

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE DOCUMENT (SOP)

Title		Requests for Assessment under the Mental Health Act 1983		Doc. No.	CL022
Scope		Clinical Directorate	Operational Directorate		
Purpose		To ensure that patients who have, or may have, a mental illness and may need assessment under the Mental Health Act 1983, are seen and assessed by the appropriate professionals and that both the patient and their carers are treated with respect, sympathy and dignity.			
GUIDELINES		<u>Mental Health Act 1983</u> Defines the situations in which a patient may be admitted to a place of safety against their will, and the legal obligations and pre-conditions that must be met to make such action legal. <u>Information for Clinicians</u> Registered medical practitioners can sign a recommendation form for compulsory admission or detention of a patient under the act if they: a. are registered under the act as having special expertise in the assessment and treatment of mental illness b. have prior knowledge of the patient’s normal condition from a time before the current clinical episode In the out-of-hours environment the clinician will not normally meet these criteria and must not sign Mental Health Act assessment forms unless he or she complies with the law.			
PROCEDURE				RESPONSIBILITY	
1	Patient demographics to be recorded on the system following normal procedures.			NHS 111 Health Advisor	
2	Ask the caller if they are aware of when the patient was last seen by their own GP and / or district nursing team – this information is to be recorded within the ‘Reported Condition’ section of Adastra.			NHS 111 Health Advisor	

3	If the call is being passed by a 'Health Care Professional' please ensure this is recorded in the caller origin field.	Primary Care 24 Health Care Professional Line
4	Record 'mental health problem – section assessment request' within the 'Reported Condition' screen if requested by the caller.	NHS 111 Health Advisor
5	Dispatch the call into the 'DCA' pool with a priority of urgent.	Primary Care 24 Referral Coordinator
6	The clinician undertaking the 'Definitive Clinical Assessment' will reassign the priority and arrange for a suitable doctor telephone or face-to-face assessment. This is discussed with the patient or their carer and suitable arrangements made.	Primary Care 24 Clinician
7	The clinician who speaks to or sees the patient will decide if we can deal with the problem and provide treatment, with due attention paid to the MHA Code of Practice.	Primary Care 24 Clinician
8	If the problem requires secondary care assessment, the clinician will refer the patient to the correct geographically based 'Mental Health Service' as an informal patient if the patient so agrees. Patients can no longer be referred to the 'Mental Health Crisis Team' via RLUH 0151 709 2000. A patient needing to be referred to the 'Mental Health Crisis Team' has to be referred through the 'Access Service Team' on 0151 250 5056 and referrals faxed on 0151 250 5018.	Primary Care 24 Clinician
9	If the patient does not agree to an informal admission and the situation requires, or may require, assessment for possible compulsory admission to hospital under the Mental Health Act 1983 (MHA), the clinician making the decision must contact the 'Approved Mental Health Practitioner' (AMHP) for the area covering the patient's address or current whereabouts and state that he or she is requesting assessment under the Mental Health Act 1983.	Primary Care 24 Clinician
10	The AMHP has statutory responsibility to arrange for two suitably qualified doctors to make the assessment and recommendations and apply for compulsory admission if indicated.	Approved Mental Health Practitioner
11	Once a referral has been made to the AMHP, the Primary Care 24 clinician has complied with their legal and clinical responsibility and the case can be completed. There is no requirement for the clinician	Primary Care 24 Clinician

	to take part in the mental health assessment beyond passing clinical details of the presentation to the AMHP.	
12	Any further action once the call has been passed to the AMHP is their responsibility. As indicated in the guidelines above, Primary Care 24 clinicians cannot legally sign assessments under the Mental Health Act unless they have prior knowledge of the patient or are approved for the purpose under Section 12 of the 1983 Act.	Approved Mental Health Practitioner
13	As no current Primary Care 24 Clinicians are registered with the service as holding approval under Section 12 of the Act, Primary Care 24 cannot usually provide a clinician to complete section papers even if requested to do so by the AMHP.	Primary Care 24 Clinician

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Title		Requests for Assessment under the Mental Health Act 1983		Doc. No.	CL022
Version			v10		
Supersedes			v9		
Approving Managers/Committee			Medical Lead for Out-of-Hours		
Date Ratified			2008 (original)		
Department of Originator			Medical Directorate		
Responsible Executive Director			Medical Lead		
Responsible Manager/Support			Service Manager Out-of-Hours SDU		
Date Issued			2008 (Original)		
Review Date			June 2023 (or when there is a change in procedure)		
Target Audience			All Operational and Clinical Staff		
Version	Date	Control Reason		Accountable Person for this Version	
v1 – v7	2006 – 2013	Updated (see previous SOP)		Various	
v8	October 2015	Reviewed and updated by medical lead		Medical Lead	
v9	February 2018	Reviewed and updated by Medical Director		Medical Director	
v10	June 2020	Reviewed and updated by medical lead		Medical Lead	
Reference documents		Electronic Locations		Locations for Hard Copies	
		Primary Care 24 Intranet		Standard Operating Procedures File in the Call Centre	
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