



Critical Casework Panel

Terms of Reference

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Executive Summary

This document introduces the Critical Casework Panel (CCP) for the Youth Custody Service (YCS). The has evolved from the acute needs working group which has operated since September 2016.

The CCP will be managed by the Casework Team in YCS. Casework is a new and developing area for the YCS, established to provide central support and oversight to establishments and key professionals in respect of complex and critical cases. Since the population of young people in custody has reduced significantly, it has become clear that the needs of the young people in our care have increased and as a result our responsibility to provide more enhanced and bespoke care is greater. Those who remain in custody are a concentrated mix of very troubled young people who often display very challenging and violent behaviour. Figures show that the average sentence length has increased, from 11.8 months in the year ending December 2011, to 14.2 months in the year ending December 2016. This is reflected in that, as of May 2017, custody placement data showed that 1 in 3 young people were assessed on entry to custody as a high risk to others.

Each young person has unique needs and a 'one-size-fits-all' approach is not effective. We are in a time where professionals who work closely with this group of young people need to be innovative, encouraging and creative to get the best outcomes. It is important to use the varied and experienced stakeholders across the youth justice sector to give the best multi-disciplinary informed approach to case management.

The casework team and more specifically the CCP will take continuous learning as the initiative develops to ensure a process that best meets the needs of the stakeholders involved and most importantly the young people who need additional support and consideration from the professionals working closely with them.

The implementation of Secure Stairs and development of staff to identify complex cases and work alongside Healthcare professionals in a trauma informed approach will further embed and aid this process.

Purpose

The CCP will be a multi-disciplinary panel which will provide oversight, assurance and support to professionals working with the most exceptionally complex young people in the youth custody estate. It will provide central oversight and take action as necessary to ensure effective assessment, planning and co-ordination of services to ensure that every effort is made to meet the needs of this group of children.

The CCP should be overseeing the work of the critical few children and young people in custody whose complexity of need presents risk to themselves, risk to others and/or risk from others. The Head of Casework will chair the panel and standing members will include practitioners from forensic psychology, operations and casework.

Local practitioners and case managers will join panel discussions in relation to individual children and the YOT case manager will remain the case manager for the child. The panel will support and challenge local practitioners in order for the most effective service to be achieved.

Aims

The panel will discuss, as appropriate, children and young people placed across all three sectors: - Secure Children's Homes (SCHs), Secure Training Centres (STCs) and Young Offender Institutions (YOIs). The group will operate in a discrete manner, offering strategic oversight of cases where needs identified are not being met through the business as usual processes in place across the secure estate.

The key aim is to reduce the risk around the individual whilst in custody, with the ultimate goal of reducing the risk of reoffending and preventing future victims.

The aim of the panel is to empower establishments and YOTs to work with these young people, providing specialist advice and support to include sign posting to relevant or appropriate services and/or interventions.

The Panel

The CCP will sit on a monthly basis and will have permanent representation from the following groups:

- YCS Casework Team

- YCS Central Forensic Psychology Team
- Central operational representation from all three sectors (SCH's, STC's and YOIs)
- NHS England

The panel will be scheduled for the first week of every month.

The panel will schedule new referrals and reviews ahead of the panel sitting and notify the YOT Case Manager, establishment and other relevant professionals when they are required to attend or dial in to discuss their critical case. It is the responsibility of the YOT Case Manager, establishment and other relevant professionals to provide up to date information and papers on their cases ahead of the meeting.

The panel will decide if the young person meets the threshold to be a critical case. At the end of the discussion the panel will agree the frequency of reviews.

On occasions where deemed necessary, advice can also be given prior to the next panel sitting. The panel will also be available to attend professional's meetings in order to provide advice, oversight, direction and decision making where necessary and appropriate.

Roles and Responsibilities

Organisation/Group	Role	Responsibility
YCS Casework Team <i>Panel Chair</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Head of Placements, Casework and Business Planning - Head of Casework - Social work practitioner - Senior Caseworkers - Admin support 	<p>Chair the panel meetings</p> <p>Responsible for identifying young people to be considered by the panel, or through business as usual placement processes</p> <p>Provide central resource to attend professional's meetings</p> <p>Provide strategic direction and oversight on critical cases where alternative placements may be more appropriate, be that be a transfer elsewhere in the youth estate, a planned transition or an early transition</p> <p>Provide the administrative support for the panel.</p>
YCS Central Psychology	- Lead forensic	Responsible for identifying young

