Only when:

- All de-escalation options exhausted
- There is immediate, serious risk
- Medical causes ruled out or managed

Document: rationale, alternatives attempted, timeframes, reviews.

Cultural & whānau support

- Ask who they want involved
- Offer cultural worker support
- Maintain mana-enhancing, non-judgemental tone

Discharge / handover essentials

- What helped settle them
- Follow-up AOD plan
- Whānau / peer connections
- Safety plan & early-warning signs.



Helpful Resources



**Seclusion Reduction
Guidance – Ministry of
Health**



**Harm Reduction & AOD
Info – The Level (NZ Drug
Foundation)**

