



**ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL  
SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING DIRECTORATE**

**EMERGENCY DUTY (SOCIAL WORK) SERVICE / IN-OFFICE  
HOURS SERVICES**

**ARRANGEMENTS AND INTERFACE PROTOCOLS**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION:

- 1.1 The full range of services provided outside office hours consists of: Duty Managers (Filtering Officers), Emergency Duty Officers (Adult and Child), Approved Social Workers, Homelessness Officers, Foster Carer Support Social Workers, Wightcare Operators, Mobile Wardens and Emergency Homecarers. These arrangements and protocols relate to the interface between the EDS Social Work Service provided by the Filtering Officers (FOs) and the adult and child Emergency Duty Officers (EDOs).
- 1.2 The purpose of this document is to clarify the parameters and respective roles and responsibilities of the Emergency Duty (SW) Service and the in-office hours' services of the SSHD in the delivery of personal social services to children, adults and families on the Isle of Wight. This profile will provide definitions of the major issues integral to the interface between in-office hours and the EDS Social Work Service and will reiterate the lines of accountability, financial arrangements, communication and planning protocols.

## 2.0 DEFINITIONS:

- 2.1 **Emergency.** An unexpected occurrence requiring immediate action. Whilst new referrals are, by their nature, an unexpected occurrence, existing cases account for an average 95% of all emergencies dealt with by the EDS. Many of these are truly unexpected risk occurrences but the likelihood of some can be anticipated via existing known risks or patterns of behaviour, which are the subject of the Contingency Planning Protocol (see below). These are still classified as emergencies for EDS intervention providing that the incident triggering the need for intervention occurs outside office hours.
- 2.2 **Planned Intervention.** Any ongoing direct involvement in a new referral or an existing case initiated during office hours **or** an intervention planned during office hours at whatever time or on what day that intervention occurs. By definition, a planned intervention is not an emergency and therefore cannot be referred to the EDS other than in the exception outlined in 3.5, Service Parameters and Accountability.
- 2.3 **Risk.** Any potential adverse outcome for an individual or family. These can be related to a medical condition, a specific event, series of events or the involvement of a person/s. Risk may also be inherent in the level of care available to a child or adult. In all cases that have a known risk but especially essential in existing formal child or adult protection cases, the risks should be the subject of contingency planning. It is important to define this for the purposes of EDS / In-hours services arrangements because the management and appropriate response to risks should, wherever possible, be sufficiently well planned and resourced to allow for a 'seamless service' in respect of reducing the harm experienced by the occurrence of risk 24 hours per day for children, adults and families.

### **3.0 SERVICE PARAMETERS AND ACCOUNTABILITY:**

- 3.1 **In-office hours' services for children and adults** operate between approximately 9am and 5pm Monday to Thursday (4.30pm Fridays), excluding Bank Holidays and the Christmas / New Year period. Any new referral or intervention that was planned or initiated during office hours that requires continued input after 5pm remains the responsibility of the Team that planned or initiated this intervention. The need to sometimes continue working after 5pm is already integrated into the contracts of 'daytime' staff and arrangements for overtime payments or Time Off In Lieu are made at the discretion of the Team Manager.
- 3.2 **Accountability.** Management of any ongoing case activity undertaken by daytime staff outside office hours rests with the Team Manager of the initiating team. They should make their own arrangements with deployed staff for contact between them during the intervention for advice and decision-making.
- 3.3 **The Emergency Duty Service**, as described at 1.1, provides a range of services, outside office hours, to new and existing service users; specific to these arrangements, the provision of Social Work / Care Manager assessment and intervention. Service users, family, carers, other agencies etc. access the EDS through the Wightcare Operator who is available 24 hours of every day. The call is then referred to the Filtering Officer who is responsible for call screening, research of case histories on the ACCISS system, initial service user contact, inter-agency consultation, decision making and overall management and recording of services provided. The FO may decide that a visit or other intervention from the EDO is required. (The FO may involve other elements of the EDS, e.g. the Foster Carer Support Worker, for which separate protocols exist or are under review). The express purpose of all EDS interventions is to reduce risk and stabilise the emergency until in-office hours services are next available.
- 3.4 **Accountability.** All activities initiated by the FO remains their direct management responsibility outside office hours, Terms of Reference and protocols exist that clarify this responsibility and FO / EDO interface. Decision-making is informed by a number of possible sources of advice and delegations.
- 3.5 **Referrals from the EDS.** Generally, other than the passing on to Adult and Children's Duty Teams of new referrals, the FO or EDO should not refer service users to services offered during the day or give undertakings about the service to be provided by in-hours services. There may, from time to time, be service developments that do allow for direct referral from the EDS; e.g. the Family Solutions Service currently operates an emergency session for families to which the FO directly refers. A separate protocol exists to clarify this arrangement.
- 3.6 **Referrals from in-hours services.** The EDS offers an emergency response only, as described at 3.2, and should not be seen as an extension of daytime services; any use of the limited out of hours

resources for planned interventions (as defined at 2.2) compromises the ability of the EDS to respond to an emergency in a timely and effective manner. Therefore, no direct referral can be made by in-hours services to the EDS with one exception.

