

Mental Health Crisis Concordat

What is it?

The Mental Health Crisis Concordat is a national multi-agency commitment to improve the experience and outcomes for people facing mental health crisis. Linked to the national commitment to achieve “parity of esteem” between how we respond to mental health and physical health needs, the signatories to the concordat commit to the following:

“We commit to work together to improve the system of care and support so people in crisis because of a mental health condition are kept safe and helped to find the support they need – whatever the circumstances in which they first need help – and from whichever service they turn to first.

We will work together, and with local organisations, to prevent crises happening whenever possible through prevention and early intervention. We will make sure we meet the needs of vulnerable people in urgent situations. We will strive to make sure that all relevant public services support someone who appears to have a mental health problem to move towards Recovery.

Jointly, we hold ourselves accountable for enabling this commitment to be delivered across England.”

Who’s involved?

Principally the NHS, local authorities and criminal justice system are involved. Key partners include: the Department of Health, Home Office, Mind, NHS England, police services, ambulance services, community mental health trusts, social services, children’s mental health, Health Education England, Public Health England, General Practitioners and CCGs,

A full list of national Concordat signatories can be found in appendix 1

What needs to happen and when?

The concordat requires that “localities” adopt the Concordat and develop:

1. A local Mental Health Crisis Declaration that brings together the key agencies to commit to “work together to continuously improve the experience of people in mental health crisis in their locality”
2. Shared action plan to review, monitor and track improvements
3. Reduction in use of police stations as “places of safety”
4. Evidence of sound governance arrangements

NHS England has advised that all declarations and action plans must be agreed locally and uploaded to a national system by **31 December 2014**.

The expectation of NHS England is that this process would be led by the local mental health commissioners

What are the expected outcomes?

The Concordat defines a set of principles which all services involved in crisis care should adhere to.

- A. Access to support before crisis point
- B. Urgent and emergency access to crisis care
- C. Quality of treatment and care when in crisis
- D. Recovery and staying well / preventing future crises

These are used as the foundation for the declaration and action plans for local organisations across Thames Valley; in addition there is a further objective specifically for commissioners, 'Commissioning to allow earlier intervention and responsive crisis services'.

What support is there for the key partners in delivering the declarations and action plans?

The Department of Health has established a national Crisis Care Concordat team to support localities in developing plans as well as a dedicated website with additional information and templates. www.crisiscareconcordat.org.uk

At a regional level Strategic Clinical Networks (SCNs) for Mental Health are also actively supporting developments. The focus for SCNs is to support the local development of plans as well as coordinating a wider regional alignment with partners such as crime and emergency response teams. In Thames Valley a regional Crisis Care Concordat event will be held on Wednesday 17 September, at the Hilton Hotel in Reading. Further details may be found by contacting a member of the MHDN team: Linda.tait1@nhs.net or eva.morgan@nhs.net

Appendix 1

Signatories to the Concordat
Association of Ambulance Chief Executives
Association of Chief Police Officers
Association of Directors of Adult Social Services
Association of Directors of Children's Services
Association of Police and Crime Commissioners
British Transport Police
Care Quality Commission
College of Emergency Medicine
College of Policing
The College of Social Work
Department of Health
Health Education England
Home Office
Local Government Association
Mind
NHS Confederation
NHS England
Public Health England
Royal College of General Practitioners
Royal College of Nursing
Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health
Royal College of Psychiatrists

The national organisations that are signatories to this Concordat have made a commitment to work together to support local systems to achieve continuous improvements for crisis care for people with mental health issues across England.

In addition, a number of third sector and voluntary organisations have agreed to be identified formally as supporters of the Concordat.

The list of supporter organisations is available at www.gov.ukⁱ

ⁱ With our thanks to Ian Bottomley, Assistant Director of Adult Service Oxford CCG, who allowed us to use his initial summary of the Crisis Care Concordat