

# Information for family, friends and carers



# Welcome

We believe family, friends and carers are a valuable part of the recovery journey for those who use our services.

Our teams provide high-quality care and treatment that is evidence-based and follows best practice, Trust policies and procedures.

We ask you to work alongside us in promoting a recovery focused service.

This leaflet has been developed with the support of carers and family members who have used our services, in the hope that it will provide some useful information. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to approach a member of staff, or a carers champion in your area. You may also find the local carers information leaflet helpful. More information can be found on our website: [www.kmpt.nhs.uk/carers](http://www.kmpt.nhs.uk/carers)

## Helpful advice and tips for carers from carers

- At every opportunity, identify yourself as a carer
- Try to engage with all staff at every opportunity
- Keep a diary of all events, medications used and associated side effects
- Keep a list of contacts and important or emergency phone numbers close at hand
- If there is an advanced care plan, or lasting power of attorney (LPA), make sure staff know about it and where it can be found
- If you feel it necessary, question confidentiality and your right to an opinion
- If you need to pass on information, providing this in writing can be helpful
- Joining carers' organisations can be very helpful and supportive
- Carers champions are available in teams and can be contacted for support and advice

- It can be very useful to meet other carers
- When passing information to professionals, never understate the situation. Be exact and precise with facts, however painful they may be
- Understating things is something carers tend to do naturally, rather than cause a fuss or bring attention to themselves
- Carers often think they have to cope on their own. There are organisations that can help
- Staff welcome any information you have that can assist them in supporting the person you care for to recover.

## Triangle of Care

We are working towards the principles of the Triangle of Care (ToC) and recognise the value and importance of the service user, carer and staff working together to promote safe care, support, recovery and sustain wellbeing.

### The key elements of the Triangle of Care:

- Carers and the essential role they play are identified at first contact, or as soon as possible
- Staff are carer aware and trained in carer engagement strategies
- Policy and practice protocols regarding confidentiality and sharing information are in place
- Defined posts responsible for carers are in place
- A carer introduction to the service and staff is available, with a relevant range of information
- A range of carer support services are available.



## Carer's assessments - your needs

We understand how looking after someone can have an impact on your own life and how this role can be very demanding.

Under the Care Act 2014, a carer is an individual who provides or intends to provide care for another adult. If you think you

may be a carer and you appear to need support, you may be entitled to a carer's assessment.

It is the duty of the local authority (council) to ensure this assessment is carried out by the delegated organisations. However, your local mental health team will be able to help you request an assessment, or you can contact your council yourself to request a carer's assessment.

A carer's assessment can happen face-to-face or over the telephone at a time convenient for you. It is about you, your physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. It will include discussing the ways that caring affects your life and what could make things better for you and the person you look after.

You won't need to do a financial means test as part of the carer's assessment but you might be asked about what impact the cost of caring is having on your finances. Having a carer's assessment will not affect whether or not you receive a carer's allowance. For more information or to request a carer's assessment, you can contact:

### **Kent County Council (KCC)**

Tel: 0300 041 6161

Website: [www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/care-and-support/how-to-get-help](http://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/care-and-support/how-to-get-help)

### **Medway Council**

Tel: 01634 334466

Email: [ss.accessandinfo@medway.gov.uk](mailto:ss.accessandinfo@medway.gov.uk)

Website: [www.medway.gov.uk](http://www.medway.gov.uk)

## **Carers champions**

These are staff who are dedicated to working with you as a family member, friend or carer to listen to your concerns. They can provide you with details about where to get support and information, particularly if this is the first time your loved one has used our services. Carers champions are passionate about raising awareness of the valuable role carers play in supporting

their loved one and in raising awareness about the needs of carers. Carers champions have chosen to be the point of contact for staff and for carers in addition to their identified role.

Details of your carers champion can be found on the carers' board on the ward or community site, or by asking a member of staff.

