

Mental Health & Addiction Service Welfare Assessments (Checks) Procedure

MHAPPM/8970

Approved by:	Deputy General Manager – Mental Health & Addictions	First Issued:	September 2024	
Signature:	Liam Jackson	Review Date:		
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Purpose

The purpose of this document is to clearly outline the procedural steps to be undertaken by Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora Te Matau a Māui Hawke's Bay staff when:

- Undertaking mental health welfare assessment/follow up.
- Ensuring that Mental Health and Addiction Services (MHAS) meet their obligation and respond appropriately when contacted about the mental health concerns and wellbeing of a person. This includes upholding the rights of tangata whaiora.
- This responsibility cannot be deferred to a non-mental health agency to follow up. If ambulance / police are required due to the nature of the concern, MHAS are required to attend with these agencies.

Principles

All Health New Zealand, Te Matau a Māui Hawke's Bay documents are based on and link back to our values; **He Kāwanuano** (respect), **Ākina** (improvement), **Raranga Te Tira** (partnership) and **Tauwhiro** (care), and are detailed so all persons are provided with clear information on the way they are expected to practice and undertake tasks.

The principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi are key drivers in health service intervention, in collaboration with whānau, hapū and communities in acknowledgement and active protection of mātauranga Māori throughout the health and disability system.

Te Matau a Māui key values and their collective expression and application under Article 2 of Te Tiriti o Waitangi protect Māori and their whānau in their communities.

Activities and interventions shall be in accordance with the Pae Ora Act, Te Pae Tata and Ngā paerewa, health and disability services standard and the code of expectations for health entities' engagement with consumers and whānau.

The following New Zealand Legislation and Standards are applicable to this document:

- [The Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975](#)
- [Ngā paerewa Health and Disability Services Standard](#)

Scope

All Mental Health and Addictions Service staff

Definitions

Refer to the Mental Health Service Definitions Glossary <\\FS3\share\Public\All Users\MHS Policy review\DEFINITIONS FOR WORDS AND TERMS IN USE WITHIN THE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE.docx>.

Term/Abbreviation	Meaning
Duly Authorised Officer (DAO)	A person authorised by the Director of Area Mental Health Services to perform the functions of and exercise the powers conferred on DAOs by the MH (CAT) Act. DAOs must be competent and appropriately trained mental health professionals.
Mental Health and Addiction Services (MHAS)	This refers to all services within MHAS – including Child Adolescent and Family Service (CAFS), Emergency Mental Health Service (EMHS), Home Based Treatment Team (HBT), Opioid Substitution Treatment Team (OST), Alcohol and other Drugs (AoD), Community Mental Health Service (CMH), Ngā Rau Rākau (NRR), Older Persons Mental Health Service (OPMHS)
MHA	Mental Health (Compulsory Assessment and Treatment) Act 1992
MHAS Welfare Assessment	Often referred to as a Welfare Check A mental health response to concerns raised with Mental Health and Addiction Services about the mental state and wellbeing of a person.
Welfare Check (Other Agencies)	These are checks performed by external agencies to meet their obligation and service requirements. These are not Mental Health welfare assessments.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Emergency Services	This covers Ambulance, Fire and Police and these services, with negotiation, can support (but not replace) MHS completing welfare assessments if risk indicates need for these services.
MHAS Clinicians	Contact Emergency Services for support. To follow MHAS Welfare Assessment and documentation responsibilities.

Procedure

- 1 If contact has been made with MHS that may require mental health welfare assessment with an individual, either urgently or non-urgently, the responsibility of completing the welfare assessment sits with the MHAS that has accepted this contact.
- 2 MHAS staff are responsible for investigating and determining the urgency of the request and collating all the relevant information, including reason for request, contact information, historical risk and mental health record.
- 3 If the clinical decision indicates that a MHAS welfare assessment is **NOT** required, MHS staff are responsible for notifying the referrer and providing the rationale for this decision. This decision must be recorded in the person's Electronic Health Record (ECA) with the rationale.
- 4 If the clinical decision indicates that a MHAS welfare assessment **IS** required, MHAS staff are responsible to complete the welfare assessment. Attain consent where possible.
- 5 The need, urgency or level of risk (UK Triage Scale) will determine the mode of contact and the timeframe for this to occur. This formulation needs to be documented in the person's health record as soon as possible.

- 6 MHAS staff need to determine the level of risk based on information gathered and generate plan for contact.
- Low risk: Completed by MHAS
 - Medium risk: Discussion within the MHAS team, increased staff attendance or via phone call
 - High risk: Contact Ambulance/Police and arrange their assistance to attend alongside MHAS staff if medical concerns or staff safety concerns are evident.

Note: Other agencies that may be directly involved, referred to or need to attend are **NOT** Mental Health specialists and therefore cannot conduct a MHAS welfare assessment. Police have **NO** legal authority to take a person to a place of assessment without the use of the MHA.

