

**Wiltshire Council**

**Health and Wellbeing Board**

**22 May 2014**

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**Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat**

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**Executive Summary**

The recently launched Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat is a commitment for all relevant agencies to work together to improve the system of care and support so people experiencing mental health crisis are kept safe and helped to find the support they need. The agreement has been signed by more than 20 national organisations, making a commitment to work together to achieve continuous improvements for crisis care for people with mental health issues.

**Proposal(s)**

It is recommended that the Board:

- i. Notes the commitment of Wiltshire Police to the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat;
- ii. Notes the event that took place with local partners on 30 April to develop the local response to the Concordat;
- iii. Notes the joint Department of Health and Home Office review of s135 and s136 (place of safety powers) in the Mental Health Act.
- iv. Notes the changes in provision set out in Appendix 1.

**Reason for Proposal**

There have been a number of important mental health developments recently and it is important that partners are coordinated in their response to these.

**Angus Macpherson**

Police and Crime Commissioner

**Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat**

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**Purpose of Report**

1. To update the Health and Wellbeing Board on the commitment of Wiltshire Police to the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat which aims to improve outcomes for those experiencing mental health crisis.

**Background**

2. The recently launched Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat is a commitment for all relevant agencies to work together to improve the system of care and support so people experiencing mental health crisis are kept safe and helped to find the support they need. The agreement has been signed by more than 20 national organisations, making a commitment to work together to achieve continuous improvements for crisis care for people with mental health issues.
3. It sets out standards of care people should expect if they suffer a mental health crisis and details how public services should respond. It challenges local services to make sure beds are always available for people who need them urgently; highlighting that police custody should not be used just because mental health services are unavailable. It also stipulates that police vehicles should not be used to transfer patients and encourages services to improve sharing essential need-to-know information about patients which could help keep them and the public safe.
4. Local areas will sign their own regional and local agreements to commit to working together across services to improve care and potentially save lives. The Crisis Care Concordat challenges local areas to make sure that:
  - Health-based places of safety and beds are available 24/7 in case someone experiences a mental health crisis
  - Police custody is not used because mental health services are not available and police vehicles are not used to transfer patients
  - Timescales are put in place so police responding to mental health crisis know how long they have to wait for a response from health and social care workers. This will make sure patients receive suitable care as soon as possible
  - People in crisis should expect that services will share essential 'need to know' information about them so they can receive the best care possible

- In areas where black and minority ethnic groups have a higher risk of being detained under the Mental Health Act, this must be addressed by local services in consultation with these groups
  - A 24-hour helpline should be available for people with mental health problems and the crisis resolution team should be accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
5. I fully support the aims of the Concordat and am pleased to report that Wiltshire Police are actively engaging with local partners to achieve the core principles and outcomes set out in the report. Recent successes include improved provision of health based Places of Safety for those detained under Section 136 (further details of which are included as **Appendix 1**), increased information sharing leading to improved decision making when choosing the most appropriate course of action when dealing with those in mental crisis and the development of local protocols in order to improve partnership working, setting out clear guidelines for all involved in the care and support of those in mental crisis.
  6. To highlight its commitment to improving outcomes for people experiencing mental health crisis, Wiltshire Police has a Mental Health Liaison Officer who works closely with partnership agencies to enable the delivery of the shared aims of the Concordat to be achieved.
  7. Partnership agencies from across the area met together on 30 April to discuss the concordat and its implementation. I will be happy to provide a further update on the outcome of this at the meeting.
  8. Recently, my Innovation Fund also made some awards relevant to Mental Health including :
    - Wiltshire Mind counselling project - £28,405 for counselling for people at risk of offending.

Wiltshire Mind, working with Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Targets for Change (SWITCH) has identified the need for a non-clinical intervention, in this case a counselling service. The aim of the project is to enable individuals to manage their lives better, moving away from dangerous and harmful lifestyles and offending. The project will be a six month pilot providing a counselling service for 36 adults with mental problems who are at risk of offending or re-offending. The counselling will take place in Melksham, Swindon and Salisbury. Three part-time counsellors will be employed, together with a part-time project manager.

- Alabaré - £20,228 to avoid vulnerable young people staying in police stations.

Wiltshire Child Protection Unit reports delays in finding accommodation for young people picked up by the police who are unable to return home immediately. This can result in them spending an excessive and stressful time at a police station, as well as the time and cost implications for the police. Alabaré proposes to use its existing

accommodation in Salisbury and Trowbridge to provide out-of-hours access of up to seven days accommodation for a vulnerable young person. Two beds are permanently available.

9. Finally, a joint Department of Health and Home Office [review](#) has also been announced to examine the operation of sections 135 and 136 and Wiltshire Police will be responding to the consultation. The findings and recommendations for change will be published later this year. The Mental Health Act Code of Practice is also being reviewed and this will report in October 2014.

**Angus Macpherson**  
Police and Crime Commissioner

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## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Recent changes to joint service provision for those in mental crisis or suffering with mental ill health.