## **Carers support**

Being a carer can often feel very isolating and lonely. There are registered carer support services in your local area. They can provide support individually or in groups. Carer support services will also be able to put you in touch with other carers. Speaking to and meeting with other carers can be supportive and a useful source of information. For more information about what is available in your local area, please ask a staff member or a carers champion.

### **Why is it important to register as a carer with your GP?**

If your GP knows you are a carer and that you have the additional responsibilities and potential stress associated with this role, they are more likely to be able to offer you the appropriate advice and support you may need. Carers of people with serious/chronic health conditions or who are frail may also qualify for an annual flu vaccination. Registering as a carer with your GP entitles you to a yearly carer's wellbeing check. Ask your GP or practice for more information about the support they provide for carers.

## **Confidentiality and consent**

Confidentiality can often feel like a barrier to communication between staff and family and carers. This is why it is important to check as soon as possible the wishes of the person you care for regarding sharing information. If the person you care for has concerns about sharing information, guidance can be sought about what type of information can and cannot be shared. It may be that the person you care for is happy for certain information to be shared with you. This should be revisited at

regular intervals as their wishes may change over time. There may be occasions when we are not be able to share information with you; however, we are here to listen to any information or concerns you feel you want to share with us.

For more information, please see the Carer's Guide to Confidentiality, which can be found on our website: [www.kentmedwaymentalhealth.nhs.uk/carers/general-information](http://www.kentmedwaymentalhealth.nhs.uk/carers/general-information)

## **Hospital admission**

At times, the person you care for may require a stay in hospital. Inpatient services are located throughout Kent. They provide assessment and brief periods of treatment in a safe and therapeutic setting. A stay in hospital is only considered when the person you care for has been assessed and it is not considered appropriate for them to be treated at home. This is when the person you care for is in the most acute and vulnerable stage of their illness.

Hospital admissions are described as either formal or informal.

### **Informal or voluntary**

If the person you care for is admitted informally, it means they have agreed to come in to hospital voluntarily. Informal patients are able to leave at any time however, if they wish to be discharged and the staff have concerns, they may be assessed under the Mental Health Act or Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019.

### **Formal or section admission**

If the person you care for is admitted to hospital under a section of the Mental Health Act it means that the risk of them not being in hospital is too great for the person and/or others. The person you care for will have been assessed by specially-trained mental health practitioners before a decision can be made about being admitted to hospital and all other options will have been considered first. Patients have a legal right to appeal against some sections. Individuals staying in hospital under a section are not able to leave hospital without permission. As the mental health of the person you care for begins to improve, they may

be allowed time off the ward. This is known as Section 17 leave and/or weekend leave, when they may be able to return home. Please speak to a member of staff for more information.

### **The most common sections used are:**

- Section 136 is where a vulnerable person is thought to be suffering from a mental disorder and a police officer can remove them from a public place to a place of safety for up to 24 hours to allow for formal assessment under the Mental Health Act.
- Section 2 admission for assessment and treatment in hospital up to 28 days.
- Section 3 admission for treatment in hospital for up to six months.

## **Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019**

If the person you care for is confused, they may not be able to make decisions concerning aspects of their care and treatment.

The Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019 covers a wide range of decisions made, or actions taken, on behalf of people who may lack capacity to make specific decisions for themselves.

## **Power of attorney**

A lasting power of attorney (LPA) is a legal document that lets the person you care for (donor) appoint one or more people (known as attorneys) to help them make decisions or to make decisions on their behalf.

This gives the person you care for more control over what happens to them if they have an accident or an illness and cannot make their own decisions (lack mental capacity).

They must be 18 or over and have mental capacity (the ability to make their own decisions) when they make their LPA.

### **There are two types of LPA:**

They can choose to make one type or both.

- health and welfare
- property and financial affairs.

More information can be found at [www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney](http://www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney)

## **Community mental health teams (CMHTs)**

CMHTs for adults and older people are located throughout Kent and Medway and support people in the community who have complex or serious mental health problems. Different mental health professionals work in CMHTs including psychiatrists, mental health nurses, occupational therapists, psychologists and support staff. The person you care for will be allocated a named worker. The team are available Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm.

