

# Mental Health – Section 136 detentions

Health and Wellbeing Board

12 March 2014

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Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

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## 1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to update the Board regarding the ongoing changes made to our joint provision to improve service delivery to those in Mental Crisis or suffering with Mental Ill Health.

## 2. Recommendations

The Board is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the contents of this report.

## 3. Detail

### 3.1 Background – persons under 18 years

During an HMIC Inspection in 2012, it was identified that the number of young persons under 18 years detained in Wiltshire under Section 136 Mental Health Act was significantly higher compared to Forces of similar size. In addition, all these vulnerable detainees were taken to Police Custody as there was no health based Place of Safety

### 3.2 Progress – persons under 18 years

A number of changes have since been made to improve service provision for this group:

- Health Based Place of Safety for all Wiltshire residents under 18 years of age who are detained under Section 136 (Fountains Way Hospital, Salisbury)
- Health Based Place of Safety for Swindon residents aged 16 and 17 years of age who are detained under S136 (Sandalwood Court Hospital, Swindon). Discussions are continuing to extend this provision to those under 16 to mirror the position for Wiltshire residents. There is general support for this and it is hoped that commissioning arrangements will be finalised in the coming weeks.
- Introduction of Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) telephone protocol for persons under 18 years with mental health issues or who are in mental crisis. This enables officers to contact CAMHS, at any time of day, for advice and guidance prior to taking any action.

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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Supt Marion Deegan, 01380 733439.

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- The CAMHS scheme within Wiltshire has received recognition on national radio by Norman Lamb, Minister of State for Care and Support, highlighting it as best practice for others to follow

## 3.3 Benefits – persons under 18 years

- Between April 2011 and March 2012, 13 young people were detained using Section 136. All were taken to Police Custody.
- Between April 2012 and March 2013, this figure reduced to 6 people as the CAMHS trial was introduced during this period.
- Since April 2013, only 3 young people were detained. All were taken to a health based Place of Safety rather than Police Custody. All three young people were 17 years of age, two being female.
- The decrease in number of young people detained is the result of officers being able to seek advice at the scene from mental health professionals, enabling them to consider all options and to take the most appropriate course of action rather than immediately using Section 136

## 3.4 Persons over 18 years

In the last few years, the number of adults detained under Section 136 and taken to Police Custody has fallen, although it is recognised that the figures remain too high:

- Between April 2011 and March 2012, 113 adults were detained
- During April 2012 and March 2013, this figure had fallen to 85
- During the current financial year, this number has reduced to 58 adults
- The average time spent in police custody for each person detained Section 136 is just over 9 hours but this can vary considerably on a month by month basis. The lowest monthly average length of detention was 4hrs 30 mins but in other months this can increase to over 16 hours. The average length of detention for each full year has remained constant since 2010 at 9 hours

- 3.5 In order to assist officers when dealing with adults in mental ill health or who are in crisis, a telephone advice protocol is to be introduced, which will be similar to the CAMHS protocol above. This telephone protocol will increase partnership working between Police Officers and the Intensive Service Teams, enabling officers to consider other options rather than defaulting to using Section 136. It is anticipated this will significantly reduce the volume by enabling information sharing at the earliest opportunity and also allowing for patients to be seen in their own home by arrangement rather than being detained unnecessarily.

## 3.6 Court Assessment and Referral Service (CARS)

This scheme will allow Mental Health Practitioners from the CARS Team to work within Police Custody Suites. It aims to improve the screening processes, identifying those who have been arrested for criminal offences who may be

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suffering with a mental illness. The difference with this scheme is that it does not deal with those detained under Section 136 and will ensure that such persons receive the care and support they need, both whilst in custody and at court.

## 3.7 Street Triage

To further improve the options available to officers and to increase the level of care and support to those in mental crisis, the intention is to trial a Street Triage Scheme within Wiltshire. Funding has been secured by CARS and discussions have begun as to what Street Triage could deliver.

## 3.8 Risks

The following risks are identified:

- Lack of health based Place of Safety provision for U16s in Swindon. Currently, any U16 detained Section 136 would be taken to police custody. Efforts are continuing to rectify this and a solution should be achieved in the coming weeks
- Length of time taken to complete a Mental Health Act Assessment (MHAA). The average time taken to complete a MHAA can vary enormously depending on the availability of Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHPs) and Section 12 Doctors. The Regional Section 136 protocol suggests a psychiatric assessment should be completed within 5 hours of an officer detaining someone. Currently, the average detention time often exceeds this target.
- Future changes to Place of Safety provision. Considerable improvements have been made in Wiltshire and Swindon and it is important that commissioning arrangements ensure that this level of provision remains.
- Data collation. Currently, each organisation collects its own data which is shared at the monthly Section 136 Steering Group meeting. To deliver a comprehensive overview of mental health trends and patterns, the collation of data needs to be more in-depth and timely. Members of the Steering Group are currently looking at how to improve the collation and sharing data.

## 3.9 Future Objectives

- Develop joint training between Wiltshire Police and Mental Health Professionals. A joint working party is being set up to create a training needs.
- Develop joint protocols to cover patients who are Absent without Leave (AWOL), missing patients, Section 135 warrants and private premises, conveyance of patients, offences committed on Mental Health premises and the Mental Capacity Act. These protocols will form an important basis for any future training for officers and hospital staff.
- Improve staff awareness of autism and learning difficulties.
- Continue to engage with partners at local and regional level to improve service delivery and working relationships. Examples include the regional

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Section 136 protocol proposed by the South West CCG, use of ambulance to convey Section 136 patients, and the national Concordat.

## **4. Alternative Options**

4.1 This is a for information report.

## **5. Implications**

5.1 This is a for information report.

## **6. Consultees**

6.1 Not applicable.

## **7. Background Papers**

7.1 None.

## **8. Appendices**

8.1 None.