

AMHP Service

Staff Welfare Practice Guidance

Organisations	Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) Bedford Borough Council (BBC) Luton Borough Council (LBC) East London Foundation Trust (ELFT)		
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Right Care, Right Person Statement:

Right Care, Right Person (RCRP) (DoH, July 2023) sets out a collective national commitment from the Home Office, Department of Health & Social Care, the National Police Chiefs' Council, Association of Police and Crime Commissioners, and NHS England to work to end the inappropriate and avoidable involvement of police in responding to incidents involving people.

EDT and the AMHP Service will signpost and respond to contact's taking into consideration the RCRP principles. Meaning, where possible the right person with the rights skills, training and expertise will respond. Staff will use the escalation process in place if they feel this is required. The police have a legal duty to Keep the Kings peace, respond to imminent threat to life and respond where a crime has been committed. All documents will be reviewed and updated in 2025 to include specific details relating to RCRP.

Contents

Right Care, Right Person Statement:	3
AMHP Service Daily Expectations Practice Guidance	6
1. Introduction	6
2. Expectations at the beginning of the day	6
3. Expectations at the end of the day	7
4. Relating Policy / Practice Guidance	7
AMHP Working Hours Guidance	8
1. Introduction	8
2. AMHPs Responsibility	8
3. Approval of Additional Hours.....	9
4. Sickness	9
5. Related Policies / Practice Guidance.....	9
AMHP Competences, Standards and Expectations	10
1. Introduction	10
2. Employment and Approval of AMHPs	10
3. MHA Regulations	11
4. Support available for newly approved AMHP and AMHPs returning to practice	11
5. AMHP Supervision.....	12
6. AMHP Health and Safety.....	14
7. AMHP Training	15
8. AMHP Competences and Standards	16
9. Relating Policy / Practice Guidance	16
10. Appendices.....	16
Lone Working Guidance	17
1. Introduction	17
2. Scope	17
3. Definition.....	17
4. Risks associated with lone working	17
5. Assessment of risk.....	18
6. Lone working from home.....	19
7. Relevant guidance and legislation	19
Workforce Strategy	20
1. Introduction	20
2. Strategic Operating Context	20

3.	Organisational Objectives	21
4.	Learning and Development Framework	22
5.	Training Funding.....	23
6.	Monitoring and Retention of the AMHP Workforce	24
7.	Lead AMHP	26
8.	Relating Policies / Practice Guidance.....	26

AMHP Service Daily Expectations Practice Guidance

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Daytime AMHP Service has routines in place to ensure a consistent approach from all AMHP's who support the service. The routines are beneficial so the expectations of AMHP's are clearly defined.
- 1.2 This Practice Guidance has been developed to ensure the Daily Expectations of the AMHP Service are defined.

2. Expectations at the beginning of the day

- 2.1 There are varying working arrangements for AMHPs within the Daytime AMHP Service, some AMHPs will work from an office base and others will work remotely. This will be agreed between the AMHP and their AMHP line manager.
- 2.2 AMHPs who attend the office are required to attend their relevant base by 09:00hrs every day unless otherwise discussed and agreed. All AMHPs will attend a morning handover meeting which is held remotely so all AMHPs can be involved.
- 2.3 Prior to the handover meeting the Daytime AMHP Service email inbox, and answer phone will require review for referral requests that are pending, this will be done by the AMHP Lead and/ or team admin.
- 2.4 In line with the Handover Practice Guidance the AMHP Lead will liaise with the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) On-call Manager to obtain a handover regarding any ongoing Mental Health Act Assessment (MHAA) or new referrals.
- 2.5 A daily (but brief) handover meeting will be led by the AMHP Lead and held with all AMHPs, AMHP Support, AMHP Candidates and AMHP admin will be present to discuss (as a minimum):
 - On-going work from previous working day;
 - New referrals;
 - Assessments 'in progress' (i.e. where a referral has been received some days earlier, but the assessment is still pending).
 - Any challenges or support required by AMHPs.
- 2.6 All AMHPs and members of the extended AMHP Team are expected to attend the team daily handover meeting promptly. The handover meeting will review the outcome of all the previous days AMHP referrals and act as a forum to discuss all the current days' referrals. All referrals will be subject to review by the AMHP Leads who have the overall responsibility to arrange for rota AMHPs to consider referrals on behalf of the LSSA; where it is possible that an application for admission to hospital or guardianship is indicated.
- 2.7 The Daytime AMHP Service allocation sheet will record who has been present at the handover meeting and the recorded outcome of the referral review, details for pending referrals and referral outcome for the previous day's referrals. A clear record of which AMHP has been allocated will be retained in this document.

- 2.8 A brief entry in the service users RiO notes will be made to reflect the handover discussion and plan.
- 2.9 The AMHP Lead has the overall responsibility for the allocation of duty AMHPs to consider referrals on behalf of the LSSA; where there is an indication that application for admission to hospital or guardianship is required. This responsibility can be delegated to other AMHPs if the AMHP Lead is not present. If this happens the reviewing AMHP should have the required level of competency to carry out this task safely and efficiently and should not review referrals that they then undertake the assessment for.
- 2.10 All Daytime AMHP Service activity needs to be recorded on RiO, through the opening and closing of referrals, uploading of AMHP reports and each AMHP is responsible for diarising and outcoming of their assessment activity. This includes all preparatory work completed ahead of assessment and time taken to complete all relevant documentation, arrange a bed, await conveyance and reports post assessment.
- 2.11 The decision-making section of the AMHP referral form needs to be completed as part of the review process and signed by the AMHP Lead. The referrer must be offered verbal and written referral feedback (via a copy of the completed referral from being uploaded to RiO/ emailed to the referrer) regarding the outcome of their referral.
- 2.12 If an AMHP has been allocated to consider the referral, the AMHP will then be responsible for completing the rest of the decision making section of the referral outcome and providing a written copy to the referrer, as well as verbal feedback regarding the agreed plan.