## **Other services within the trust**

### **Bridge House detoxification treatment centre**

Bridge House is a nine-bedded inpatient detoxification unit located on the outskirts of Maidstone. Bridge House offers high-quality medically assisted detoxification for clients dependant on alcohol, opiates, stimulants, sedatives and/or other prescribed or non-prescribed drugs, aged 18 upwards. They provide a safe, comfortable detoxification regime that allows maximum engagement with, and benefit from, the psychotherapeutic programme available. Recovery is centred on holistic care with a focus on co-production with our clients and a strong emphasis on harm reduction and relapse prevention.

### **Early intervention in psychosis service (EIP)**

Work with people aged between 14 and 65 who are experiencing their first episode of psychosis, and who have been experiencing symptoms for less than three years. We also work closely with Epic Minds - [www.epicminds.co.uk](http://www.epicminds.co.uk)

### **Forensic and specialist services**

Includes forensic, learning disability and specialist inpatient services across Kent. The team also provides a variety of forensic and specialist community services, specialist day therapy and clinic treatments.

For more information, please visit [www.kentmedwaymentalhealth.nhs.uk](http://www.kentmedwaymentalhealth.nhs.uk)

### **Complex emotional difficulties therapeutic community**

The therapeutic communities are specialist services for adults diagnosed with personality disorder who require more intensive or specialist therapy than is usually offered by our secondary care services. Services are based in Maidstone and Folkestone and operate between 9am – 5pm on weekdays. Our treatment programme is up to three years long, which includes an intensive year in a therapeutic community three days a week.

### **Liaison psychiatry service**

Provide an urgent mental health assessment, which may lead on to further treatment, for anyone aged over 18 who attends any Kent and Medway A&E department and presents with a mental health difficulty.

### **Rehabilitation services**

Inpatient teams work in partnership with individuals and their carers to identify their needs and create a personalised care plan that uses a recovery approach. They aim to identify, enhance and promote individual strengths and support people's journey to manage their mental health. As part of the therapy process, service users can attend a structured programme of daily living, therapeutic, and community activities which may support people to develop the skills to achieve a sustainable recovery. The community rehabilitation service has two components; community outreach and supported accommodation. The community rehabilitation service provides a flexible range of mental health support. Both services follow a recovery ethos and work in close partnership with a range of providers, from housing and social care to district councils and Kent County Council.

### **Perinatal mental health community service (PMHCS)**

Specialises in the assessment, diagnosis and short-term treatment of women aged 18 and above who are affected by a moderate to severe mental health illness in the preconception, antenatal and postnatal period.

This specialist inpatient unit provides support for new mothers

with serious mental ill health from Kent, Surrey and Sussex. Mothers are admitted with their babies and receive specialist perinatal mental health care and treatment from our specialist team. Our unit has been designed by mums, for mums and we have, as part of the multi professional team, mums with lived experience.

## **Who to contact out of hours**

Out of hours, please contact the Crisis resolution and home treatment (CRHT) team covering your area. Visit [www.kmpt.nhs.uk/need-help](http://www.kmpt.nhs.uk/need-help) for more information.

CRHT teams provide rapid assessment of individuals with acute mental health problems, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They ensure individuals are treated in the least restrictive environment usually within their own home.

### **North east Kent crisis team**

(Canterbury, Herne Bay, Faversham, Thanet and Sandwich)

Tel: 01227 812286

Pager: 07623 514686

### **South east Kent crisis team**

(Ashford, Dover, Deal, Folkestone and Shepway)

Tel: 01227 812215

Pager: 07623 514687

### **Medway and Swale crisis team**

Tel: 01634 968460

### **Dartford, Gravesend and Swanley crisis team**

Tel: 01322 622222

### **West Kent crisis team**

(Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge, Maidstone, West Malling and villages)

Tel: 01622 725000

## **Care plans**

When the person you care for is under the care of mental health services, staff will work in collaboration with them to develop a plan of care



that identifies their needs and goals. If the person you care for is happy for you to be involved in their care, you will be invited to be part of this process.

