

Right Care, Right Person – SEL London Leaders Briefing 19 Sep. 23

1.0 Background

Right Care, Right Person (RCRP) refers to an agreement between policing, health, and other relevant partners, which aims to ensure that individuals in mental health crisis are seen by the right professional. This agreement will begin to be implemented across London starting on 1 November 2023.

At present, police are increasingly involved in mental health cases when they are not always the most appropriate agency to respond. For example, we know that 78% of people detained under section 136 will go on to be discharged home following assessment, suggesting many mental health cases are not being dealt with by the right professionals.

RCRP provides a framework for assisting police with decision-making to assess when they should be involved in responding to incidents involving people with mental health needs in four key areas:

- AWOL from mental health inpatient premises
- Requests for welfare checks from health & social care
- Transportation of mental health patients
- Handover times at health-based place of safety for members of the public conveyed under S136

Some recent media coverage has suggested Right Care, Right Person will mean the police will no longer attend any health incidents. This is not the case. Under RCRP, the threshold¹ for a police response to a mental health-related incident is:

- to investigate a crime that has occurred or is occurring; or
- to protect people, when there is a real and immediate risk to the life of a person, or of a person being subject to or at risk of serious harm.

The RCRP builds on the Humberside model² which has taken close to three-years to implement.

2.0 London Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat

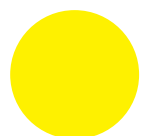
In July 2023, the London Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat³, which sets out a plan to transform mental health care, was launched. The agreement was developed with 'experts by experience', Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, carers, the police, and voluntary sector organisations. It sets out a path for keeping people safe, free from harm and able to access the care they need in the right place at the right time. This includes:

- Preventing mental health crises by supporting people to live well in their communities
- Ensuring access to timely and appropriate crisis support for those who need it
- Building on the success of the mental health joint response cars, which have been operating seven days a week across the capital for two years; and
- Introducing NHS 111 First for Mental Health, which will be launched nationally in April 2024, and will provide support for people experiencing a mental health crisis and ensure people have help to access the best care for them.

¹ [National Partnership Agreement: Right Care, Right Person \(RCRP\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-partnership-agreement-right-care-right-person-rcrp)

² [Right Care Right Person – Humberside Police | College of Policing](#)

³ [London's All Age Crisis Care Concordat \(england.nhs.uk\)](https://www.england.nhs.uk/mentalhealth/care-concordat/)



3.0 Right Care, Right Person Governance

A Joint Mental Health Policing Group has been established which is co-chaired between NHSE and the Metropolitan Police Service. This reports up to the existing London Mental Health Board and to a newly established RCRP Partners Board.

Four subgroups, with membership from across a range of partner organisations, have been set up to oversee the preparations necessary for safe and successful implementation:

- Policy and Legal Framework
- Workforce
- Data
- Communications

The Policy and Legal Framework sub-group is primarily focussed on the Absent Without Leave (AWOL) and Welfare Check aspects of RCRP.

The Cavendish Square Group⁴ Chief Operating Officers have initiated a project to align an "Affinity" protocol for all ten mental health providers in London covering AWOL, Welfare Checks and Missing Persons.

Some of the areas which still need to be addressed are the increase in the mental health workforce which will be necessary alongside a thorough understanding of the legal powers of health and social care staff in such situations.

4.0 Right Care, Right Person Next steps

The first key milestone for the implementation programme is the 1 November⁵ when police call handlers will use a new prompt when they answer a 999-call relating to welfare checks or when a patient goes AWOL from inpatient care.

The prompt will ask call handlers to check that a police response is required or whether the person's needs may be better met by a health or care professional.

The police will assess the call using their new criteria and if it meets this threshold they will respond and assist. If it does not meet this threshold, then the police may redirect the call to other partner agencies as appropriate. This may include NHS 111 (option 2 mental health line), Local Authorities, and/or other services. Whether the NHS and partner agencies can respond both in terms of capacity and capability is the overarching exam that is still being explored.

It is essential that this next step, and any future action, is clearly communicated to professionals across the police, health, and care sectors as well as patients. This will ensure that everyone feels safe and supported, whether they are giving or receiving care.

5.0 Updates and progress

Right Care Right Place Communications sub-group

- The RCRP Communications sub-group has recently convened. The group contains representation from NHS trusts, London region, London Councils and Metropolitan Police.
- A first draft communications plan co-produced with partner agencies is due to be circulated next week. This group reports into the London region RCRP Partners Board.

⁴ The Cavendish Square Group is a collaboration of the ten NHS trusts that provide mental health services in London. <https://www.cavendishsquaregroup.co.uk/>

⁵ The date has been moved a few times but is now confirmed as 1 November 2023.

Communications

- A series of live broadcast events are being planned for frontline workers to hear directly from the partners involved on what RCRP is and what they can expect. The sessions (including one for public) will be iterative and build on what attendees want to know more about. The first is due to take place beginning of October.
- A central NHS webpage is being created. This will include an FAQ document which is currently being drafted to help answer some of the basic questions people will have. The webpage will also include two leaflets – one for staff and the other for patients and carers. It will also host the videos from the broadcast events for on demand viewing.

Ongoing updates

- There is a currently a communication protocol being developed which will recommend future updates are provided directly via London Councils.

END