3. Expectations at the end of the day

- 3.1 At the end of the AMHP working day, the AMHPs should follow the Handover Practice Guidance for any ongoing or outstanding referrals or Action.
- 3.2 The AMHP is responsible for ensuring all documents and information are recorded in line with the Recording Practice Guidance and as needed. Should there be any difficulties in this area the AMHP is responsible for liaising with the AMHP Lead or Operational Manager.
- 3.3 If an AMHP is still out on an assessment, their location, expected time of completion (where this can be worked out), and contact telephone number should be given to the AMHP Lead or Operational Manager. Contact will be made with the ELFT on-call manager if needed to make them aware of the situation. The AMHP Lead or Operational Manager will liaise with the EDT On-call Manager for support and sharing of information if needed.

4. Relating Policy / Practice Guidance

- Handover Practice Guidance
- Recording information practice guidance
- Escalation Practice Guidance
- Competences, Standards and Expectations Practice Guidance

AMHP Working Hours Guidance

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Practice Guidance has been developed to rationalise agreements for AMHPs who work additional hours.
- 1.2 It has been acknowledged different organisations will utilise different terminology. This Practice Guidance will be applied with the understanding that terminology may differ, but the underlying principles remain consistent.
- 1.3 This Practice Guidance describes the principles and guidance to be applied when AMHPs work over and above their contracted hours. It includes additional hours AMHPs work when undertaking duties for the AMHP Day Services.
- 1.4 Agreements for additional hours for the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) are not included in this Practice Guidance. EDT Officers will liaise with the EDT On-call Manager should there be a need to work additional hours, this will be recorded via supervision and on monthly additional hours forms. All documents can be found in the EDT SharePoint File.
- 1.5 Under the section 75 agreement East London Foundation Trust (ELFT) manages the Daytime AMHP Service on behalf of all three LSSAs, Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC), Luton Borough Council (LBC) and Bedford Borough Council (BBC). CBC hosts on behalf of all three LSSAs the emergency AMHP provision out of hours via the EDT. The operating hours for the Daytime AMHP Service are Monday to Thursday 0900hrs-1700hrs and Friday 0900hrs-1630hrs, AMHP's are expected to undertake their usual contracted hours whilst on AMHP duty. The AMHP Service and the AMHP rota draws on AMHPs from ELFT and the three Local Authorities.
- 1.6 The aim of the Practice Guidance is to ensure sound procedures are in place to agree additional hours worked by AMHPs and to ensure Managers are clear on their roles and responsibilities when providing management oversight and support to AMHPs.
- 1.7 This Practice Guidance also applies to locums who may work additional hours, the locum AMHPs Line Manager will approve additional hours via timesheets submitted.

2. AMHPs Responsibility

- 2.1 Due to the nature of the business, it is not unusual for AMHPs to work over and above their contracted hours. Reasons might include delays in receipt of referrals, s.12 doctor availability, delays in bed identification, complex assessments or transport delays.
- 2.2 All AMHPs are aware that their role may require working additional hours.
- 2.3 In line with best practice, it is expected assessments are completed by one AMHP. AMHPs should attempt to complete an assessment to reduce the need for handovers and to reduce the impact of another Mental Health Act Assessment (MHAA) being co-ordinated.
- 2.4 If an AMHP shift will exceed 12 hours or 16 hours in the case of EDT, they will contact the AMHP Lead and their Line Manager to review the situation and agree actions required. In exceptional circumstances, arrangements will be made for another AMHP to be allocated to the case. In the event that a handover is being arranged between AMHP Day Services and EDT it is important that all AMHPs refer to the Handover Practice Guidance. Wherever possible, a contingency plan will be put in place when an AMHP is going over their hours.

- 2.5 AMHPs are notified of their allocated rota dates in advance and will take responsibility to liaise with their Line Manager accordingly in order to manage their workload.
- 2.6 When AMHPs are on the rota, their manager will ensure that their diary is clear for this day. It is recommended that the AMHP has a clear diary the following day in order to allow time for completion of AMHP reports. This is to provide maximum flexibility if additional hours are worked. Whilst these agreements are reached in discussion with their manager, it is expected that the AMHP will be fully supported to ensure their health and wellbeing is maintained.
- 2.7 At the earliest opportunity the AMHP will notify their Line Manager and the AMHP Lead, in writing, of the additional hours worked and the reasons for this.

3. Approval of Additional Hours

- 3.1 The AMHP's Line Manager is responsible for ensuring worktime directives are not breached and should seek Human Resources (HR) advice if necessary.
- 3.2 The AMHP's Line Manager is responsible for ensuring AMHP welfare, including consideration of time off in lieu or payment for additional hours. The AMHP and Line Manager will reach an appropriate agreement regarding the approval of additional hours.
- 3.3 All time in lieu will be recorded in line with the AMHP's host organisations policy and procedures. Payment for additional hours will be recorded and paid in line with the AMHP's host organisational procedures at the organisations agreed rate.
- 3.4 If there is a dispute regarding approval of hours this will be escalated in line with each organisations own HR procedures.
- 3.5 In the unlikely event that an AMHP feels unsupported in managing the demands of AMHP and their substantive work, they should raise this with their Line Manager in the first instance. All four organisations (CBC, LBC, BBC & ELFT) have signed up to provide a supportive working environment to AMHPs that assists them to discharge their duty without compromise and with the understanding that on occasions, there could be an impact, due to the unpredictable demands of the AMHP role.
- 3.6 The AMHP, the AMHP Lead and the AMHP's Line Manager will monitor the additional hours worked on a regular basis. Should an issue arise in respect of the number of additional hours being worked, all parties will meet to discuss this so that there is clarity regarding this, and the situation can be managed or monitored effectively, and the appropriate duty of care can be imparted to the AMHP.

4. Sickness

- 4.1 In the case of sickness on a duty day, the AMHP must inform the AMHP Operational Manager and their Line Manager as soon as possible. It is then the responsibility of the AMHP Operational Manager to decide if the AMHP back up needs to be used to cover the AMHP sickness.
- 4.2 Any difficulties providing the AMHP service must be escalated to the AMHP Operational Manager for further discussions and actions.

