

Referral to Adult Mental Health Services in CUH ED: A Guideline for ED Staff

1. Introduction

- A clear simple referral pathway should be in place to facilitate further assessment of patients with mental health problems in the Emergency Department.
- Adult patients in ED presenting with mental health problems (including self-harm) are assessed by a member of the Liaison Psychiatry team or by the on-call Psychiatry NCHD following referral by the ED officer.
- Sometimes because of necessary medical treatment, the mental health assessment may be deferred until the patient is fit to be interviewed. This does not necessarily preclude the ED staff liaising with the mental health staff about aspects of the patient's management in the interim.

2. How to make an ED Referral

- Monday– Friday 8-4pm
 - Discuss face-face with the Liaison Psychiatry Team in the ED each morning at 8am.
 - Contact the Liaison Psychiatry Team (Self-Harm 'Crisis' CNS Tel: VPN 65327/65324; Alcohol & Drug Liaison CNS Tel: VPN 61184; Liaison Doctor Tel: VPN 62409/62410).
- Out of Hours & Weekends
 - Contact the Psychiatry Registrar-on-Call (Tel: VPN 67103)
 - Self-Harm on Saturday and Sunday 8-4pm, contact the Self-Harm 'Crisis' CNS Tel: VPN 65327/65324

3. Psychiatry Response to a Referral

- The mental health service will *in general* prioritise for assessment patients with mental health problems in the ED over those presenting elsewhere in CUH.
- Urgent referrals will be responded to by telephone discussion in the first instance. This will be followed by an assessment on the same day, the timing and priority of which will depend on the level of urgency and on the day's workload.
- The outcome of the assessment by the mental health professional will be:
 - recorded in the ED notes using a standardised assessment form
 - discussed verbally with the ED staff
 - discussed with the patient and/carer
 - communicated to the patients GP