CROSS BORDER MENTAL HEALTH PROTOCOL

Joint Protocol for the WHSCT and the HSE West (Donegal/Leitrim/Cavan/West Cavan) for responding to people with significant mental health conditions who present to or avail of services from outside their home jurisdiction.

1. Primary Purpose

1.1 The primary purpose of this protocol is to ensure optimal communication between professionals in order to protect and benefit the health and well being of patients/clients.

2. Introduction

2.1 This protocol offers guidance to primary care and staff working in second tier mental health services who are concerned that a patient may be at risk of self-harm/suicide (or pose a risk to others) and are concurrently accessing or may have accessed services on both sides of the border ie within Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

2.2 The protocol outlines the reporting procedures to be used in sharing information and concerns to the relevant services within each jurisdiction.

2.3 The protocol is intended to complement existing policies, procedures and guidelines in both jurisdictions and should be enacted with reference to existing policies and procedures.

3. Purpose

3.1 The purpose of this protocol is to ensure:

- Efficient communication between health professionals working on both sides of the border in relation to patients at risk from suicide/self harm.
- Recognition of the importance of sharing information pertaining to ‘at risk’ patients, with professionals in the other jurisdiction.
- That all relevant information relating to a patient’s history is communicated effectively and in a timely manner, to the appropriate health and social care professionals in the other jurisdiction. This applies when it is established that an individual may be accessing services from different locations, possibly on both sides of the border (without the knowledge of the person’s GP/consultant/mental health service within their home jurisdiction).
4. Role of Health Professional - including GP's and other Primary Care and Mental Health staff

4.1 As part of any assessment, care plan, treatment regime or discharge plan there should be an awareness of the need for action to obtain a range of information.

4.2 The following information should be sought from the patient and/or next of kin, to establish whether a patient is availing/has availed of mental health and/or primary care or mental health services on either or both sides of the border:
   • Check current or previous addresses.
   • Patient identity via eg., Personal Public Service Number, Medical Card, Date of Birth or NHS number.
   • What services are or have been accessed.
   • Check present and past medications.
   • Obtain collateral information from family/next of kin.

4.3 Throughout the process staff should emphasise to patients and their families the benefits of sharing information in order to promote best treatment and care and to avoid potential problems that could arise from duplication or conflicting treatment plans.

4.4 The patient and family should be informed that this information will be shared with other services in the best interests of the patient. This will be carried out in a secure and confidential manner in line with relevant Data Protection legislation. If a patient or family refuses consent to share information, advice should be sought from the appropriate member of staff.

4.5 If it is established that there is or has been past contact with services outside the jurisdiction, contact should be made with these services and information shared as appropriate.

4.6 Where a patient has been identified as being ‘at risk’ and in receipt of services on both sides of the border information may need to be shared within the context of a case conference and steps put in place as to how future care planning should take place.

4.7 In the event of a death of a patient who is known to have used services in both jurisdictions, health professionals should share relevant information with their counterparts in the other jurisdiction and ensure that support is offer to family members.

**Data Protection and Record Retention**

*This protocol is consistent with data protection legislation in both jurisdictions.*

*The retention periods for information shared under this protocol between both Health Authorities will be governed by the Health Records guidelines, currently being observed by the transferring body and, upon receipt in the other jurisdiction, by the guidelines being observed by the receiving Authority.*
5. **Procedure for Primary Care Staff/GP’s responding to cross border patients with significant mental health conditions**

- When a patient presents to a GP or provider of GMS Out of Hours Services, a decision will be taken to either treat the mental health condition or refer the patient to mental health services.

5.1 **Decision to Treat**

- Where a decision is made to treat the ‘presenting’ condition(s), the GP or other member of the primary care team will ascertain – as part of the history taking – whether the patient attended a GP in the other jurisdiction for mental health conditions.

- Where the patient had attended a GP in the other jurisdiction, the form at [Appendix 1](#) will be sent by the GP to the last GP practice ‘on record’ in the other jurisdiction. A copy of the form will also be sent to the appropriate Primary/Community Care Mental Health Teams in both jurisdictions. ([See list of contacts at Appendix 2](#)).

