

▶ Culture and information sharing in mental health crisis care

**Sharing information to support out of hours working and people in crisis situations**



# Summary

The Centre of Excellence for Information Sharing has supported Surrey to explore the cultural factors impacting on information sharing for the various stakeholders working in mental health crisis care.

Through this work seven key themes have been identified around culture and information sharing:

1. Scaling up successful information sharing
2. Working in a complex partnership setting
3. Supporting assessment of risk for people in crisis and for organisations
4. Supporting out of hours working and people in crisis
5. Working together to identify and support people with complex needs
6. Monitoring and tracking outcomes for service user and supporting commissioning
7. Building the mind-set, capacity and willingness to share information

**The report has been split in to the seven themes which are available from [www.informationsharing.org.uk/hsc](http://www.informationsharing.org.uk/hsc)**



## 4. Information sharing to support out of hours working and people in crisis situations

### Issues covered:

**Accessibility, 24 hour access, timeliness, decision making, sharing advance decision and crisis plans, service user engagement, essential information**

Information sharing is key to achieving the whole system or single agency response that local places are seeking and which provides 'no wrong door' for those people seeking support regardless of wherever they present in the mental health crisis care system. Information sharing within a local place that supports the sharing of individuals' mental health crisis plan, or other forms of advanced treatment plan, is seen as essential. This provides any professional within, or potentially even outside of, the mental health crisis care system the information necessary to quickly identify risks, interventions and manage the potential escalation of a mental health crisis. This is also a route by which professionals can be alerted to a history and risk of mental health crisis and so improve preventative working. This helps to reduce the demand on a local place's mental health crisis care system and ultimately the overall financial burden.

### Learning and challenges

Local places recognise that working with limited and reducing resources impacts on the ability of partners within the mental health crisis care system to ensure that all core or essential information shared is of good quality, up-to-date and robust so that professionals are able to record information consistently.

They need to have agreement and be clear on that set of core or essential information that needs to be accessible to professionals at all times and particularly during the large amount of time represented by Out of Hours (OOH) working. It then follows that those existing crisis and advanced treatment plans need to be reviewed along with other identified relevant templates within the mental health crisis care system to ensure they support the requirements of a local place's essential information set. It will also be necessary for local places to review, consider and so determine upfront what the impact of new information sharing approaches will be on other aspects of their current operating arrangements.

One significant challenge is that to providing a consistent response to an individual who presents but is not known to the local mental health crisis care system as they are from outside of the geographic area or have not presented to services before. Local places need to consider how such situations are managed and what potential information sharing solutions exist to support them such as the national NHS GP derived enhanced Summary Care Record.

**Crisis Plans: In 2014 Surrey committed to developing their approach to crisis, relapse and contingency plans that, through recognising the early warning signs that an individual is becoming unwell and putting plans in place to address the symptoms, both help minimise the likelihood of relapse and also help people stay well. These advanced treatment plans layout exactly what should happen during a crisis situation and highlight previous strategies that have worked for people if they do find themselves in a crisis.**

**Service User Quote: "If [individuals'] crisis plans are being shared that will make a huge difference."**