5. Related Policies / Practice Guidance

- Handover Practice Guidance

AMHP Competences, Standards and Expectations

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Mental Health Act (MHA) places on Local Social Services Authorities (LSSAs) the duty to provide AMHP Services. Under the section 75 agreement East London Foundation Trust (ELFT) manages the Daytime AMHP Service on behalf of all three LSSAs, Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC), Luton Borough Council (LBC) and Bedford Borough Council (BBC). CBC host on behalf of all three LSSAs the AMHP provision out of hours via the Emergency Duty Team (EDT).
- 1.2 LSSAs are responsible for ensuring that sufficient AMHPs are available to carry out their roles under the MHA and should have arrangements in place to ensure an AMHP service is provided 24 hours a day to respond in a timely manner to a person's needs.
- 1.3 Each LSSA is responsible for its own AMHP Service provision, approval system and standards; this local Practice Guidance represents a summary of best practice standards and guidance taken from a national and local perspective as there are currently no set national governance processes in place for AMHP Services.
- 1.4 This Practice Guidance should be used in conjunction with the supervising organisations Supervision Policy.

2. Employment and Approval of AMHPs

- 2.1 The LSSAs are also responsible for the Approval of AMHPs for the purposes of the Mental Health Act (MHA). An AMHP can only be Approved by one LSSA and the AMHP acts under the authority of that LSSA when acting in the role of AMHP. Under the Act, AMHPs are not required to be employed by the LSSA, but all need to be Approved by the LSSA. Local arrangements across Bedfordshire and Luton are that a Bedfordshire/ Luton AMHP will be Approved by one of the three LSSAs (usually the one for the area where they are based), and upon successful approval/re-approval will be issued with letters of authorisation permitting them to act on behalf of the other LSSAs also.
- 2.2 All LSSA's will follow the joint Approval Policy to ensure a consistent approach is adopted within Central Bedfordshire, Bedford and Luton.
- 2.3 Locum AMHPs are employed by EDT and the Daytime AMHP Day Services to support the delivery of AMHP provision, each organisation will follow their own organisations processes regarding the employment of Locum workers. Pay will be in line with locally agreed rates for each organisation.
- 2.4 The employing organisation and Approving LSSA will obtain confirmation and keep records of the following prior to the AMHP practicing:
 - the name of the AMHP;
 - the AMHPs profession;
 - the AMHPs date of Approval;
 - A copy of the Approval card/authorisation;

- details of the completion of ongoing training;
 - details of the completion of ongoing supervision and/or professional development;
 - the names of other LSSAs for whom the AMHP has agreed to act as an AMHP.
- 2.5 It is the responsibility of the organisation employing the AMHP and the Daytime AMHP Service to monitor and review Approval arrangements and ensure the AMHP has the appropriate competence in dealing with people who are suffering from a mental disorder.
- 2.6 All AMHPs will have an additional 'bolt on' contracts to their substantive job description in relation to their roles and responsibilities as an AMHP. This will include details regarding the training, supervision, support, professionals meeting attendance, report writing and working arrangements. The contract will also provide details of the organisational support expected from the LSSA and/ or ELFT regarding remuneration, time to attend training and supervision.

3. MHA Regulations

- 3.1 LSSA have a number to duties under the MHA regulations for AMHPs who undertake assessments on their behalf. All organisations are committed to ensure the following regulations are adhered to:
- To ensure that all AMHPs have access to professional supervision and support in their role as AMHPs
 - Provide a minimum of 18 hours refresher training relevant to the AMHP role each year, this is to include a legal update
 - LSSAs are responsible for ensuring the professional competence of AMHPs in their role, and for removing or suspending their warrant as necessary
 - LSSAs have a responsibility for the health and safety of AMHPs whilst they are undertaking assessments on their behalf
 - Provision of legal indemnity for AMHPs, whilst undertaking their role
 - Access to legal advice whilst carrying out AMHP duties.
- 3.2 These regulations will be monitored and reviewed via the AMHP Supervision and AMHP Competencies.

4. Support available for newly approved AMHP and AMHPs returning to practice

- 4.1 It is acknowledged newly Approved AMHPs or AMHPs returning to practice may require additional support in order to carry out their role. AMHPs and their line manager will consider what support is required and will ensure the supervision agreement reflects this.
- 4.2 Additional support available could include:
- Shadowing opportunities to observe other AMHPs practice.
 - Support from another AMHP when undertaking complex assessments.
 - Case reflections following MHAA to identify future learning and development needs.

- Debrief sessions for any challenging or complex MHAA, to ensure AMHPs wellbeing is supported.
- Facilitating additional training to support development or areas of learning identified.
- Additional supervision to ensure competencies and standards are enhanced.
- Arrangements for AMHP to be allocated a “buddy” who will be an experienced AMHP. The Buddy can be contacted as needed and will have regular meetings with the AMHP to explore issues or practice as required and will facilitate detailed case discussions.

5. AMHP Supervision

- 5.1 The purpose of supervision is to establish the accountability of the AMHP to their employing organisation and to promote the AMHPs professional development. The process of supervision between the AMHP and the supervisor ensures a link between the values, policies and statutory responsibilities of the organisation and the delivery of efficient and effective services to service users and carers within available resources and eligibility frameworks.
- 5.2 To take account of the fact that the AMHP role is delivered by multi-professionals who may have more than one position, distinction is made between Management Supervision (undertaken in the AMHPs base team) and Professional AMHP Supervision.
- 5.3 Professional AMHP Supervision will be focussed on the supervisee’s AMHP practice and is an opportunity to systematically reflect on and understand the needs of person coming into contact with services, their families and professionals supporting them. Supervisions considers the AMHPs interventions and responses in the context of undertaking AMHP duties.
- 5.4 Professional AMHP supervision should aim to:
- Reflect on emotional issues arising from and associated with AMHP work
 - Reflect on application of specific theoretical frameworks and evidence-based practice and updating knowledge and skills and relating this to practice
 - Advance of practice with regards to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults
 - Reflect on profession-specific input to contribute to the overall objectives of the service
 - Assess adherence to professional guidelines and standards
 - Promote Professional development, continuing education and training
 - Discuss cases requiring additional, specific professional expertise
 - Encourage and enable the worker to learn and develop new, improved working practices
 - Help the worker to gain an overview of their work and acquire fresh insights into their practice
 - Provide an opportunity for the worker to share work experiences
 - Foster a good professional culture for student placements

