

# Improving access to mental health services in a crisis



# Improving access and urgent care mental health services

We are improving our services for people experiencing a mental health crisis.

We want people experiencing a mental health crisis to be able to access high quality care, as quickly and easily as possible.

We aim to provide this emergency mental health care with the same urgency as people expect from the NHS in a physical health emergency.

There is now one number for patients or their carers to call to get help urgently, day or night.

We will be able to respond more quickly helping people, where possible, to recover at home or close to home, with friends and family nearby.

Fewer people will need to be admitted to hospital and there will be more alternatives to hospital.

## What care will we provide?

A **single point of access (SPA)** for people in crisis or carers with one phone number:

# 0300 1234 244

You can call this number to get help or advice in a crisis from our trained mental health advisors and clinicians, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Crisis response teams will also provide out of hours care and respond rapidly to your needs and provide the right care for you in an emergency.

The SPA will provide a one-stop point of entry for new referrals to adult mental health services provided by the trust or people needing help in a crisis day or night.

The number is the same as our existing patient and carer support line and it will continue to provide information and advice, day and night.

# Patients and carers - what should I do in a crisis and what can I expect?

You should call the SPA – out of hours and during normal working hours – to get immediate advice and help from one of our trained mental health advisors or clinicians.

We may:

- Send a crisis team to visit you or your loved one at home.
- Arrange for admission to a specialist hospital.
- Arrange for an out-patient appointment the same or next day.
- Ask you to go to A&E or contact the emergency services if you or anyone else is at risk.

**In an emergency, we aim to respond within four hours, and within 24 hours in urgent cases, whatever the time of day. These are the same response times for acute NHS services.**

## What else will be different?

- We are improving the support available through GPs and in the community, with mental health professionals helping earlier before things get to a crisis point.
- People who do need to be admitted to hospital will get more intensive care so they will have shorter stays.
- We have opened the first of our recovery houses, Amadeus House in Ealing, to provide community-based care in a safe, therapeutic setting as an alternative to hospital admission.

## Frequently asked questions

### What do I do if I have a crisis during the day?

If you or a loved one is going through a crisis during normal working hours, you should still contact the SPA.

## Who can contact the SPA?

A patient, carer or other family member or a health or other professional such as a social worker.

## How quickly will I be seen?

Clinicians working in the single point of access will assess whether your crisis requires an emergency response, an urgent response or give advice over the phone.

## Have the changes happened?

The changes are being introduced on **4 April 2016**.

## Do I have to be referred by my GP?

No, anyone can ring the single point of access if they are having a mental health crisis.

## Does it matter where I live?

These changes affect residents in the boroughs of Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, and Hounslow.

# Your notes

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## A partnership between:

West London Mental Health NHS Trust

Ealing Clinical Commissioning Group

Hammersmith & Fulham Clinical  
Commissioning Group

Hounslow Clinical Commissioning Group



**London Borough  
of Hounslow**

If you need this information in another format, such as large print, Easy Read or another language, please ask a member of staff.

If you have questions or concerns about any of our services, please contact the patient advice and liaison service (PALS) on **0800 064 3330** or **pals@wlmht.nhs.uk**.



Switchboard

**020 8354 8354**



24 hour patient support line

**0300 1234 244**



Website

**wlmht.nhs.uk**



Email

**communications@wlmht.nhs.uk**