





## General treatment for self-injury

Remember:

- Don't delay treatment because it is self-inflicted
- Take account of the distress involved in self-harm and in seeking treatment
- Always use anaesthesia and/or analgesia if treatment may be painful

Explain the treatment options to the service user

Discuss fully with the service user his or her treatment preferences

## Wound closure

For superficial uncomplicated injuries of 5 cm or less in length

Offer tissue adhesive as the first-line treatment

Offer skin closure strips if service user prefers this

For superficial uncomplicated injuries of greater than 5 cm, or deeper injuries of any length

Assess and explore the wound and follow good surgical practice

Discuss treatment options with service user

## Support and advice for people who repeatedly self-harm

Giving advice to people who repeatedly self-poison

- Don't offer harm minimisation advice regarding self-poisoning – there are no safe limits
- Consider discussing the risks of self-poisoning with service users (and carers, where appropriate) who are likely to use this method of self-harm again

Offering support and advice for people who self-injure repeatedly

- Consider giving advice and instructions on:
- self-management of superficial injuries, including providing tissue adhesive
  - harm minimisation issues and technique
  - appropriate alternative coping strategies
  - dealing with scar tissue

Discuss with a mental health worker which service users should be offered this

Voluntary organisations may have suitable materials