

Version	Date	Changed by	Summary of change
1.0	30/12/2019	Steve King	Implementation of version control
1.6	06/01/2021	Steve King	Additional appendix updates
2.0	01/04/2022	Mark Hill	Updated appendix's B2, C6, C10, C13, C14

Issued by the Kent Approved Mental Health Professional Service

Purpose

This protocol sets out:

- How staff will be prepared and supported via their Continual Professional Development (CPD) plan to enable them to successfully train as Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHPs).
- The requirements and process for AMHP approval following successful completion of the AMHP training
- Minimum CPD requirements for AMHPs
- The re-approval criteria and processes.
- The maintenance of the Kent AMHP register.

Under the Mental Health Act Code of Practice 14.35 Local Social Services Authorities are required to approve sufficient professionals as AMHPs to cover 24 hours per day ,seven days per week , to discharge the functions conferred on them by the Act. Professionals must have 'appropriate competence in dealing with persons who are suffering from mental disorder' to be approved (S114 (3)).

The following professionals are able to train as AMHPs:

- Registered social workers
- Registered chartered psychologists
- Registered mental health and learning disability nurses
- Registered occupational therapists (OTs)

1. AMHP Preparation Pathway for Potential AMHP Trainees

1.1 Requirements & Process of Application

All eligible KCC staff in Mental Health services will train and practice as AMHPs once they have demonstrated that they are ready.

The Preparation Pathway begins when an eligible staff member considers undertaking their AMHP training and continues until their formal training begins.

Eligible staff from within KCC and other organisations begin the Preparation Pathway when AMHP training is agreed by the candidate and their manager. Depending on their current role and past experience there may be a requirement to spend time working alongside mental health social work teams to enhance their mental health knowledge and undertake KCC training available relating to mental health issues.

Table of requirements for potential AMHP trainees:

Trainees background	Experience required prior to application for AMHP training
Currently working with service users who experience a variety of significant mental health problems	Variety of experience with a range of service user groups e.g. Learning Disability; Dementia; Children
Has worked with service users with a variety of significant mental health problems in the last 2 years	A minimum of one week's experience in a variety of mental health settings
Has worked with service users with a variety of significant mental health problems in the last 5 years	A minimum of two weeks experience in a variety of mental health settings
Has never worked with service users with significant mental health problems or experience is over 5 years old	A minimum of one month's experience in a variety of mental health settings

In preparation for AMHP training all eligible staff will have their AMHP training pathway reflected in their good conversation action plan using the preparation pathway documentation. These documents are contained in **Appendix A** and should be regularly used during supervision. In particular, this should focus on reflection and on the application of social work values to the AMHP role, following a Mental Health Act assessment. The eligible staff member should list all Mental Health Act assessments they have shadowed in the appropriate section of the documents.

The eligible staff member should complete the reflection form following every Mental Health Act assessment they have been involved in focusing on three elements from below. Note: all aspects will need to be covered prior to any AMHP training application being submitted:

- The Mental Health Act assessment and its impact and effect on service users and their families
- The role of the AMHP ,focusing on the emotional challenges for AMHPs and the potential conflict of social work values.
- The AMHP legal duty to considering the case
- Assessment processes
- How outcomes are decided
- Alternatives to detention
- The detention process.

All eligible staff wishing to apply for AMHP training will spend time in the AMHP Service shadowing Mental Health Act assessments within the shift pattern. A record of this will be kept by the AMHP Service.

After shadowing a Mental health Assessment the potential applicant should seek feedback from the AMHP. Upon completing “the reflection form following Mental Health Act assessment” (see appendix A) the potential applicant should pass the form onto the AMHP who will then provide feedback, on the relevant portion of the form, and return it to the potential applicant.

Attendance at relevant training and AMHP forums is required and this should be recorded within the essential training completion checklist.

In addition, other services should be shadowed including the KMPT Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment (CRHT) service and an inpatient ward. Staff and their supervisors should also identify practice areas where they need to enhance their knowledge such as Older Persons and Learning Disability and arrange shadowing experiences with these services. This should be recorded in the list of other services shadowed form.

Applications for the AMHP training will be through Kent County Council who will sponsor the AMHP trainee with the university provider. Application forms will be submitted with a copy of the completed preparation pathway document.

