

Guidance for AMHPs on involvement of trainees in Mental Health Act assessments

AMHP trainees must participate in Mental Health Act assessments in order to develop and demonstrate relevant AMHP skills such as; setting up assessments, interviewing in a suitable manner, identifying the nearest relative, making sure that the statutory criteria for detention are met, looking at less restrictive and alternative options to admission, making accountable and autonomous decisions and compiling statutory reports.

However, AMHPs have some specific statutory duties under MHA that cannot be completed by a trainee. It is the AMHP's responsibility to 'lead' the assessment but, the AMHP trainee can work alongside the AMHP to ensure they are more than a passive observer.

The AMHP responsible for the assessment must:

- Identify him or herself to the person, members of the family or friends present, and the other professionals involved in the assessment (the trainee may be introduced as an assisting colleague).
- The AMHP should explain in clear terms the AMHP's own role and the purpose of the visit and ensure that the other professionals have explained their roles.
- AMHPs should carry with them at all times documents identifying them as AMHPs.
- Make the decision whether or not to apply for detention or guardianship, or to agree to supervised community treatment. AMHPs may only make an application if they have interviewed the patient in a suitable manner and are satisfied that the statutory criteria are met.
- Complete and sign any necessary statutory forms
- Communicate the decision to the patient and relevant parties including the nearest relative.
- Take overall responsibility for the conveyance of the patient if they are to be admitted to hospital. Ensure that the papers go with the patient.
- Check and sign any social report left with the hospital after an admission, the trainee can contribute to this but the AMHP needs to countersign agreement with the information.
- The official MH1 report must be completed by the AMHP and not the trainee. If the trainee has completed a 'shadow' MH1 report, some of the content can be included within the AMHP's MH1 but the source of this information should be cited. The trainee 'shadow' report should not be uploaded as a final MH1 report on RIO.

The AMHP must complete these tasks but, with planning, the AMHP may agree ways in which the trainee can assist and participate fully in;

- Considering the case (S.13(1) MHA)
- Interviewing the patient in a suitable manner (S.13(2) MHA)
- Participate and contribute to the Consulting (S.11(4) MHA) and informing (S.11(3) MHA) the nearest relative with the AMHP.
- Discussing the assessment with doctor(s) and checking any forms they have completed
- Contributing to the decision-making process
- Complete and sign any necessary statutory forms (for practice, the trainee could complete a separate form marked 'for training purposes' and then destroy it.)

- Completing 'shadow' AMHP reports in a word document

After an assessment:

AMHP trainees should be offered an informal debrief after each assessment with the AMHP they are working with, however if additional support is required this can be sought from the shift coordinator or Practice Educator