- 5.5 Professional AMHP Supervision will be carried out at least three times per year, as a minimum within Daytime AMHP Services. For Daytime substantive AMHPs and EDT AMHPs supervision is undertaken on a 4-6 week period. More frequent supervision may be requested by the AMHP and may be necessary in cases where closer monitoring and supervision is required due to practice related concerns or issues.
- 5.6 The Daytime AMHP Service and EDT have the responsibility for ensuring that provision for AMHP support (at least quarterly, via AMHP support reflective practice session) and de-brief as required (Appendix 2 de-brief). AMHP Support is also available via members of the AMHP leadership teams and the offer of increased managerial and professional supervision to be provided as required. AMHP Away Days will be provided with the intention of providing collective team development and support.
- 5.7 The content and duration of supervision may vary according to the job and the needs of the AMHP. However, as a minimum, the following supervision standards will apply:
- Supervisors will have been trained in supervision;
 - Written supervision contracts will be agreed by both parties and reviewed on a regular basis. The contract will include expectations, goals, boundaries, rights and responsibilities, methods of recording and confidentiality.
 - Professional 1:1 AMHP Supervision should take place at least three times per reporting year.
 - Professional Supervision may be provided in a group.
 - EDT Peer AMHP Supervision held monthly.
 - In cases where the professional supervisor is also the management supervisor, supervision should occur once every 6 weeks (minimum 8 times over 12 month period).
 - Where appropriate, the supervisor should support the supervisee in raising concerns using available LSSA/Trust policies including the Whistle Blowing Policy.
 - A written record of the supervision should be recorded and signed off by both parties.
 - Where there is a dispute over the supervision record – this should not be signed and mediation should be sought by the supervisor.
 - All future supervisors shall have access to previous supervision notes.
 - In the event of a change of supervisor, a new supervision contract should be completed.
 - Supervision contracts should be completed/reviews 6 monthly in line with the Supervision Policy.
- 5.8 In order to ensure that supervision provides a supportive and reflective learning environment for the AMHP, the supervision guidance detailed below should be followed:
- At least two cases should be identified to be discussed (brief details should be included on the first page of the supervision notes proforma). If the AMHP has not undertaken any assessments during the supervision period, then a suitable discussion topic should be identified in advance such as recent case law. This element of supervision should also

include discussion of any recent, relevant AMHP Report audits undertaken by the AMHP Lead.

- Supervision should facilitate the opportunity to reflect and identify new learning as well as further areas for development. Areas of practice that went well should be discussed; areas that the AMHP found particularly difficult or complex, and any implications for practice, should also be explored.
- The AMHP Supervision Competency Form provides a record of competencies that need to be evidenced to ensure practice remains relevant and safe. It can be completed after any supervision, but it must be completed annually. It is the responsibility of the AMHP to complete the document, indicating which competencies have been met, or are yet to be covered by the AMHP in that quarterly AMHP supervision period. It is envisaged that all competencies will be met within a year of practice.
- Where competences are not met, the learning and development plan will be reviewed to support the AMHP in being able to demonstrate competency at the soonest point after the 12 months have expired. Appropriate and proportionate risk assessments and strategies for mitigation will be considered on an individual basis to ensure practice remains safe.
- Dates of all supervision and Supervision session discussions should be recorded on a supervision form must be included in an AMHP portfolio and kept on AMHP data base for Approval purposes.
- In instances where there is poor AMHP Performance that has not improved through increased supervision or requires more formal monitoring and action the AMHPs' host employer (LSSA or ELFT) will be responsible for managing the performance of the AMHP via their own capability policy and procedures. ELFT and the Approving LSSA have joint responsibility for escalating and managing this process in partnership with the AMHPs' host employer. In circumstances where the outcome of the host employer's capability process is the AMHPs' capability is of concern this will be brought to the attention of the Approving LSSA, who have the responsibility to provide urgent review of the AMHPs' Approval status.

5.9 The AMHP Operational Manager and EDT Service Manager are responsible for completing audits of the supervision completed. These Audits will be undertaken on a quarterly basis and will focus on the frequency and quality of the supervision be held.

6. AMHP Health and Safety

- 6.1 When joining the Daytime AMHP Service or EDT, AMHPs are required to complete a Health & Safety contact details form which will be provided to the AMHP's line manager. Thereafter should there be any change in detail it is the AMHPs responsibility to complete a new form. Once completed it should be emailed to AMHP or EDT Administrator and line manager.
- 6.2 MHAA may take place in a variety of settings and these settings will to some extent predict the potential risk to AMHPs and protective factors or resources which can be utilised e.g. ward nurses, police. AMHPs should liaise with other duty AMHPs, AMHP Lead or EDT On-call Manager to ensure that the whereabouts of MHAA they are attending is known and recorded.

- 6.3 In the event that an AMHP has to work beyond normal working hours when completing an assessment, it is essential that they notify the AMHP Lead or EDT On-call Manager, particularly of safe completion of an assessment. There is Lone Working Practice Guidance which AMHPs should follow in all instances.
- 6.4 It is essential that AMHPs consider their safety not just during MHAA but throughout all they do. This is especially so after the assessment when conveyance is being arranged. AMHPs should obtain support from relevant partners if it is deemed additional support is required. The AMHP must ensure they liaise with the AMHP Lead, AMHP Operational Manager or EDT On-call Manager to discuss how risks will be supported.
- 6.5 Additional guidance relating to staff safety can be found within wider ELFT/ EDT policies and all AMHPs should make sure that they are familiar with them, including:
- ELFT Lone Worker Policy and Monitoring Staff Whereabouts protocol:
 - ELFT Dignity at Work – Violence at Work: Prevention and Management Section for more detailed guidance.
 - CBC Lone Working Policy
- 6.6 If an AMHP who is working for the Daytime AMHP Service is working outside of usual operating hours and the AMHP Operational Manager or AMHP Lead cannot be obtained the ELFT on-call manager can be called on 01582 657568.
- 6.7 EDT have an On-call Manager available during EDT operating hours. Contact can be made with the EDT On-call Manager when required on the 01462 757929.
- 6.8 EDT at times use Casual EDT On-Call Managers. In the event that the EDT On-Call Manager is not an AMHP, or the EDT On-Call Manager requires further guidance, this can be sought following the escalation guidance.