3.7 **Exception.** If it becomes clear to a Team Manager during office hours that a child or adult may be at risk of harm, as defined at 2.3, they may decide that an intervention may be required outside office hours to monitor or prevent this risk. Whilst this should ordinarily be carried out by a member of the in-hours team, if no worker is available due to staffing levels or any other reason the Team Manager may approach the EDS Manager during office hours or the FO out of hours to request that this is undertaken by EDS staff on rota. The final decision as to if and when this should happen must remain with the FO on duty at the time with reference to the priority assigned to each emergency as presented to the EDS at the time. Management of the EDO remains with the FO but the daytime Manager is responsible, in consultation with the FO, for the planning and subsequent actions related to this planned intervention. See Financial Arrangements, below.

#### 4.0 **DELEGATIONS:**

4.1 The FO is to authorise, when absolutely necessary, the accommodation of adults in nursing or residential homes. Notification of the Care Manager or Team Manager will be as per communication, below.

4.2 No child or young person will be placed in Foster Care outside office hours without the authorisation of a delegated Service Manager or Head of Children's Services.

4.3 No direct decision that affects an individual's liberty will be taken without the agreement of a Senior Manager in the relevant field of practice. (This does not apply to decisions taken by other agencies, e.g. the Police or Mental Health Services, with whom EDS staff might be involved). In any decision that contradicts the expressed wishes of any person that holds parental responsibility for a child the Filtering Officer may wish to consult a Senior Manager in Children's Services.

4.4 No decision regarding the application for any Court Order out of hours will be made without consultation with a Senior Manager **and** a delegated legal representative.

4.5 Unless specified by separate agreement or procedure, all other decisions regarding case intervention and deployment of resources outside office hours remains the responsibility of the FO.

#### 5.0 **COMMUNICATIONS:**

5.1 Sources of advice provided to the EDS are, primarily, Out of Hours Contingency Plans on ACCISS (which are subject to separate protocols and proformas), faxed and verbal reports from 'daytime' staff and out of hours liaison with other SSHD staff on standby duty, Team Managers and

other Service Advisors. A list of these is maintained in the FO duty bag and comprises all Team and Service Managers, Heads of Service (see Delegations) and other specialist advisors. If required, always in the case of likely public interest issues, the Strategic Director of SSHD will be consulted. Unless subject to delegation or otherwise agreed between the FO and Service Advisor decision-making and management outside office hours remains the responsibility of the FO.

- 5.2 The EDS' communication with in-hours services are based upon the ACCISS records made by the FO and EDO, there being separate recording policies for this. It is the responsibility of the FO to make the case holder or their Team Manager (or Duty Teams in relation to new referrals) aware of the EDS intervention by fax or telephone by 09:00 – 09:15 the next working day. In the case of new referrals to Children's Services the EDO will complete as much as possible of the Initial Assessment Form and in the case of Section 47 interventions, the Section 47 Form. When an FO considers that there has been an inappropriate hospital discharge they will complete the nominated form as required. Information from the FO Sessional Overview Report will also be made available to managers as requested.

#### 6.0 **FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS:**

The EDS is funded to maintain rotas of workers on stand-by for emergencies only outside office hours. Any emergency input (2.1) to any existing case comes under these criteria. Any planned intervention (2.2), as described in Exception (3.5), is the financial responsibility of the initiating team and the total overtime claim of EDS staff undertaking this work on behalf of the in-hours team will be coded to that Team's staffing budget. Any member of in-hours staff who undertakes work out of hours, whether this work starts inside or outside office hours, will **not** be able to make a claim on the EDS budget.

#### 7.0 **REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS:**

These arrangements and related protocols will be the subject of ongoing review in order to ensure that they are regularly updated to meet the changing demands of social care legislation and guidance and to ensure best practice outside office hours and between different divisions of the SSHD.

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Endorsed IW SSHD Senior Management Group 170203