### **Recent changes to joint service provision for those in mental crisis or suffering with mental ill health.**

This update covers:

- Persons under 18 years;
- Persons aged 18 years and over;
- Court Assessment and Referral Service;
- Street Triage;
- Risks; and
- Future Objectives.

#### **Persons under 18 years**

1. During an HMIC Inspection in 2012, it was identified that the number of young persons under 18 years detained in Wiltshire under Section 136 Mental Health Act was significantly higher compared to Forces of similar size. In addition, all these vulnerable detainees were taken to Police Custody as there was no health based Place of Safety.
2. A number of changes have since been made to improve service provision for this group:
  - ✓ Health Based Place of Safety for all Wiltshire residents under 18 years of age who are detained under Section 136 (Fountains Way Hospital, Salisbury)
  - ✓ Health Based Place of Safety for all Swindon residents under 18 years of age who are detained under S136 (Sandalwood Court Hospital, Swindon).
  - ✓ Introduction of Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) telephone protocol for persons under 18 years with mental health issues or who are in mental crisis. This enables officers to contact CAMHS, at any time of day, for advice and guidance prior to taking any action.
  - ✓ The CAMHS scheme within Wiltshire has received recognition on national radio by Norman Lamb, Minister of State for Care and Support, highlighting it as best practice for others to follow.
3. The benefits of this approach can be demonstrated as follows:
  - Between April 2011 and March 2012, 13 young people were detained using Section 136. All were taken to Police Custody.
  - Between April 2012 and March 2013, this figure reduced to 6 people as the CAMHS trial was introduced during this period. All were taken to a police station rather than a health based Place of Safety.
  - Between April 2013 and March 2014, 5 young people were detained using Section 136. All were taken to a health based Place of Safety rather than Police Custody. All were 17 years of age, 4 being female.
  - The decrease in number of young people detained is the result of officers being able to seek advice at the scene from mental health

professionals, enabling them to consider all options and to take the most appropriate course of action rather than immediately using Section 136 .

### **Persons aged 18 years and over**

4. In the last few years, the number of adults detained under Section 136 and taken to Police Custody has fallen, although it is recognised that the figures remain too high:
  - Between April 2011 and March 2012, 100 persons aged 18 years and over were detained
  - During April 2012 and March 2013, this figure had fallen to 79
  - Between April 2013 and March 2014, the number of adults detained fell to 65
  - The average time spent in police custody for each person detained Section 136 is just over 9 hours but this can vary considerably on a month by month basis. The lowest monthly average length of detention was 4hrs 30 minutes but in other months this can increase to over 16 hours. The average length of detention for each full year has remained constant since 2010 at 9 hours
5. In order to assist officers when dealing with adults in mental ill health or who are in crisis, a telephone advice protocol is to be introduced, which will be similar to the CAMHS protocol above. This telephone protocol will increase partnership working between Police Officers and the Intensive Service Teams, enabling officers to consider other options rather than defaulting to using Section 136. It is anticipated this will significantly reduce the volume by enabling information sharing at the earliest opportunity and also allowing for patients to be seen in their own home by arrangement rather than being detained unnecessarily.

### **Court Assessment and Referral Service (CARS)**

6. This scheme enables Mental Health Practitioners from the CARS Team to work within Police Custody Suites. It aims to improve the screening processes, identifying those who have been arrested for criminal offences who may be suffering with a mental illness. The difference with this scheme is that it does not deal with those detained under Section 136 and will ensure that such persons receive the care and support they need, both whilst in custody and at court.

### **Street Triage**

7. To further improve the options available to officers and to increase the level of care and support to those in mental crisis, the intention is to trial a Street Triage Scheme within Wiltshire. Discussions have begun as to what Street Triage could deliver in Wiltshire and various different formats are being considered.

## **Risks**

8. The following risks are identified:
- Length of time taken to complete a Mental Health Act Assessment (MHAA). The average time taken to complete a MHAA can vary enormously depending on the availability of Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHPs) and Section 12 Doctors.
  - Future changes to Place of Safety provision. Considerable improvements have been made in Wiltshire and Swindon and it is important that commissioning arrangements ensure that this level of provision remains.
  - Data collation. Currently, each organisation collects its own data which is shared at the monthly Section 136 Steering Group meeting. To deliver a comprehensive overview of mental health trends and patterns, the collation of data needs to be more in-depth and timely. Members of the Steering Group are currently looking at how to improve the collation and sharing data.

## **Future Objectives**

9. The future objectives of Wiltshire Police in this area are as follows:
- Develop joint training between Wiltshire Police and Mental Health Professionals. A joint working party is being set up to create a training needs programme.
  - Develop joint protocols to cover patients who are Absent without Leave (AWOL), missing patients, Section 135 warrants and private premises, conveyance of patients, offences committed on Mental Health premises and the Mental Capacity Act. These protocols will form an important basis for any future training for officers and hospital staff.
  - Improve staff awareness of autism, learning difficulties and dementia.
  - Continue to engage with partners at local and regional level to improve service delivery and working relationships. Examples include the local and regional Section 136 protocols, use of ambulance to convey Section 136 patients, and the national Concordat.

**Supt Marion Deegan**  
Head of Crime Prevention

April 2014