7. AMHP Training

- 7.1 All AMHPs are required to attend a minimum of 18 hours Mandatory AMHP specific training (one must be a legal update), which is hosted via CBC on behalf of all the Local Authorities. It is recommended the AMHP pre-arranges this training, so attendance can be confirmed. AMHPs are reminded training should be deemed a priority. In the event the AMHP is unable to attend training, the relevant line manager should be informed as soon as possible.
- 7.2 All AMHPs are expected to attend at least 4 AMHP Professional Meetings per year. All Daytime AMHP Service substantive team AMHPs are expected to attend the AMHP Professionals and Business Team meetings each month.
- 7.3 EDT AMHPs are expected to attend the monthly EDT Team Meeting.
- 7.4 All AMHPs are expected to attend AMHP Away Days per year.
- 7.5 Whilst it is acknowledged the AMHP will need to undertake 18 hours of refresher training in relation to the AMHP role, the LSSA's agree this can be obtained from a variety of sources. The AMHP should attend AMHP specific training of preference, however, training provided by their employing organisation or relevant independent training can be accepted in some

cases. For example, employing organisation's Mental Health Act training may cover the main objectives of a legal update, as an interim measure, until the AMHP could attend the AMHP specific legal update. Attendance of employing organisations or independent training is not intended to be done as a substitute for AMHP specific training, provided via the LSSA. AMHPs should discuss their training attendance and requirements regularly within AMHP supervision to ensure the requirements for re-warranting are achieved.

- 7.6 The Daytime AMHP Operational Manager and EDT Service Manager are responsible for reviewing AMHP training compliance and reporting any concerns to the AMHPs Approving Local Authority.

8. AMHP Competences and Standards

- 8.1 Social Work England currently sets the approval criteria for the AMHP training programmes; however, it does not stipulate how professionals undertaking AMHP training must demonstrate the competencies set out in Schedule 2 of The Mental Health (Approved Mental Health Professionals) (Approval) (England) Regulations 2008. This is down to LSSAs to decide and has therefore resulted in great variation across the country.
- 8.2 In 2016, the government announced its intention to establish a new social work body, that will take over this function; establishing processes and procedures for education providers and standard knowledge, understanding and skills professionals must have when they complete their AMHP training. The Independent regulation of the AMHP role has also been championed by the Department of Health and Care Quality Commission in response the national need to reduce variation and increase overall numbers of AMHPs to match the current level of need.
- 8.3 Bedfordshire AMHP Service and EDT are committed to support all AMHPs in achieving the competencies. The AMHP Competency Record will be reviewed in supervisions and support provided accordingly. It is the responsibility of the AMHP to ensure this document is updated and shared with their AMHP supervisor.

9. Relating Policy / Practice Guidance

- ELFT Lone Worker Policy
- Monitoring Staff Whereabouts protocol;
- ELFT Dignity at Work
- CBC Lone Working Policy
- Warranting Policy

10. Appendices

- Appendix 1: AMHP Competency Record
- Appendix 2: AMHP Debrief

Lone Working Guidance

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Emergency Duty Team (EDT) responds to emergency Mental Health Act Assessments (MHAA) out of hours. It is hosted by Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) and provides a service to Bedford Borough Council (BBC) and Luton Borough Council (LBC) under Service Level Agreements.
- 1.2 East London Foundation Trust (ELFT) is responsible for the delivery of Mental Health Adult Social Care services within Bedfordshire and Luton, including the Daytime AMHP Service, as part of a section 75 agreement.
- 1.3 When undertaking the AMHP role, there may be instances when AMHPs are required to work in isolation and autonomously.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This practice guidance applies to all AMHPs who may be working alone, at any time, in any of the situations described within the definition.
- 2.2 This document highlights the risks that can be presented by lone working and identifies the individuals' responsibilities and the support and mechanisms in place in order to support the AMHP within their role whilst lone working.

3. Definition

- 3.1 Lone working is defined by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) as people who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.
- 3.2 Examples of lone working for AMHPs can include:
 - working as individuals at a fixed site but are separated from others e.g. working alone in buildings or interviewing a patient/service user alone in interview rooms
 - working in a remote location, including outdoors
 - working alone away from base e.g. home visiting often involving contact with the public
 - working outside normal working hours, e.g. alone in isolated buildings or working alone in the community
 - travelling alone as part of their work e.g. travelling to meetings or travelling to the home of a patient/service user
 - working on other employers' premises or working from home.
- 3.3 Lone working does not automatically imply a higher risk of violence, but it does make workers more vulnerable. The lack of nearby support from a colleague means that lone workers may be less able to prevent an incident from occurring.

4. Risks associated with lone working

- 4.1 Risks that may affect lone workers include:
 - Physical violence and/or verbal abuse

- stress and mental health or wellbeing
- a person's medical suitability to work alone
- the workplace itself, for example if it's in a rural or isolated area

5. Assessment of risk

Responsibilities of Employee's/AMHP

- 5.1 The AMHP has a duty to take care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions at work. They must co-operate with employers and co-workers to help everyone meet their legal requirements.
- 5.2 If the AMHP has specific queries or concerns relating to health and safety in their workplace, they should talk to their employer, manager/supervisor or a health and safety representative.
- 5.3 The AMHP must complete assessments of risk prior to completing any work alone. This may include checking background information on any people being assessed, in advance, and reporting any concern of risk to the AMHP lead/ EDT On Call manager so that joint risk assessments can be implemented and managed appropriately.
- 5.4 The AMHP must report any incident that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others.
- 5.5 The AMHP must maintain their own professional development and take part in training designed to meet the requirements of this practice guidance.
- 5.6 The AMHP must inform the AMHP Lead/ EDT On Call manager or other identified person when they will be working alone, giving accurate details of their location and following an agreed plan to inform that person when the assessment is completed. This includes occasions when a staff member expects to go home following a visit rather than returning to their base location.
- 5.7 In the event that an AMHP has to work beyond normal working hours when completing an assessment, it is essential the duty AMHP Lead is notified so that necessary safe working procedures can be followed in line with due policy and process.
- 5.8 All AMHPs have access to People Safe which is an App on phones, this enables the AMHP to trigger requests for help when needed. All AMHPs will ensure this App is on their work mobile and used when lone working.

