



Referral and Transfer of Patients between Emergency Department and Community Mental Health Procedure

1. Guiding Principles

Hospital Emergency Departments (ED) and Community Mental Health Services (CMHS) clinical staff have clear direction in the processes for the referral and transfer of patients between services from Monday to Friday 8:00 am – 4:00 pm.

There are strategies in place to ensure that, when a patient is referred and transferred between services, effective handover occurs, thereby reducing potential risks to the patient. These risks include:

- self harm
- an inability for the patient to safely negotiate the buildings in order to access the appropriate care
- the patient fails to present to ED when referred by CMHS
- that the patient fails to present to CMHS when referred by ED.

For patients and /or carers who are of Aboriginal¹ origin or from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, understanding is to be facilitated where appropriate, by:

- using approved interpreter services
- involvement of an Aboriginal Mental Health Liaison Officer (AMHLO)
- involvement of family carer/s.
- Involvement of Personal Support Person (PSP)

2. Procedure

2.1 Referral and Transfer of the Patient from ED to CMH

- Where a patient is assessed by the treating duty District Medical Officer (DMO) as requiring an urgent mental health review, the DMO is to notify the ED Nurse Coordinator/CNM/CON.
- The ED Nurse Coordinator/CNM/CON is to telephone CMHS Triage and refer the patient using ISOBAR handover. CMHS staff are to record patient information on the Mental Health Clinical Information System (PSOLIS)
- Where a patient is referred to CMHS from ED, clinical handover may be facilitated by the completion and sending of the MRK52A KMHDS Referral form by the DMO and/or by telephoning the local MH Triage service.
- CMHS is to advise if they are available to see the patient in ED, or if they require the patient to be escorted from ED to CMHS.

¹ Within Western Australia, the term “Aboriginal” is used in preference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, in recognition that Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants of Western Australia. No disrespect is intended to our Torres Strait Islander colleagues and community.

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- When relocation to CMHS is required, the ED Nurse Coordinator is to allocate a nurse escort who is responsible for the care of the patient until formally handed over and
 - escorts the patient to CMHS
 - provides ISOBAR handover to CMHS Triage clinician
 - hands the patient and their care over to CMH.

2.2 Referral and Transfer of the Patient from CMH to ED

- Where a patient is assessed by CMHS as requiring urgent medical examination or transfer to ED, CMH clinician is to telephone the ED DMO and /or the ED Nurse Coordinator to refer the client using ISOBAR handover.
- ED staff are to record patient information on the Telephone Communication Record form, the MRK56 Telephone Communication Record. This is to be added to the Emergency Department Notes, the MR1 form, when the patient presents and is triaged.
- CMHS Triage is to arrange a mental health worker escort who is responsible for the care of the client until formal handover is complete and
 - escorts the client to ED
 - provides a completed SMHMR905 Risk Assessment and Safety Plan and formal, written, contemporaneous clinical handover to the ED Triage nurse indicating the reason for referral. This information is attached to the MR1 before assessment of the patient.
 - hands the patient and their care over to ED.

3. Definitions

ISoBAR	Clinical handover is an explicit transfer of information supporting the transfer of clinical accountability and responsibility between healthcare professionals to enable continuity of care for the patient. The standardised structure for all clinical handovers is ISoBAR.
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4. Roles and Responsibilities

Medical Director – Kimberley

The Medical Director has overall responsibility for ensuring that clinical services within the regional hospitals are delivered in accordance with this procedure.

Clinical Director – KMHDS

The Clinical Director has overall responsibility for ensuring that clinical services provided by KMHDS are delivered in accordance with this procedure.

Director of Nursing – Kimberley

The Director of Nursing is responsible for the implementation of this procedure by clinical staff in regional Emergency Departments.

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Regional Manager – KMHDS

The Regional Manager is responsible for the implementation of this procedure by clinical staff in KMHDS.

All Staff

All staff are responsible for adhering to this procedure.

5. Compliance

Failure to comply with this procedure may constitute a breach of the WA Health Code of Conduct (Code). The Code is part of the [Integrity Policy Framework](#) issued pursuant to section 26 of the [Health Services Act 2016](#) (WA) and is binding on all WACHS staff which for this purpose includes trainees, students, volunteers, researchers, contractors for service (including all visiting health professionals and agency staff) and persons delivering training or education within WACHS.

WACHS staff are reminded that compliance with all policies is mandatory.

6. Records Management

All clinical documentation must be stored in the medical record.

[Health Record Management Policy](#)

7. Evaluation

Monitoring of compliance with this document is to be carried out by Kimberley Mental Health and Drug Service every three (3) years using the following means or tools:

- Clinical Incidents review

8. Standards

[National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards](#) – 2.1b; 5.4b; 5.7a; 6.4b; 6.4c; 6.7c; 6.8; 6.11a

[National Standards for Mental Health Services](#) – 2.1; 6.13; 10.2.1; 10.5.9

[National Standards for Disability Services](#) – 3.5; 5.4; 5.5

9. Legislation

[Mental Health Act 2014 \(WA\)](#)

[Health Services Act 2016 \(WA\)](#)

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10. Related Policy Documents

WACHS [Mental Health Care in Emergency Departments and General Wards Policy](#)

WACHS [Interhospital Patient Transfer of Mental Health Patients Guideline](#)

11. Related WA health system Policies

MP0095/18 [Clinical Handover Policy](#)

MP0070/17 [Mental Health Emergency and Follow Up Information on Discharge from Hospital Emergency Dept Policy](#)

12. Policy Framework

[Mental Health](#)

**This document can be made available in alternative formats
on request for a person with a disability**

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