

What happens after I contact services for support?

Will they be taken to hospital?

Someone who has tried to take their own life or is showing suicidal behaviours will usually be taken to hospital. They will be kept safe and may be offered treatment. They may be detained in hospital under the Mental Health Act. But this isn't always necessary.

When will they be discharged from hospital?

- ❖ Doctors will decide when someone is safe to leave hospital
- ❖ If you don't agree that someone is safe to leave, discuss your concerns with the hospital
- ❖ Focus on risk

It may be helpful to think about the following questions:

- What do you think will happen when they leave hospital?
- Why does this concern you?
- What is the likelihood of this happening?
- Do you have any evidence to back up your concerns?
- Do they have support?
- Are there any safeguarding issues?
 - For example, are there children in the house who may be affected?

What will happen when they are discharged from hospital?

- ❖ If someone still needs a lot of support when they leave hospital you could ask them to be assessed for a package of care called 'care programme approach' (CPA).
- ❖ CPA are provided by NHS mental health teams
- ❖ You can ask the hospital or GP to refer them to the mental health team
- ❖ CPA means that they will have a care plan and a care coordinator
- ❖ The care plan will outline all of their needs
- ❖ Their needs will be both NHS treatment and social care needs
- ❖ The care plan will explain who is responsible for meeting each need
- ❖ Your relative should be placed under CPA if they have been detained in hospital under certain sections of the Mental Health Act such as section 3, or section 37

What will happen if they aren't taken to hospital?

- They might be supported by the crisis team, community mental health team or GP
- If you think that they should be in hospital, ask for a Mental Health Act assessment
- It is best if the nearest relative (NR) asks for the assessment, but anyone can request one.
- NR is a legal term under the Mental Health Act.
- It is different to 'next of kin.'
- The nearest relative has certain rights

What is a Mental Health Act Assessment?

A Mental Health Act assessment is an assessment to see if someone needs to go to hospital to be kept safe or treated against their will

How do I ask for a Mental Health Act assessment?

- If you are concerned that someone is a risk to themselves or other people you could try and get a Mental Health Act assessment by contacting an Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP)
- An AMHP works for social services but can often be found through the community mental health team (CMHT) or mental health crisis team
- The only way to give someone treatment who doesn't want it is through the Mental Health Act
- They will only be detained under the Mental Health Act if they are assessed as a high risk to themselves or other people
- There is no definition for what high risk means

It could include:

- Not being aware of hazards because of delusional thoughts or confusion
- Refusing to eat for fear that food is contaminated
- Threatening to harm self or others due to delusions or severe paranoia

Think about the following questions:

- Who is in danger of being harmed?
- What evidence do you have of this?
- Have they done it before?
- How has their behaviour changed?
- When did their behaviour change?
- Are they aggressive? If so, how?
- Have they tried to harm themselves or other people?
- If so, how and when did it happen?
- Have they stopped eating, drinking or bathing?
- Have you got any evidence to show the changes in their behaviour?

Detaining someone in hospital can be a stressful process. It is usually the best option if someone can be encouraged to get the help for themselves, such as through their GP. Treatment available should be the same in hospital as in the community.

You can find more information about:

- NHS Mental Health Teams (MHTs)
- Talking therapies
- Nearest Relative
- Care Programme Approach
- Mental Health Act

at www.rethink.org.

Or call our General Enquiries team on 0121 522 7007 and ask them to send you a copy of our factsheet.