As part of the application process a supporting statement is required from the applicant’s supervisor. The focus of this will be:

- Reflection on the use of the preparation pathway document in supervision and how this demonstrates that the applicant is ready for AMHP training including their commitment to

the role and the quality of their work which equips them to undertake further training and the statutory requirements inherent in the role.

- Reflections on the quality of their report writing , their ability to communicate clearly and demonstrate in reports how they are able to collate, analyse and apply information to their decision making.
- Reflections on how the applicant demonstrates KCC values in their practice

Applicants whose preparation pathway document and supporting statement demonstrates the required standard will be shortlisted for interview.

Prior to the interview the applicant will need to submit an anonymised report completed within the last 6 months for scrutiny by the interview panel. This report needs to demonstrate the applicants ability to collate, analyse and apply information to their decision making.

The interview panel will consist of:

- AMHP Service Practice Educator
- Service user or carer with recent experience of a Mental Health Act assessment
- Representative of university providing training.

Feedback will be provided to successful applicants regarding their ongoing learning needs in preparation for the training. The AMHP service representative will take overall responsibility for providing this feedback. **Appendix C**

Once an applicant has been accepted, they will be expected to progress from shadowing to contributing in the coordination of assessments under AMHP direction- **Appendix B**. They will not be expected to lead Mental Health Act assessments.

Unsuccessful applicants will be provided with feedback to inform their preparatory pathway for a future application for AMHP training. Again, the AMHP service representative will take overall responsibility for providing this feedback

Prior to the block placement element of training (within the AMHP service), a Placement Induction Day will be facilitated by Kent AMHP service to provide practical resources to prepare trainees for placement.

Whilst on full time placement the AMHP trainees and AMHP working with a trainee will follow the expectations document. **Appendix B**

At the end of the placement a follow up meeting will be held with the AMHP trainees to gain their feedback about the placement and outline their next steps to AMHP practice. A feedback form is contained in **Appendix C**.

This feedback will be shared with Practice Educators to inform any areas of learning for the AMHP Practice Educator team, and consider whether any course amendments are necessary.

Following the end of the AMHP training AMHP trainees are expected to commit to the rota at the frequency agreed for their role. They will continue to lead and organise assessments utilising **Appendix B** .

In addition, they will utilise AMHP supervision to formulate a plan for moving to independent practice when they receive their warrant. This will incorporate feedback regarding development needs from their placement. **Appendix C**

Any appropriate information will be shared with the AMHP trainees' supervisor for their substantive role in order that development can be supported across their roles.

2. Requirements and Process for Approval

2.1 Successful AMHP Trainees

This appointment pathway requires successful completion of the AMHP training course. Once the AMHP trainee has confirmation that they have passed the academic component of the AMHP training including the placement portfolio they will forward this to the AMHP Service. A panel will agree their approval

Within this period the AMHP trainee is expected to remain on the rota as their contribution dictates and to lead and organise assessments. However, all Mental Health Act work will be with an approved AMHP who will retain legal responsibility for the decision making and fulfil the legal duties relating to the assessment and outcome. **Appendix B.**

In this period the AMHP trainee should be following and reviewing their agreed development plan with their AMHP supervisor. See **Appendix C.** Supervision for the AMHP Trainee/ NQ AMHP should occur monthly. Where possible this should take place during the trainees week of AMHP practice.

The AMHPs name and relevant details will be added to the AMHP Register.

New AMHPs will provide the AMHP Service administrative team with a digital photo taken within the last six months for their AMHP warrant card .The AMHP service admin will request a warrant card via e mail to SHQ Security providing the AMHPs name, approval expiry date and photo.

New AMHPs will receive an approval letter following the panel which confirms their AMHP status. This letter and their work photo identification is required for them to practice as AMHPs.

The approval letter will be kept on file by the AMHP Service and also sent to the AMHPsservice manager.

On the date of issue of this letter mental health AMHP's will move to the appropriate grading.

The newly appointed AMHP will then move to independent practice using their action plan. The standard expectation is that newly appointed AMHPs (where required) will be supported by another AMHP for three assessments prior to independent practice, this will include a community

assessment, contained assessment and general hospital assessment. It is appreciated that there may be exceptions to this, which in the first instance should be discussed with the AMHP supervisor.

