



National Offender
Management Service

Mental Health Casework Section Stakeholder Engagement Framework

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Introduction

1. Mental Health Casework Section (MHCS) forms part of the National Offender Management Service, an Executive Agency of the Ministry of Justice. MHCS's primary duty is to discharge under agreed delegated authority, the Secretary of State for Justice's responsibilities under the Mental Health Act 1983 with regard to restricted patients.
2. Restricted patients are mentally disordered offenders who are detained in hospital for treatment or who have been discharged from hospital with conditions and who are subject to special controls by the Secretary of State owing to the level of risk they pose. They include offenders transferred from prison and those sentenced by the Courts subject to Restriction Orders. In most cases monitoring and supervision continues after the patient is discharged from hospital into the community.
3. At the end of October 2016, there were 7171 Restricted Patients in the system consisting of 4690 detained in hospital and 2481 conditionally discharged into the community. The corresponding figure in October 2015 was 7002 (4618 in hospital and 2384 in the community).

Aims and Objectives

4. MHCS' overall objective is to manage restricted patients under approved delegated authority from the Secretary of State, ensuring that decisions are defensible and reasonable, based on careful risk assessment and in collaboration with clinicians
5. We work to protect the public and reduce reoffending by delivering the punishment and orders of the courts and supporting rehabilitation by helping offenders to reform their lives.

Our Vision

6. We will work collaboratively with providers and partners to achieve a transformed Justice system to make communities safer, prevent victims and cut crime.

Our Values

7. In delivering offender management services, we will:
 - Be objective and take full account of public protection when assessing risk
 - Be open, honest and transparent
 - Incorporate equality and diversity in all we do
 - Value, empower and support staff, and work collaboratively with others
 - Treat offenders with decency and respect
 - Embrace change, innovation and local empowerment
 - Use our resources in the most effective way, focusing on outcomes and delivering value for money for the taxpayer
8. MHCS will use this framework to improve and maintain a high and sophisticated level of engagement with its external stakeholders.

9. Engagement with stakeholders will focus on the following objectives:

- Enabling the vision, values and objectives of MHCS to be understood by all;
- Ensuring that the needs and concerns of stakeholders are understood and addressed by MHCS;
- Communicating MHCS progress, successes, good news stories and lessons learnt;
- Providing information and news about the work and decisions of MHCS;
- Ensuring messages are accurate, consistent, tailored to the needs of the stakeholders and provided via suitable communications channels; and
- Providing a feedback mechanism for organisations to raise questions or issues regarding the role and work of MHCS.

10. All information provided to stakeholders under this framework will not be case-specific and patient confidentiality will be respected at all times.

Scope

11. This framework addresses formal, collective engagement at organisational level (above the everyday work on individual case management). Generally, when engaging, MHCS is representing the views of the Secretary of State for Justice (or more broadly, the Ministry of Justice).

12. To ensure that engagement has the desired impact, the process will:

- Ensure the visibility of MHCS and build credibility among stakeholders
- Proactively solicit feedback from stakeholders and incorporate this into plans and activities, establishing an environment of open two-way communication;
- Recognise and acknowledge stakeholder policies and procedures and strive to prevent reactions that could negatively impact on the work of MHCS;
- Ensure coherence and consistency in messages;
- Use effective communications to improve levels of stakeholder engagement;
- Be sensitive to cultural differences and use appropriate language; and
- Recognise that all forms of interaction with stakeholders can provide an opportunity to communicate and engage.

Engagement Protocols

13. The MHCS will ensure that:

- All planned engagement is with organisations not individuals without specific reference to the organisations of which they are part;
- Stakeholders are advised of the basis of organisational engagement and, unless otherwise stated, that MHCS is engaging on the same basis;
- Engagement is properly targeted so as to ensure that we have the right audience and takes place with the most appropriate representatives of organisations:
- We formally engage only with organisations who have an interest (stake) in our work
- Any other contact with individuals within organisations (for example at case management level) continues to take place constructively and positively
- Reciprocal engagement is sought from stakeholder organisations

Stakeholder Identification

14. In this context, a stakeholder is any organisation external to the Ministry of Justice which is involved in and/or impacted by the work of MHCS.
15. A list of stakeholders has been developed which will be kept updated by MHCS. This identifies the level of support, interest, influence, impact and importance each has in respect of MHCS operations.

Issues for Engagement

16. MHCS will identify broad themes which underlie engagement with each stakeholder or stakeholder grouping.
17. We will ensure the right messages are delivered to the right stakeholders in a timely and effective way by engaging with them on the following issues:
 - Proposals to change operating policies
 - Proposals to change procedures and/or guidance
 - The presentation of statistical information
 - Awareness of the Restricted Patient system
 - Performance Management and delivery of services by MHCS
18. The precise form of engagement will be decided by MHCS but consultation is the preferred form of engagement. This is defined as contact which does not require the parties to agree but where an exchange of views is necessary or helpful prior to any particular decision or action being taken
19. The primary vehicle for notification and the provision of information will be the MHCS pages on the MoJ website.