

5 Steps

How to respond to someone who is agitated...

Listen

- Don't interrupt or offer opinions. Let them know you are focussed on understanding their point of view.

Maintain calm body language

- Be aware of your facial expressions, tone of voice, posture and gestures.
Make sure they are not threatening or challenging.

Keep your own feelings in check

- Be aware of reacting based on your emotions. Use phrases such as “that sounds really difficult for you”; this will remind both of you that you are not their problem.

Know your limits

- Don't hold back from asking a colleague for help.
Try to avoid helping someone who is drug-affected – offer to call them back later.

Follow policy

- If matters escalate, follow the policy that your centre has set up for situations where someone has become threatening or aggressive.