5.2 **Decision to Refer**

- Where a decision is taken by the GP or other member of the primary care team, to refer the patient to the Primary/Community Mental Health Team, the form at [Appendix 1](#) will be completed.

- The receiving Primary/Community Mental Health Team will verify the services the patient accessed and will contact the team on the other side of the border and send to them the form ([Appendix 1](#)), plus other relevant information to the Primary/Community Mental Health Team and last GP practice ‘on record’ in the other jurisdiction.

- [Appendix 3](#) sets out the referral pathways to Primary/Community Mental Health Teams in-hours and out of hours.

**General Guidance:**

Where there is a concern about patient safety or the safety of others contact with the relevant GP or mental health service in the opposite jurisdiction should in the first instance be verbal but in all instances should be followed up in writing in a secure and confidential manner. Where patient information is being transferred, the rationale should be recorded appropriately.
In all instances, health professionals should attempt to work in partnership with patients and families. This should normally entail openness and transparency in their dealings with clients and patients. Bearing this in mind it will be normal practice to advise the patient/family when there are concerns that information is being passed to the appropriate GP/mental health service within the opposite jurisdiction and that the principal concern for sharing information is to offer the highest level of protection and care for the patient and their family.

**In Summary**

**PATIENT WITH SIGNIFICANT MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS PRESENTS TO GP**

- **TREAT**
  - History taking to include ascertaining whether patient has accessed services in OTHER jurisdiction
  - **If YES**
    - Send Form at Appendix 1 to (i) GP ‘on record’ in other jurisdiction (ii) Primary/Community Mental Health Teams in BOTH jurisdictions (See Appendices 2 and 3)

- **DIRECT REFERRAL TO PRIMARY CARE LIAISON TEAM/COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH TEAM/SERVICE**
  - History taking to include ascertaining whether patient accessing services in OTHER jurisdiction
  - **If YES**
    - Mental Health Team to Send Appendix 1 to: (i) GP ‘on record’ in OTHER jurisdiction (ii) Primary Care Liaison Team/Community Mental Health Team/Service in OTHER jurisdiction
## APPENDIX 1 - Sample Out of Hours Call Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Case Number:</th>
<th>Case Type:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Patient Information

- **Patient Name:**
- **Address:** (NI) Post Code
- **Sex:**
- **Date of Birth:**
- **Age:**
- **(ROI) Own Doctor:**
- **Surgery:**
- **Appointment time:**
- **Return Tel:**
- **Arrival time:**
- **Case Origin:**
- **Case Priority:**
- **Caller Name:**
- **Tel:**

### Reported Condition

- **Reported Condition:**
- **Operator:**

### Symptoms

- **Symptoms:**

### TAS Assessment

- **TAS Assessment:**
- **Assessed by:**
- **TAS Begin:**
- **TAS End:**

### Latest Advice Details

- **Latest Advice Details:**
- **Consulted by:**
- **Advice Begin:**
- **Advice End:**

### Latest Consultation Details

- **Latest Consultation Details:**
- **Consulted by:**
- **Cons. Begin:**
- **Cons. Finished:**