It is expected that newly appointed AMHPs will not complete night shifts for the first 6 months post approval. Exceptions to this must be specifically agreed with AMHP managers.

Further guidance in terms of ongoing professional development is contained in the AMHP operational policy.

3 AMHP Re-approval.

3.1 Process

In order to maintain AMHP approval all AMHPs need to complete a five-yearly portfolio for re-approval and this is presented to the AMHP panel. This will be completed in yearly segments and collated into one piece of work at the end of the period. The portfolio should demonstrate application of the AMHP Competences, Values and Principles underpinning the Mental Health Act. The portfolio will be submitted by a specified date to their AMHP supervisor. The annual content of the portfolio will include the following:

- A yearly action plan to address identified learning needs and evidence of how these were met.
- A training log
- A Peer Practice Review (PPR)
- A log of attendance at AMHP supervision
- A MHA report audit.
- Feedback from colleagues, allied professionals
- Feedback from service users and carers.

The AMHP will complete an assessment log in year 4 and 5 that demonstrates a range of assessments they have undertaken and a variety of outcomes.

The AMHP is responsible for collating the required evidence for re-approval for each year of AMHP practice.

Feedback from service users and carers can be gained by

- AMHPs personally requesting this feedback/providing form at the time/following a MHA assessment either in person or with the support of Back Up/Place of Safety staff etc.
- AMHP requesting feedback form to be sent to the service user and/or carer by admin (with return envelope enclosed).
- AMHP requesting Practice Supervisor/SWA to contact service user/carers within reasonable timescale to seek feedback over the phone.
- During any peer practice review – the observer will actively try to seek feedback on behalf of the AMHP following assessment (if appropriate).

AMHP Trainee and Approval Protocol



Each year the AMHP will submit their portfolio to their AMHP supervisor/allocated AMHP for readers comments.

All documents required for re-approval are contained in **Appendix C**

AMHPs will be sent a reminder from the AMHP administrator to submit a portfolio of evidence six months prior to the expiry date of the period for which they are approved.

Prior to the five-year re-approval date, the completed documents will be submitted to the identified AMHP Practice Supervisor eight weeks prior to the approval expiry date.

All AMHP re-approval processes will be overseen by the identified AMHP Practice Supervisor who will make the initial recommendation regarding re- approval. Their feedback and final comments will be sent to the AMHP and the panel 3 weeks prior to the warrant expiring or the date of the panel if sooner.

AMHP panel feedback will be collated and will be kept in a restricted folder in the shared mental health training folder.

If the panel agree that the AMHP should re-approve for another 5 years, the AMHP will receive a Kent approval letter. See **Appendix D**.

The AMHP will provide the AMHP Service administrative team with a digital photo taken within the last six months for their new AMHP warrant card .

The AMHP service admin will request a new warrant card via email to SHQ Security providing the AMHPs name, approval expiry date and photo.

On successful re-approval AMHPs who have been contributing to the AMHP rota before re-approval can claim the AMHP retention premium, through self service.

If the panel are not in agreement that the AMHP should re-approve at this time the AMHP will be sent an advice letter and this will detail the areas that need to be developed before re-approval can be agreed. Timescales to achieve this development will be set.

The advice letter will be shared with the AMHPs line manager and supervisor for their substantive role.

Table summarising timeframes for re-approval:

Timeframe	Requirement
Yearly	AMHP to complete appendix C documents and AMHP supervisor/allocated senior to agree and make comments.
6 months prior to	AMHP admin send a reminder to the AMHP and advise of portfolio submission

approval ending	date.
3 weeks prior to panel	AMHP submits completed portfolio to AMHP admin.

3.2 Yearly AMHP approval

Although an AMHP is approved for 5 years there are minimum requirements relating to practice experience and training for each AMHP within each AMHP year (1st January to 31st December). These are:

- To have co-ordinated and completed a minimum of 6 Mental Health Act assessments, demonstrating a range of assessments across different service user groups
- To have completed 18 hours of AMHP related training

Failure to meet one or both of these criteria will result in the suspension of AMHP approval.

