

See Me Event Safer Spaces Agreement

Shifting the Dial: Scotland's Conference on Mental Health Stigma and Discrimination

Wednesday 1st October, 9.30am to 4.10pm

thestudio, 67 Hope Street, Glasgow

Why do we talk about 'safer' spaces instead of 'safe' spaces?

See Me refer to 'safer' spaces as an open acknowledgement that we will do all we can to mitigate harm and to create supportive environments, and that this is a priority for us. We know, though, that it isn't possible to guarantee any space is completely psychologically safe for anyone. Describing a 'safer' space is a way of communicating a process that everyone in the room is asked to contribute to which seeks to minimise harm for everyone present.

The emphasis of the event overall is not on spending time discussing traumatic experiences. We will not be asking anyone attending to discuss any personal experience, so please only share what feels comfortable and safe for you.

Safer Space Agreement

This is the agreement that we plan to use for the conference:

- **Keep yourself safe:** Share only information that is yours to share – take time out if you need to.
- **Respect:** Everyone has different views and experiences. Treat people how you would like to be treated. **We are not here to debate if stigma and discrimination of any sort is real.**
- **Confidentiality:** Personal Information shared here by people shouldn't be discussed outside.
- **Self-awareness:** Acknowledging there is different power dynamics in the room and being mindful of what we are all bringing with us into the session and impact on others.

Please feel free to get in touch ahead of the session if you would like to suggest any changes or additions to this agreement. Email info@seemescotland.org.

Example See Me Content Warnings

Content warnings may be provided both ahead of a session and at the start. They are a way of preparing participants for the topics that may/will be covered by a session and making it as easy and comfortable as possible for participants to take action to keep themselves safe (e.g. take time out of the session). These are examples that from previous events.

- The session will include descriptions of stigma and discrimination including stigmatising language and discriminatory practices across gender, race, sexuality, disability, and socio-economic deprivation.

- The content and case studies in this session include LGBTQI+ and racialised experiences of mental health stigma and discrimination and contain mention of suicidal ideation and attempts. We are making this content warning to emotionally prepare people for descriptions of distress and harmful behaviours and language. Please take time out from the session if needed.

What See Me will do

- We will share as much information as possible with attendees prior to the event, including venue accessibility information and signposting links
- We will ensure there is a designated safeguard lead identified, and all See Me staff are easily identifiable and available for safeguarding concerns
- We will have an exercise at registration to create an opportunity to raise concerns and worries before the event starts
- There will be an option to opt out of photography
- We will set out our Safer Spaces Agreement at the start of the event and reiterate throughout
- We will encourage attendees to take breaks, move around, and be present in a way that works for them
- There will be a Safer Space table where attendees can take a break if required and there will be See Me Staff and volunteers on hand to have a chat and signpost if needed
- There will be a See Me member of staff in each workshop to support and safeguard during those events

What we have asked our facilitators to do

- Sharing content ahead of time
- Share details of breaks and confirm end time. Keep to time.
- Acknowledgment that many of us have lived and living experience of the issues covered in the session, model speaking about an experience or identity as though it may be experienced by someone present in the session
- Acknowledging positionality and power imbalances and make deliberate choices to remove hierarchies
- Acknowledging expertise in the room of all present
- Language and terminology caveats and glossary
- Invitation to feedback directly during session or afterwards with clear process explained
- Signposting materials – where to go for support
- The conversation and activities may also affect facilitators and staff – look after yourself and take breaks when needed