Risks & Hazards to Staff

Risk/Hazard	Control
Risk to staff in community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Utilising the appropriate emergency services when required to assist in the completion of a MHAS Welfare Assessment by MHAS staffUse of UK Mental Health Triage Scale based from identified level of risk

Measurable Outcomes

All requests for welfare assessments/follow ups are reviewed and the appropriate MHAS response is given and recorded in the person's health record.

Related Documents

Welfare Assessment flow chart

[UK Mental Health Triage Scale](#)

References

No references

Keywords

Documentation

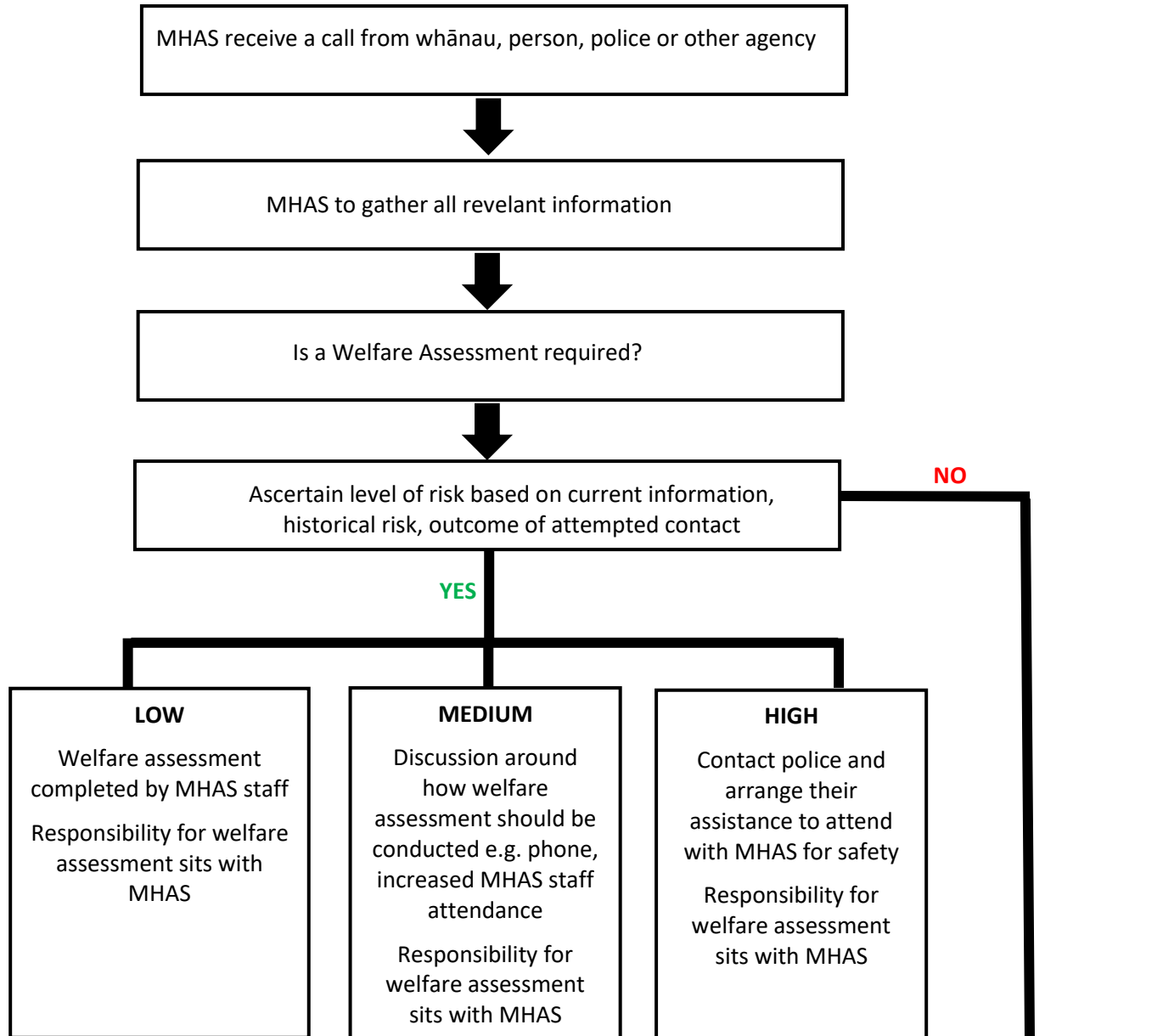
Welfare Check

For further information please contact the Deputy General Manager – Mental Health and Addictions Service

Appendix 1

Welfare Assessment

If Mental Health & Addiction Service staff are concerned about the mental state and wellbeing of a person that has been brought to their attention, they need to follow this process.



Note:

- Welfare assessment will be completed by MHAS staff.
- Police may attend to provide safety of MHAS staff and, if legally required, provide assistance and transport under the MHA following MHAS assessment.

Notify referrer and include rationale. Ensure same information is documented into the person's Electronic Health Record (ECA)