



Safety Planning for Mental Health Consumers Policy

1. Purpose

Mental health consumers have a right to receive care in an environment where their safety is actively promoted.

Effective clinical care of mental health consumers requires an approach by health professionals that promotes safety and recovery, founded on shared understanding, supported decision-making and shared responsibility for safety.

This policy outlines the standards to ensure a consistent approach to protect the safety of mental health consumers.

This policy further aims to promote care that is:

- recovery-oriented
- person-centred
- trauma-informed
- culturally competent
- developmentally appropriate.

This policy is a mandatory requirement for Health Service Providers (HSPs) under the *Mental Health Policy Framework* pursuant to section 26(2)(c) of the *Health Services Act 2016*.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- [MP 0122/19 Clinical Incident Management Policy](#)
- [MP 0155/21 State-wide Standardised Clinical Documentation for Mental Health Services](#)
- [Policy for Mandatory Reporting of Notifiable Incidents to the Chief Psychiatrist](#)
- [Chief Psychiatrist's Standards for Clinical Care](#)

This policy supersedes the following:

- *MP0074/17 Clinical Care of People Who May Be Suicidal Policy*
- *MP0101/18 Clinical Care of People with Mental Health Problems Who May Be At Risk of Becoming Violent or Aggressive Policy*
- *MP 0070/17 Mental Health Emergency and Follow Up Information on Discharge from Hospital Emergency Departments Policy.*

2. Applicability

This policy is applicable to all HSPs that provide public mental health services, including through emergency departments.

This policy is only applicable to contracted health entities where it is explicitly stated in the contract between the contracted health entity and the State of Western Australia or Health Service Provider. The State of Western Australia or Health Service Provider is responsible for ensuring that any obligation to comply with this policy by the contracted health entity is accurately reflected in the relevant contract and managed accordingly.

3. Policy Requirements

HSPs must:

- develop and maintain local procedures consistent with the [Safety Planning Procedures for Mental Health Consumers](#) to assess, identify, prevent, manage, and reflect upon incidents, and to continually improve the safety of the healthcare environment. These procedures must also include information on how health professionals can access risk assessment and safety planning training.
- ensure safety planning processes are sensitive to diverse sexualities and genders (LGBTQIA+) and are culturally sensitive and appropriate for consumers from Aboriginal or ethnoculturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This includes recognising obligations under the *Mental Health Act 2014* (MHA 2014), such as collaboration with Aboriginal mental health workers and other Aboriginal staff in the assessment, planning and treatment of Aboriginal consumers, particularly where no close family members are present.
- provide appropriate training and development to health staff who regularly interact with mental health consumers to ensure they are competent to manage incidents involving mental health consumers, i.e., people who may be suicidal and people at risk of becoming violent or aggressive.
- ensure health professionals:
 - complete risk assessment and, where necessary, safety planning with all mental health consumers receiving care from their public mental health service.
 - document management strategies, including prevention and directions in the event of an escalation of care in the following Psychiatric Services Online Information System (PSOLIS) documents available in webPSOLIS or, in the event of an outage or for sites with IT connection issues, in PDF writable forms available on the [Mental Health Unit intranet site](#) (as appropriate to the clinical setting):
 - Triage (in appropriate settings/circumstances)
 - Risk Assessment and Management Plan (RAMP) (Adult)
 - Risk Assessment and Management Plan (RAMP) (Child and Adolescent)
 - Treatment, Support and Discharge Plan (TSDP).

Health professionals in non-mental health sites such as emergency departments may use appropriate equivalent documentation.

- develop safety plans for individual mental health consumers, where risks are identified.

4. Compliance Monitoring

On an annual basis, the Mental Health Unit (MHU) on behalf of the System Manager, will monitor compliance with policy requirements for assurance purposes by analysing mental health incident data involving mental health consumers regarding suicide, violence and aggression and sexual safety from the approved Clinical Incident Management System.

The MHU may, from time to time, source information from collateral sources (e.g. the Department of Health's Patient Safety Surveillance Unit and the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist) to evaluate this policy's effectiveness.

Each HSP must demonstrate compliance by providing the following by 30 June annually to the Department of Health's MHU:

- a. HSP procedure/s relating to mental health consumer safety planning consistent with the requirements of this system-wide policy
- b. annual thematic reviews of all reportable suicide/attempted suicide incidents and violent and aggressive incidents as required under sections 1.3 and 1.4 of the Safety Planning Procedures for Mental Health Consumers.

5. Related Documents

The following documents are mandatory pursuant to this policy:

- [Safety Planning Procedures for Mental Health Consumers](#)
- The following PSOLIS documents or, when necessary (see above), PDF writable documents:
 - Triage
 - Risk Assessment and Management Plan (RAMP) (Adult)
 - Risk Assessment and Management Plan (RAMP) (Child and Adolescent)
 - Treatment, Support and Discharge Plan (TSDP).

6. Supporting Information

The following information is not mandatory but informs and/or supports the implementation of elements of this policy:

- [Principles and best practice for the clinical care of people who may be suicidal, Department of Health WA](#)
- [Principles and best practice for the clinical care of people who may be at risk of exhibiting violent or aggressive behaviour; Department of Health WA](#)
- [Chief Psychiatrist's Sexual Safety Guidelines](#)

7. Definitions

The following definition(s) are relevant to this policy.

Term	Definition
Health professional	As defined under Part 2, Division 1 of the MHA 2014.
Mental health consumer	A consumer who has had contact with, or been treated by, public mental health services including mental health services provided in emergency departments.
Public mental health service	Any of these services: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a public hospital, but only to the extent that the hospital provides treatment or care to people who have or may have a mental illness• a public community mental health service.
Safety plan	A structured plan developed collaboratively between health professionals, the mental health consumer, their carers and family and other culturally appropriate health support workers. It describes strategies to reduce risk and enhance safety, as well as the actions to be taken, when and by whom, in the event of a crisis.

8. Policy Contact

Enquiries relating to this policy may be directed to:

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9. Document Control

Version	Published date	Review date	Amendment(s)
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10. Approval

Approval by	Nicole O’Keefe, Assistant Director General, Strategy and Governance, Department of Health
Approval date	9 January 2024

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