If an AMHP has a break in practice that impacts on their ability to complete the yearly approval requirements and documentation, the AMHP Service Manager has the discretion to agree to not all requirements being met for that year. This decision will be based on:

- Length of time the AMHP has been approved.
- AMHPs commitment to the rota
- Reason for the break in the service
- Length of break in service.
- Key learning needs identified in the AMHP's CPD plan

3.3 AMHPs transferring from other local authorities

During their notice period the AMHP will complete the transfer authority form with their current authority **Appendix D**.

The Kent warrant will carry the same expiry date as the warrant held with the previous employer. The transferring AMHP will commence the yearly approval process from the first date of employment with Kent. If there is less than two years left on their warrant, agreement will be reached regarding the evidence they will need to submit for re-approval.

All transferring AMHPs will shadow the AMHP Service; complete the AMHP service induction; have a Peer Practice Review (PPR) of a MHA assessment they are leading on under AMHP supervision and an audit undertaken of an AMHP report prior to practicing independently **Appendix D**. These tasks will inform the AMHP development plan for their re-approval process.

3.4 AMHPs break in practice

AMHPs may need to take a break in practice. Where possible any break in practice needs to be agreed in advance by their line manager and the AMHP Service. Completion of AMHP mandatory

training and the 6 assessments should be facilitated where possible. If this is not possible an action plan to achieve these on their return should be agreed with their AMHP supervisor and line manager.

Any AMHP can return to practice despite the length of time since they last held a warrant . However, the AMHP Service will need to agree with the potential AMHP how they will achieve this and the timeframe for completion depending on:

- Length of time practiced for prior to break in service
- Length of time they have not practiced for
- Related skills and knowledge in recent practice
- Commitment to the rota

Any AMHP returning to practice must undertake the following :

- Co-ordination and leading, under AMHP supervision on a completion of a minimum of 6 Mental Health Act assessments, demonstrating a range of assessments across different service user groups within an agreed timescale depending on their commitment to the rota
- Completion of 18 hours AMHP related training as soon as the training can be accessed

3.5 AMHPs working for other Local Social Service Authorities

If an AMHP wishes to undertake work for another LSSA with a Kent warrant, they need to notify the AMHP Service Manager in writing. This will be entered onto the AMHP register as specified in the Mental Health (Approved Mental Health Professionals) (Approval) (England) Regulations 2008 5(b). The AMHP Service Manager should be informed if this arrangement comes to an end. The register will be updated.

4. Suspension of Approval

If an AMHP's professional registration is suspended, AMHP approval will be suspended. The AMHP cannot practice until further notice. If professional registration is reinstated approval may be reinstated depending on the circumstances of the suspension which will be discussed at the AMHP panel.

This information would be shared with any other LSSA for which the AMHP is providing a service.

The LSSA can agree to end an approval prior to the date on which it expires in response to a written request from the AMHP.

The LSSA must end an approval if an AMHP no longer meets the approval requirements (Regulation 5 of the AMHP Regulations) (Regulation 7). This might occur if an AMHP has a break in service.

In exceptional circumstances the LSSA can also end the approval of an AMHP if it is no longer satisfied that the AMHP is able to practice at an appropriate level of competence.

5. The AMHP Panel

The process of approval and re-approval of AMHPs in Kent will be overseen by a panel which will meet on a regular basis according to organisational need. See **Appendix E** for Terms of Reference.

The Panel will provide updates to all AMHPs and related teams on the experience and learning of scrutinising AMHP Portfolios with the aim of developing and improving practice.

This learning will be disseminated through the AMHP forum and learning needs will be addressed by the KCC AMHP mandatory training commissioned for the following year.

Individual learning needs identified will form part of the AMHP's action plan for the forthcoming year.

The Kent AMHP panel consists of:

- Assistant Director for County Services
- AMHP Service Manager
- The AMHP

6. AMHP Register

Kent will maintain a record of approved AMHPs. The record will contain:

- Name
- Profession
- Social Work England Registration Number or registration details for the appropriate registering body
- Registration expiry date
- Job role
- Base
- Manager
- Date employment commenced
- Date first appointed as ASW /AMHP
- Previous and current approval dates and authority
- Important Warrant Information including suspension periods, endings of warrant
- Reasons for warrant endings or suspensions
- Current approval dates (date, month, year)
- Details of AMHP duties carried out on behalf of other Authorities under Kent
- Approval
- Working hours
- Age range

- Ethnicity

The AMHP register will be held by the Kent AMHP Service administration team and be updated by the AMHP Service Manager following an AMHP panel or when a change is required.