Responsibilities of the Employer/ Manager

- 5.9 Employers must identify lone workers and carry out joint risk assessments for AMHP's/ teams.
- 5.10 Employers must ensure that any accidents, hazards and violent incidents are reported, and any control measures identified are implemented.
- 5.11 Employers/ Line managers must ensure that identified lone working staff attend relevant training to keep themselves and others safe. Any identified development or training needs must be discussed within supervision and relevant support, or training made available.

- 5.12 Employers must ensure that any new staff are supported with an induction plan and considerations for buddy support during their induction period.
- 5.13 Employers must regularly review and monitor lone working policies and procedures.
- 5.14 Employers must follow the supervision policy and ensure that all AMHP's have access to regular supervision to check on well-being and report any concerns related to lone working.
- 5.15 To optimise the safety and wellbeing of all AMHPs, a form containing personal contact details will be completed when new AMHPs join the service. This information will be accessed by the relevant manager(s) only and it is the responsibility of the AMHP to keep the information up to date. Once completed it should be emailed to AMHP Administrator and relevant AMHP Co-ordinator/Lead.

6. Lone working from home

- 6.1 The AMHP working from their own home should take every reasonable precaution to ensure that their address and telephone number remain confidential. Only provided equipment by the Local Authority/ ELFT should be used to make contact with service users in conjunction with relevant IT policies and procedures.
- 6.2 There should be regular contact with the AMHP Lead/ EDT On Call manager or other designated person if working at home, and an appropriate reporting-in system should be used if completing assessments/ visits from home.

7. Relevant guidance and legislation

- 7.1 Whilst there is no specific lone worker policy within the UK, the primary legislation for health and safety include:
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
 - The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- 7.2 Specific guidance for adult social care can be found in:
- Supporting Staff that Regularly Work Alone, a Guide for Adult Social Care Employers, published by Skills for Care
- 7.3 Guidance for health workers in NHS facilities can be found from the following sources:
- Improving the Personal Safety for Lone Workers — A Guide for Staff Who Work Alone (February 2018) NHS Staff Council Health, Safety and Wellbeing Partnership Group (HSWPG)
 - Personal Safety when Working Alone: Guidance for Members Working in Health and Social Care (September 2016) Royal College of Nursing

Workforce Strategy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The role of the Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) is critical in supporting vulnerable people and their families, often at a point in their life when they are experiencing a crisis. The work AMHPs undertake when operating within the framework of the Mental Health Act (MHA) is highly valued however, it can be the case that operational, organisational and sometimes professional boundaries and challenges may appear to dilute this.
- 1.2 We continue to review the operating culture via the Quality Framework, practice support and learning and development offer that will encourage staff to see the benefits and career pathway options available, in training to be an AMHP.
- 1.3 In recognising the value of the AMHP role, the system acknowledges the role they play in being technical experts in mental health legislation and assisting partners to navigate the complex legal frameworks that statutory services have to operate within. We also recognise that because of their practice experience is at the sharp end of professional practice, they are often best placed to help us articulate what good and innovative practice looks like with a firm focus on prevention, low level intervention and community support which supports the principle of least restrictive practice.
- 1.4 We are committed to ensuring that this workforce strategy sets out how we will continue to attract, appoint, retain and develop staff who are interested in undertaking AMHP training with a view to them feeling supported and valued in their practice.
- 1.5 This document sets out a system wide, collaborative approach to reenergising this workforce in order to ensure that people who live in Luton, Bedford and Central Bedfordshire can expect to receive a high quality and equally highly valued service provided by a well-equipped, confident and capable AMHP workforce, regardless of where they work or who employs them.

2. Strategic Operating Context

- 2.1 East London NHS Foundation Trust (ELFT) with its partner Local Authorities in, Luton Borough Council (LBC), Bedford Borough Council (BBC) and Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC), are committed to offering a high quality, safe, proportionate, well led and responsive AMHP Service in relation to assessments and other activities carried out under the powers contained in the Mental Health Act (MHA, 1983, as amended 2007).
- 2.2 Under respective section 75 agreements, ELFT manage the Daytime AMHP Service on behalf of all the Local Social Service Authorities (LSSAs). CBC is commissioned by LBC and BBC to host and provide the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on behalf of its partners out of hours, including the AMHP service.
- 2.3 The MHA places a duty on the LSSA to provide AMHP Services, and as such, they are responsible for the approval and registration of all AMHPs. Additionally, LSSAs have responsibility for ensuring that the resource provided, supports AMHPs in undertaking their duties under the MHA, in responding to individual's needs, in a timely and respectful manner.

2.4 In line with CQC, each LSSA is responsible for its own AMHP provision, approval system and operating standards. The MHA regulations have a number of set regulations that LSSAs must follow in relation to AMHPs who carry out assessments on their behalf; these include –

- Ensuring all AMHPs have access to professional supervision and support in their roles as AMHPs
- Provide a minimum of 18 hours of refresher training (to include a legal update), relevant to the AMHP role annually, as determined by the LSSA
- Responsibility for the health and safety of AMHPs whilst they are carrying out assessments on its behalf
- Responsibility for professional competence in their role as an AMHP, and for removing or suspending their warrant if necessary
- Legal indemnity while carrying out the AMHP role
- Access to legal advice while carrying out AMHP duties

2.5 Locally, the Lead AMHP is responsible for oversight of the LSSA's responsibilities and is a lead for the AMHP training arrangements.