### Examination Details

- **Examination Details:**
- **Clinical Codes:**

### Diagnosis

- **Diagnosis:**

### Prescription Items

- **Prescription Items:**

### Follow-up

- **Follow-up:**

### Name of attending GP/Nurse

- **Name of attending GP/Nurse:**
- **Signature:**
# APPENDIX 2 - Contact Numbers Primary and Mental Health Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Western Health and Social Care Trust</th>
<th>Health Service Executive (West) Covering Donegal/Sligo/Leitrim</th>
<th>Southern Health and Social Care Trust</th>
<th>Health Service Executive (DNE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOTE – Telephoning from the RoI Prefix (048)</td>
<td>Donegal Mental Health Services</td>
<td>Day Time Referrals provided through single point of entry by contacting:-</td>
<td>Meath/Louth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Urgent Care GP Out of Hours Service - 08706062288 (Mental Health Practitioner available)</td>
<td>• Admission Unit, Mountain Lodge, Letterkenny 074-9169120</td>
<td>• Mental Health Referral &amp; Booking Centre – 28 38 613430</td>
<td>• Department of Psychiatry, Our Lady’s Hospital, Navan, Co. Meath (046) 907 2676</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone &amp; Fermanagh Area (6.30pm –10.30pm)</td>
<td>• Nurse Manager on Duty 087-6182621</td>
<td></td>
<td>• St. Brigid’s Hospital, Ardee, Co. Louth (041) 685 3264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derry/Limavady/Strabane Areas (6 pm – 1 am)</td>
<td>• Central Sector Letterkenny 074-9121022</td>
<td>Out of Hours Mental Health Referrals provided by contacting:-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• South Donegal Sector 074-9721910</td>
<td>• Southern Area Urgent Care Service (GP OOH) – 08706006009</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• North West Sector Dunloe 074-9521860</td>
<td>OOH GP follow up Liaison with OOH Mental Health Home Treatment Team – (6pm – 1am weekdays / 9am-1am weekends / bank holidays)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• North East Sector Buncrana 074-9362529</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Sligo/Leitrim /South Donegal Services</strong></td>
<td><strong>Cavan/Monaghan</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derry/Limavady/Strabane Secondary Mental Health Services</td>
<td>• Main Contact - 071-9142111</td>
<td>• Department of Psychiatry, Cavan General Hospital (049) 4376232</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Gransha Hospital in-patient Wards 02871860261 ext 2656/2756</td>
<td>• St. Davnet's Hospital, Monaghan (047) 77400</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rehab &amp; Recovery Services - Derry City Team - 02871350063</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Rehab &amp; Recovery Service – Limavady Team - 02877721213</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rehab &amp; Recovery Service - Strabane Team - 02871382963</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Primary Care Liaison, (single point of entry for all GP referrals) - Oldbridge House, Derry - 02871320102</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tyrone/Fermanagh area</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Community Mental Health Team (Fermanagh) 66326604 (Mon – Sun)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Community Mental Health Team, (Omagh) 82252202</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Tyrone and Fermanagh Hospital - 82833100/ 82835368/ 82825366</td>
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</table>
## Appendix 3 - Referral Pathway

### REFERRAL PATHWAY
TO PRIMARY/COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH TEAMS/SERVICE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WHSCT</th>
<th>HSE (West)</th>
<th>SHSCT</th>
<th>HSE(DNE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.00 pm – 1.00 am weekdays</td>
<td>6.00pm – 8am weekdays</td>
<td>6pm – 1am weekday</td>
<td>6.00pm – 8am weekdays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.00 pm – 1.00 am Sat, Sun and Bank Hols.</td>
<td>6.00pm Friday – 8am Monday (weekends)</td>
<td>9am – 1am – Sat, Sun and Bank Holidays.</td>
<td>6.00pm Friday – 8am Monday (weekends)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Western Urgent Care accesses mental health services via the Primary Care Liaison Team during the above hours. The PCLT operate in 3 areas: Derry, Omagh &amp; Enniskillen. Patients from Limavady or Strabane who are willing to travel can access the service in Derry.</td>
<td>Nowdoc has no access to mental health services other than direct voluntary or involuntary referral to a psychiatric hospital. Such referrals are managed under the terms of the Mental Health Act 2001. Where a family member/ spouse/member of Garda Siochana is unable to arrange for the removal of the person to the approved centre, the approved centre concerned shall provide an assisted admissions service.</td>
<td>SAUCS accesses mental health services via the Mental Health Home Treatment Team. The 3 OOH Mental Health Locality Teams operate in the Craigavon/Banbridge.</td>
<td>NEDOC has no access to mental health services other than direct voluntary or involuntary referral to a psychiatric hospital. Such referrals are managed under the terms of the Mental Health Act 2001. Where a family member/ spouse/member of Garda Siochana is unable to arrange for the removal of the person to the approved centre, the approved centre concerned shall provide an assisted admissions service.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>