

# Equality Impact Assessment



## Name of project/proposal

Hampshire AMHP Service - Business Case for Change

Contact name

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Department

Adult Services

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## Purpose for project/proposal

The purpose of this paper is to outline the case for change to the service model for the delivery of the Hampshire Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) Service. The AMHP role is identified and defined within Statute as per the Mental Health Act 1983. MHA Code of Practice states:-

'LSSAs are responsible for ensuring that sufficient AMHPs are available to carry out their roles under the Act, including assessing patients to decide whether an application for detention should be made. To fulfill their statutory role, LSSAs must have arrangements in place in their area to provide a 24-hour service that can respond to patients' needs'.

The preferred AMHP Service model is one which makes clear distinctions in terms of its professional identity and operational framework. The department should benefit from having a strengthened, more responsive service which will have the potential to provide thorough and accurate outcomes for people in need of assessment in times of crisis. Staff should feel supported to be able to specialise their competence on complex work whether this be AMHP or Social Work casework whilst not losing the valued AMHP resource in either Community or specialist AMHP services. Above all, this model enables services to improve productivity whilst being 'future proofed' with a strengthened approach to Mental Health Social Work in all of its various forms.

Distinct AMHP and Mental Health Social Work service lines increase the prospect of improved quality outcomes for people who need social and health care services. The preferred service option provides an inbuilt flexibility for staff to specialise their focus on the ever increasing complexities of legal social work in Tier One and Two or to prioritise their expertise upon their longer term casework and social work practice in Tier Three.

This model widens the opportunity for AMHPs to be based in settings outside of mental health services where legal expertise should be encouraged to grow for assessing children, people with learning disabilities, older persons etc.

The proposed AMHP Service will include the development of a team which will be managed centrally. A full time AMHP role will be developed working from workbases across the county in line with a 'patch based approach'. The AMHP service will seek to provide dedicated AMHP provision from 0830am-2200 hrs from Monday to Friday to complement the existing OOHs AMHP team. This will mean that AMHPs in the dedicated service will be expected to undertake shift arrangements between daytime service hours which will include working in the evenings when required. AMHPs will be supported to develop their skills and improve their expertise alongside the BIA colleagues enhancing their competence to make confident decisions when in receipt of referrals for MHA assessments. AMHPs who are not working in the dedicated AMHP service will continue to be supported with their professional development as a warranted AMHP in Hampshire with support from the dedicated service whilst acting as a key resource in their community setting.

## Consultation

Has a consultation been carried out?

Planned

Consultation for this service change has taken place with staff across the County on an informal basis in October 2013.

Formal consultation with staff is due to take place in April 2014 who are likely to be affected by this change.

## Statutory considerations

### Impact

Age	Low
Disability	Medium
Sexual orientation	Low
Race	Low
Religion and belief	Low
Gender reassignment	Low
Sex	Low
Marriage and civil partnership	Low
Pregnancy and maternity	Low

### Other policy considerations

Poverty Low  
Rurality Low  
Other factors Low  
If other please describe

Geographical impact  
Have you identified any medium or high impact?\*

All Hampshire  
 Yes  No

## Equality statement

There is a medium impact identified in the proposed change to the AMHP service for people living with disability in need of MHA assessment. This impact can be described as a positive one for the purposes of those who are referred for assessment where this development is set out to improve outcomes.

The introduction of a new AMHP service will require a full time AMHP role to be developed between the service hours of 0830-2200hrs from Monday to Friday. The proposal is underpinned by clear evidence for the necessity of improved outcomes for people in receipt of this service. These outcomes include faster response times, more dedicated expertise to an increasingly complex area of law, more efficient distribution of resources to meet recorded demand particularly in support of the out of hours service, strengthened social care focus for mental health services, clearer accountability for legal responsibilities of Hampshire County Council, improved opportunity for diverse AMHP expertise across the County, improved workforce planning opportunities, strengthened support for partnership working with health and other public/ third sector organisations.

The service will require changes to existing staffing and operational arrangements. Existing Adult Mental Health AMHP staff will be invited to make an expression of interest to join the new service which will include a shift pattern of working which will extend into evenings on a rotational basis. This service transition will need to take account of staff work/ life balance and flexible working arrangements will be implemented to accommodate staff needs (i.e. caring/ family commitments) with service demand. AMHPs will be based in local patch based offices to ensure there is equity of travel entitlement regardless of proximity to the AMHP hub.

Staff recruited into the new AMHP service from outside the organisation will stipulate the requirement to work in accordance with a shift expectation.

## Potential Mitigating Actions

Staff arrangements in the new AMHP service will affect those existing staff who will be invited to make an expression of interest to join the new AMHP service. Shift working arrangements will be developed to ensure there is a flexible approach to accommodate service need with personal commitments and responsibilities. Staff will be based in office locations across the County which will not impact on the equity of travel expense entitlement.

Date to review actions 01 Nov 2014

## Final decision date

Final decision date due 30 Mar 2014  
Decision to be made by DMT