2.6 This Workforce Strategy has been developed to evidence our collaborative approach and commitment in fostering a positive operating environment that will support organisational objectives in the recruitment and retention of AMHPs in Bedfordshire and Luton.

2.7 The AMHP Governance Group (AGG), have overall responsibility for the implementation of the AMHP Workforce Strategy.

3. Organisational Objectives

3.1 The LSSAs' have agreed to the collective intention of endeavouring to train 6 AMHPs a year, spread equally across each local authority area.

3.2 The LSSAs' and ELFT will provide clear systems and operational frameworks to promote and encourage relevant staff to apply to undertake AMHP training.

3.3 The LSSAs' and ELFT, are committed to ensuring that the function and value of the AMHP role is evident within strategic and operational forums, and that the practice development and support can be clearly articulated for the purposes of recruitment and retention of the AMHPs across the system.

3.4 The LSSAs' and ELFT have instituted an agreed cross organisational approach to remunerating staff who undertake the AMHP role in recognition of their extended role that is indicative of the frequency they undertake it.

3.5 The LSSAs' and ELFT have agreed a standard AMHP contract that can be aligned to their substantive contract with their host employer (excluding Emergency Duty Team AMHPs).

3.6 The LSSAs' and ELFT are responsible for ensuring that staff who register an interest in undertaking the AMHP training, are supported to understand the level of commitment and the academic expectations that will result in the AMHP post qualification.

3.7 Arrangements to back-fill posts in order to release staff to undertake AMHP training will be in accordance with the respective Section 75 agreement.

- 3.8 The LSSAs' and ELFT though required, are equally committed to providing a positive and accessible learning and development environment to enhance and support AMHPs in providing high quality best practice.
- 3.9 The LSSAs' and ELFT will ensure that AMHPs are released from their substantive post in order to service the system wide AMHP rota, in accordance with the agreed monthly frequency.

4. Learning and Development Framework

Pre-AMHP and AMHP Training

- 4.1 There will be 2 AMHP courses commissioned every year, April and September. Nominations for officers to undertake the training need to be made to CBC. Nominations can be received from EDT, ELFT, LBC, BBC or CBC. A summary of training activity will be provided to the AMHP Strategic Governance Group on an annual basis.
- 4.2 The deadline for the September intake (including April Pre-AMHP Course) is the 31st January. The deadline for the April intake (including October Pre-AMHP Course) is 30th June.
- 4.3 Prior to the selection for Pre-AMHP Training the AMHP Candidate will require the support from their line manager. If the candidate works for ELFT support will also be required from the local Social Work Lead who will progress the nomination via the AMHP Operational Manager and Lead AMHP.
- 4.4 CBC will progress the nominations virtually and will ensure all requirements of the nomination have been achieved prior to approval. Requirements include:
- Completed nomination form.
 - Signed Learning Agreement completed by the AMHP Candidate and the nominating organisation (LSSA or ELFT agreement).
 - Confirmation the AMHP Candidate is available and employing organisation support AMHP shadowing opportunities prior to the course commencing.
- 4.5 The following nomination form needs to be completed and emailed to the Lead AMHP:

Name	Ms Alley Bee
Role	EDT Officer
Team	EDT
Local Authority	CBC
Employer	CBC
Contact No.	01234 56555555
Email	Alley.bee@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk
Cohort	September 2022

Priority	Yes – Ms Bee has recently been recruited to EDT and the role requires her to be an AMHP. The service is currently operating on locums which has created a fragility in service delivery.
Mangers Name	Mr Chuck Dilly
Managers Contact No.	011206545555
Managers Email	Chuck.dilly@centralbedfordhire.gov.uk
Allocation	CBC has confirmed funding for September 2022 intake

- 4.6 Once the nomination has been approved the AMHP Candidate will be required to shadow five days of AMHP practice. The Lead AMHP within CBC who hosts training arrangements on behalf of all LSSAs is responsible for recording the approval.
- 4.7 Regular meetings with the AMHP candidates, Social Work Leads, AMHP Operational Manager and Lead AMHP will be undertaken to ensure all requirements of the nomination have been undertaken. This will ensure AMHP Candidates are prepared for their training.
- 4.8 The LSSAs' and ELFT will ensure that the AMHP Service and EDT will have access to Practice Educators to support AMHP candidates in training.
- 4.9 The LSSAs' and ELFT will work in partnership with the University for the purposes of AMHP Candidate interviews and assessment of AMHP candidate portfolios. Representative from the LSSA and ELFT will be part of the interview and selection process.
- 4.10 Allocation of AMHP training will be prioritised by service demands. In the event that an organisation is not satisfied with decisions made in respect of allocation of training, these should be referred to the Workforce Development Manager and Lead AMHP in the first instance. In the event that a resolution cannot be reached, the matter will be escalated the respective Director for the LSSA for a final decision.

5. Training Funding

- 5.1 It is agreed that the annual cost of AMHP training is split equally between the 3 LSSA's, due to the fact that the AMHPs will be working on behalf of all 3 LSSA's. This will ensure fairness and equity across the system and that all AMHPs can be deployed to wherever the demand exists regardless of the person's Local Authority Area. CBC will pay for the AMHP training and re-charge the LSSA's accordingly.
- 5.2 The AMHP Lead and Learning and Development Manager will approve the funding of each intake on the basis of an equal three way split. This is essential in ensuring that each Local Authority has identified and forecast for the budget. CBC, Learning and Development Manager will retain a record of the AMHP Candidates and approvals for funding.
- 5.3 New AMHPs undertaking training will be required to complete a learning agreement to protect the significant investment made. If the AMHP employee leaves the organisation before a 2 year period has ended the AMHP will be expected to repay the funding of the course. It is the responsibility of each organisation to ensure the money is recovered from their employee and refund a proportion of the cost to each LSSA equally. If an ELFT

employee leaves before a 2-year period ELFT will be required to refund a proportion of the cost of training to the LSSA's and they will be responsible for recovering the cost from their employee. The repayment terms are listed below:

- Where an AMHP chooses to leave the LSSA or ELFT employment prior to obtaining the qualification or leaves within the first year of completing the AMHP course they will be required to repay 100% of the course funding.
- Where an AMHP fails to honour his/her obligation to remain in employment with the organisation for a period of 2 years from the date of qualifying the amount payable within the second year will be calculated as follows; 24 less the number of completed months of service following qualification x 100% of the total grant paid.
- Where an AMHP fails to sit for an examination within a reasonable period or fails to show satisfactory progress in his/her studies or discontinues the course, the organisation may require the repayment of the course.