Team <i>Panel Member</i>	psychologists - Critical Case Practitioner	people residing within the public estate to be considered by the panel Provide professional advice and support for young people discussed at the panel to ensure appropriate plans and services are in place.
NHS England <i>Panel Member</i>	-Children & Young People Quality Lead	Responsible for ensuring oversight Liaison with local commissioner and/or provider Conduit with NHS England specialised commissioning regarding CYP MH secure beds.
YCS Operational <i>Invitee (Where required)</i>	- YOI Operations manager - STC Head of contracts - SCH Head of contract/DfE	Responsible for identifying young people to be considered by the panel Provide oversight on current cohort of establishments Provide an oversight on the stability of establishments.
YOT <i>Invitee</i>	-YOT Case Manager	The YOT Case Manager will be responsible for continuing the case management of young people The YOT Case Manager will be responsible for attending the review panel meetings for their young people. It is the responsibility of the YOT Case Manager to provide up to date information and papers (where needed) on their cases.
Establishment and local authority practitioners <i>Invitee</i>	- Enhanced Case Support Team (where applicable) - Caseworker - Health	Responsible for identifying young people to be considered by the panel after discussion with Governor (YOI), Director (STC) or Manager (SCH) The most appropriate person(s) working with the young person will be responsible for attending the review panel meetings for their young people

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CAMHS - Education - Other 	<p>to present their case and information</p> <p>Responsible for deciding who is the most appropriate person to attend the meeting for that young person. This could be more than one person where the YP is working closely with different departments, i.e. CAMHS, education, residential.</p> <p>It is the responsibility of the YOT Case Manager to provide up to date information and papers (where needed) on their cases.</p>
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Threshold for Critical Cases

What markers would young people need to meet to be considered for the CCP?

Young people identified to match all of these markers should be rare.

The panel will consider young people to be a critical case when they meet a number of the markers below. These markers are not definitive however when evidencing needs it is important to provide any relevant background information as well as clearly identifying current needs. The information below should be clear and concise.

The criteria below have been identified through research for Enhanced Support Unit's and the markers that the YCS would deem to be enhanced after advice from psychology services.

Marker	Background information	Current needs
1. A mental disorder (not requiring in-patient Mental Health Services)		
2. An acquired brain injury		
3. An intellectual disability/difficulty		

4. A developmental disorder		
5. Previous experience of trauma		
6. Significantly problematic and challenging behaviour		
7. Pose a significant risk of harm to self and/or others and from others		
8. Require intensive support and would benefit from enhanced coordinated services		
9. Lack of engagement with professionals and services		
10. Services in current placement are not working.		

The panel will consider young people who are highlighted to meet a number of the markers above to be a critical case. The panel will consider on a case by case basis.

Once on the critical case list, the panel will discuss with front line professional's advice and next steps for management of each case. The aim to ensure that professionals and services are able to provide services to meet the young person's needs. The panel may on rare occasion recommend that the young person concerned should be assessed as suitable for a medium secure mental health bed.

The panel would be responsible for providing advice to Ministers about resettlement plans for young people who are placed on critical case list and any emerging gaps in provision that the panel has identified to commissioners.

Identification

Ideally, consideration for young people meeting the critical case markers will be part of the initial remand/sentence planning process. The aim is to engage with the Youth Justice Board with a view to National Standards being amended to ensure that this becomes part of the process for every young person. This will ensure that all young people are screened against the markers as part of the dialog with the YOT Case Manager and the establishment case worker. This would mean more pro-active identification of young people, rather than reactive identification. Young people will also be identified as part of trauma informed formulation plans developed under the Secure Stairs process.

For a young person to be considered by the CCP, full information should be shared with the panel by means of a Placement Review Form.

N.B. Until the launch of the new Placement Review Form (which will include all information required) the current form should be sent alongside any management plans for a young person i.e. sentence/remand plan, behaviour management plan.

Referrals will be gate kept by a senior member of the Placements & Casework Team. The team will quality check the placement review form and ensure that all relevant information is included for the young person to be considered by the panel. Should a young person be identified as not meeting the threshold, the form will be completed to reflect the reasoning behind this and then returned to the sender.

If a young person is assessed as meeting the markers as identified above, the YOT Case Manager, establishment and other relevant parties will be invited to the next panel at an allocated time slot. They will be expected to discuss the young person's case openly with the panel in order to get advice and support from the various different disciplines.

Governance

The CCP will be overseen by a governance board which will sit on a quarterly basis. The purpose of the board will be to review the long-term caseload and review trends that have been identified by the CCP. The board will have a natural responsibility for the sharing of best practice across the secure estate and wider departments where appropriate. The board will be responsible for reviewing identified continuing performance issues and gaps in service provision and highlighting to commissioners and policy makers.

The quarterly governance board will have representation from the following:

YCS Head of Casework, Briefing and Business Planning

YCS Head of Casework

YCS Central Psychology Team

NHS England

YCS Performance Team

MOJ Youth Justice Commissioning Team

MOJ Policy Team

YCS Central Operations

Youth Justice Board

The governance board will also have responsibility to reviewing the CCP process, guidance and governance after one year of being rolled out to ensure that the aims are being achieved.

The governance board will report into the YCS Casework, Partnerships, Business and Change Management Board.