Care plans may be in the form of a letter or care plan document.

This care plan will be given to the person you care for and, with their consent, a copy will be shared with you and/or anyone else they wish to have a copy.

## **Advanced care plans**

When a person is well, they may wish to make an advanced care plan to direct their treatment if they become unwell in the future.

An advanced care plan is written by the individual with the support of a staff member if requested. It should take into account the person's wishes, however it is not a legally-binding document and therefore does not guarantee that all their wishes will be fulfilled.

This could include treatment preferences, such as:

- Things that have worked well and things that have not worked so well
- Domestic arrangements including care of pets
- Finances
- Childcare
- Dietary requirements
- Consent.

It can be really useful for you to be involved in writing the advanced care plan and to have a copy, or knowing how to access a copy when required.

## **Carer organisations**

There are various carer organisations throughout Kent and Medway. Your carers champion and staff members will be able to advise you of who your local support agency is for your area and provide you with information. Carer organisations may also be able to provide ongoing support for you in your caring role.

**Some national organisations include:**

**Carers Trust**

Tel: 0300 772 9600

Website: [www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org)

**Mind**

Tel: 020 8519 2122

Website: [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)

**Rethink**

Tel: 0300 5000 927

Website: [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org)

**Smoking**

We have a smoke-free policy and smoking is not allowed on any of our sites. If the person you care for is admitted to hospital, we will work with them to make use of the support available to help them manage their nicotine withdrawal symptoms.

**Targeted abuse**

We are all agreed that for anyone to be subjected to racial, homophobic or targeted abuse of any sort is completely unacceptable. Whether we are a member of staff, a visitor, a service user, a loved one or a contractor; every single one of us has the right to feel safe, comfortable, valued and respected. We are an organisation that welcomes and celebrates diversity in all its forms and we will not tolerate abuse, verbal or otherwise, of anyone. If you have concerns, please share these with a member of staff.

# Notes





# Give us your feedback

There are many ways you can provide your feedback to us. Each of our wards and services have PREM cards at their reception which may be completed by the service user or by carers/friends on their behalf. This card asks specific questions about the care and treatment provided. We review each comment to enable us to continually review and improve our services. The PREM can also be completed online at [www.kentmedwaymentalhealth.nhs.uk/prem](http://www.kentmedwaymentalhealth.nhs.uk/prem)

## Compliments and concerns

Our staff are also on hand to listen to any comments or concerns. If you feel unable to speak with the team providing your care and treatment and would rather speak to the PALS and complaints team, please contact us and we will support you through the process. All complaints and concerns will be carefully listened to and thoroughly investigated. Patient consent may be required.

We would also love to hear from you if you have something positive to say about our services or a particular staff member or team. Please speak to staff or log your compliment at [www.kentmedwaymentalhealth.nhs.uk/feedback](http://www.kentmedwaymentalhealth.nhs.uk/feedback)

**East Kent: 0800 783 9972**

**West Kent and Medway: 0800 587 6757**

**Email: [kmmh.pals@nhs.net](mailto:kmmh.pals@nhs.net)**

Or write to:

PALS and Complaints (East Kent), Eastern and Coastal Area Office,  
Littlebourne Road, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1AZ

PALS and Complaints (West Kent), Priority House,  
Hermitage Lane, Maidstone, Kent ME16 9PH



We are

**caring**

**inclusive**

**curious**

**confident**

Please email [kmmh.communications@nhs.net](mailto:kmmh.communications@nhs.net) if you would like this leaflet in a different language or format.

**Visit us at [www.kentmedwaymentalhealth.nhs.uk](http://www.kentmedwaymentalhealth.nhs.uk)**