All AMHPs currently able to practice in Kent will be held on part one of the register.

Part one of the AMHP register will contain the following information:

- Name
- Profession
- Date of appointment as an ASW/AMHP
- Current Approval Dates (date, month, year)
- Kent AMHPs also working for other Authorities under Kent Approval
- Working hours
- Name of authorising authority if not Kent.

In keeping with Mental Health Act regulations, any AMHP who has held a Kent approval or practiced in Kent using the authorisation of another authority within the past 5 years will be held in part 2 of the register. In addition to information required in part 1 of the register, part 2 will record the reason for any suspension of the warrant. This may include:

- Have not met the minimum expectation for AMHP practice.
- Have agreement not to practice for a specific reason
- Have been suspended from AMHP practice
- A break in service.






The AMHP will be transferred from part 1 of the register to part 2 until they return to practice or five years has passed, at which point they will be removed from the register.

7. References to Legal, Central Government and other External Documents



- Mental Health Act 1983 (section 114) refers to the appointment of Approved Mental Health Professionals
- The Mental Health (Approved Mental Health Professionals) (Approval) (England) Regulations 2008
- Mental Health Act 2007 - New Roles - Guidance for Approving Authorities and Employers on Approved Mental Health Professionals and Approved Clinicians

APPENDICES: Preparation Pathway, Appointment and Re-appointment Forms


Appendix A – Preparation Pathway Documents




List of Mental Health Act Assessments	 A1 List Of Mental Health Assessments.d
Reflection form following Mental Health Act assessment	 A2 Reflection Form.dotx
Essential Training completion checklist	 A3 Essential Training Completion.dotx
List of shifts shadowed within the AMHP Service	 A4 List of Shifts Shadowed within the
List of other services shadowed	 A5 List of Other Services Shadowed.dc

Appendix B – Guidance for AMHPs on trainee involvement in Mental Health Act assessments









Guidance for AMHPs on trainee involvement in Mental Health Act assessments	 B1 Guidance for AMHPs on trainee ir
Expectations of AMHP trainee and AMHP on full time placement.	 B2 Expectations of AMHP trainee and A

Appendix C – AMHP trainee placement

KCC Successful application for AMHP training letter	 C2 KCC Successful application for AMHP
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KCC Unsuccessful application for AMHP training feedback letter	 C3 KCC Unsuccessful application for AMHP
AMHP trainee placement feedback forms	 C4 AMHP trainee placement feedback fr
AMHP trainee plan for move towards independent practice	 C5 AMHP trainee plan for move toward

AMHP re-approval portfolio documents








Action Plan for Identified Learning Needs	 C6 Action Plan for Identified Learning I
Allocated AMHP Senior AMHP Supervisors' comments	 C7 Allocated AMHP Senior AMHP Supervi
Assessment log	 C8 Assessment Log.dotx
Training log	 C9 Training log.dotx
Peer review report	 C10 Peer Practice Review .dotx
Supervision attendance	 C11 Supervision attendance.dotx
Feedback from colleagues, allied professionals, service users (if possible) and carers	 C12 Feedback from colleagues, allied prof
Carer feedback form	 C13 Carer feedback form.dotx

AMHP Trainee and Approval Protocol



Service user feedback form	 C14 Service user feedback form.dotx
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Appendix D - AMHP Appointment and Re-Appointment Panel

Kent Warrant Approval Letter	 D1 Kent Warrant Approval Letter.dotx
Six Month Reminder Letter for Re-Approval	 D2 Six Month Reminder Letter for R
Flowchart for timeframes for reapproval	 D3 AMHP Panel Process.pdf  D4 Panel Process for AMHP Trainees & AM
AMHP Panel Advice Letters	 D5 AMHP Panel Advice Letters Reappr  D5 AMHP Panel Advice Letters Unsuce
Warrant Transfer Form	 D6 Warrant Transfer Form.dotx

Appendix E - AMHP Panel Terms of Reference

AMHP Panel Terms of Reference



E1 AMHP Panel
Terms of Reference.