- 5.4 The required AMHP refresher update training is overseen and managed by CBC on behalf of BBC, LBC and ELFT. AMHPs will review the Training Needs Analysis at the AMHP Professional Group annually and provide any amendments or updates to the Learning and Development Manager, CBC by the 5th February every year in order that it can be considered and/or commissioned and/or budgeted for.
- 5.5 LSSA'S will ensure AMHPs have access to the 18 hours refreshers training that is required.
- 5.6 Where available and appropriate, places as identified on the AMHP update training, will be offered to colleagues other than AMHPs, to optimise efficient use of resource.
- 5.7 CBC will seek to administer, engage and commission training of a quality that is appropriate to the needs identified and approved and at a cost that can evidence best value, on behalf of the 3 LSSA's.
- 5.8 CBC will charge £40 per AMHP candidate who is nominated and progresses onto the Pre-AMHP and AMHP training. This cost reflects the administration undertaken by CBC to arrange and manage the training. These costs will be split 3 ways equally.
- 5.9 For AMHP Refresher training costs are provided on an annual basis. For each AMHP Refresher Course arranged, CBC will charge £40 per course, per LSSA.

6. Monitoring and Retention of the AMHP Workforce

Ongoing recruitment

- 6.1 The LSSAs' and ELFT are committed to resourcing and supporting recruitment activity that will increase the number of trained AMHPs into the service.
- 6.2 The LSSA's and ELFT will ensure there is an AMHP Leaflet which can be distributed across the locality to promote the AMHP role and to confirm key contact details. It is important people coming into contact with services have a better understanding of the AMHP role therefore this leaflet will also be shared with people with lived experience, their carers and other professionals.
- 6.3 The Lead AMHP will meet with professionals who may be interested in undertaking the training to discuss the role and requirements.

- 6.4 The Lead AMHP, EDT and ELFT will meet with AMHP candidates prior to commencing the course to discuss the expectations of the training and support that will be available. This will provide the AMHP Candidates with a valuable opportunity to prepare for the course and discuss any queries they may have.
- 6.5 Throughout the course AMHP candidates will be encouraged to provide feedback in relation to the course and offer suggestions which may support future candidates. This will include a survey at the end of the course when AMHPs have completed their training.
- 6.6 AMHP candidates will be offered the opportunity to meet with the Lead AMHP to discuss Approval requirements and practice expectations once they commence the AMHP role.

Retention and recognising the AMHP role

- 6.7 Twice a year the Lead AMHP will arrange an AMHP Welcome Event, this will be to congratulate AMHPs who have been authorised by the LSSA's. This event will be for newly authorised AMHPs and AMHPs who have been re-approved, it is an opportunity for the AMHPs to meet the LSSA's representatives, discuss local AMHP practice and provide suggestions for future developments.
- 6.8 Twice a year the LSSA's and Lead AMHP will facilitate two AMHP Away Days, the focus of these events be agreed by AMHPs and be guided by key themes and issues impacting on the locality.
- 6.9 The LSSA's and ELFT will ensure that appropriate, regular and high-quality supervision, appraisal and development opportunities are provided to all substantive AMHPs.
- 6.10 The LSSA's and ELFT will ensure that all substantive qualified AMHPs are provided one day as protected time to prepare their portfolio for submission to the Approval panel. AMHPs are required to review their portfolio throughout the year during supervisions.
- 6.11 When an AMHP is re-approved the Local Authority will ensure they are issued with the most recent AMHP Manual to support their ongoing practice.
- 6.12 It is the responsibility of the AMHP Governance Group and AMHP Partnership Operational Group to monitor key issues effecting the AMHP Workforce as these have a direct impact on the retention of the role. These issues are highlighted in the AMHP KPI and Standards Policy and include;
- S12 Doctor availability
 - Bed availability and delays
 - Conveyance delays
 - Increase in demand on services
 - Issues affecting AMHP safety
 - Issue relating to AMHP morale and work-stress
- 6.13 EDT and the Daytime AMHP Service will provide monthly performance data to the AMHP Operational Partnership Group for monitoring purposes. Key themes will be reported to the AMHP Governance group via monthly Highlight Reports.
- 6.14 When an AMHP decides to stop practicing or leaves an organisation an AMHP exit meeting will be arranged, the Lead AMHP and employing organisation will attend this meeting. The

purpose of the meeting is to obtain feedback on their experience of practicing in the locality and any suggestions to support future AMHP practice. The feedback obtained will be fed into the AMHP Work Plan and will inform any practice developments needed in the locality.

7. Lead AMHP

- 7.1 All three LSSAs and ELFT have agreed to have one nominated Lead AMHP within Bedfordshire and Luton.
- 7.2 The Lead AMHP responsibilities include overarching responsibility for the quality, practice and support of AMHPs. This can include:
- Develop a positive operating culture across the AMHP function, providing robust leadership and support to all AMHPs.
 - Membership with the Lead AMHP Network to obtain peer support, share information and promote good practice.
 - Understand, recommend and implement national and local policy and best practice developments.
 - Monitor and review the AMHP Operational Policy guidance in line with national developments.
 - Chair AMHP Professional and Business Meetings.
 - Plan and participate in AMHP Away Days.
 - Oversee ongoing support and development of AMHP workforce
 - Advise and support on the recruitment and retention of AMHPs, including overseeing the implementing the AMHP Workforce Strategy and associated AMHP training.
 - Represent, advocate and promote the AMHP function at wider strategic forums
 - Co-ordinate Leadership meetings between AMHP services and partner agencies

8. Relating Policies / Practice Guidance

- Quality Framework
- Approval Policy
- AMHP Competencies, Standards and Expectations