

SCHEDULE 10 – Safe & Effective Practice



Document	BHCC SPFT S75 Safe & Effective Practice
Audience	BHCC SPFT Management and Staff
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1. Introduction

In the spirit of joint working, collaboration and maintenance of positive working relationships, this schedule assumes that the following **core principles** will underpin existing and future joint operational and strategic processes, actions, and developments

- Ensure that all practice developments are focused upon improving outcomes for the population we serve.
- Always consider the impact of any changes on our staff teams, working to make our joint systems collaborative and supportive for all.
- Encourage openness and transparency between organisations, to foster trust and communication.
- Focus upon reducing and eliminating duplication of work, to reduce 'hand-offs'.
- Develop systems that enable and empower front line staff to make decisions and thereby reduce unnecessary escalation.
- Set up systems and structures that necessitate regular communication between services at all levels and encourage joint working and collaboration.
- Continue to use the above principles to review and challenge how we are progressing as the new partnership develops.

In common with all practitioners across council adult social care services, mental health social work operates within a model of practice which is strengths based and person-centred and which enables people with care and support needs to maximise independence, prevents the escalation of need, and provides timely information and advice.

2. Safe & Effective Practice

Safe and effective social work is achievable when the operating conditions are such that the role of mental health social work is well understood and that the organisations responsible for the provision of social work provide the necessary support and oversight.

To achieve consistently high-quality outcomes for service users and carers, social workers and social care workers who are employed by Brighton and Hove City Council must:

1. Have and maintain the skills and knowledge to establish effective relationships with people who use social care services and with professionals in a range of agencies and settings and be the key connectors in communities.
2. Be a highly visible and their contribution to mental health care more broadly should be well understood by all.

This schedule emphasises the importance of systems approach to supporting social work in its delivery of mental health care and sets out the key components and expectations of the host and employing organisation.

The intention is to develop a working environment where social work/social care practice and social workers flourish, in turn supporting recruitment and retention and enhancing reputation as a service provider and the experience of people who use mental health social work services.

The shared core expectations of Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC) (the Employing Organisation) and Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SPFT) (the Host Organisation) will enable social workers and social care practitioners (and SPFT employees undertaking delegated statutory social care functions) to work effectively and safely.

SPFT understands and actively promotes the role of statutory social work and social care and in turn ensures that all staff, stakeholders, and people who use services understand its role and function.

3. Statutory Context

Mental health social workers and social care workers who are co-located in SPFT work collaboratively with a range of mental health professionals with a common aim of supporting the wellbeing of people with care and support needs. Applying professional knowledge, values and skills, social workers perform a range of statutory functions on behalf of BHCC.

Social Workers discharge these delegated statutory functions through regulated professional practice. regulated professional practice. The provision of social care is shaped by statute and statutory guidance and by the following legislation:

- Care Act 2014
- Mental Capacity Act 2005 and DoLS
- Mental Health Act 1983, as amended in 2007 (New Mental Health Act expected to be law from 2023/4)
- Human Rights Act 1998
- The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 and subsequent legislation relating to DVPN, DVPO, the criminal offence of Coercive and Controlling Behaviour, Modern Slavery and Forced Marriage.
- Working together to Safeguard Children is clear that S11 Children Act 2004 is equally applicable to health and social care staff.

For the purposes of this schedule, the expectations for safe and effective practice must be delivered within the framework of the [Standards for Employers of Social Workers](#)

Standard 1 Strong & Clear Social Work Framework
Standard 2 Effective Workforce Planning Systems
Standard 3 Safe Workloads & Case Allocation
Standard 4 Wellbeing
Standard 5 Supervision
Standard 6 Continuing Professional Development
Standard 7 Professional Registration
Standard 8 Strategic Partnerships

Strong & Clear Social Work Framework (Standard 1)

Social Work professional practice contributes to wider service quality outcomes and achieves this through four core elements:

1. Application of the law and legal literacy.
2. Practice, which is explicitly person centred, strength-based and human rights driven,
3. High performing and professionally accountable practice informed by theory, post qualifying standards, research and policy and the values and standards set out by the professional regulator.
4. Operating within the BHCC performance framework which includes core metrics around operational activity, safeguarding, finance and workforce. The metrics are defined within Schedule 2 (Performance Indicators).

BHCC Social Work is responsible for specific statutory functions which are performed on behalf of BHCC. These duties take primacy over any other mental health function that the social worker's host team or service is responsible for.

It is expected that registered BHCC mental health social workers and BHCC managers provide advice, support, and guidance to SPFT staff to assist compliance with Care Act statutory duties on a day to day and case by case basis.

All BHCC Social Workers and social care workers operate within the defined adult social care model of practice which uses *strength based and person-centred* approaches to conduct the range of statutory duties as outlined below.

Application of professional knowledge and skills is evidenced through accurate record keeping and recording.

(Insert Table on where work must be recorded – Eclipse or Care Notes or both)

Task	Eclipse	Carenotes
S42 (Care Act) Safeguarding	All referrals, forms and casenotes to be recorded on Eclipse.	Duty LEO adds alert in Care Notes which should reflect that there is an open S42 within Eclipse. Inform LP and/or Team Lead of the concerns (and forward any documents) who will then be responsible to update Care Notes including updating Risk assessments and Care Plans.
S117 (Mental Health Act) Aftercare Planning/Reviews	All forms and casenotes to be recorded on eclipse.	Alert to be added on care notes to reflect s.117 entitlement. Care Plan to be updated by LP to reflect s117 aftercare provision.
Care Act Assessments and Support Planning/Reviews	All forms and casenotes to be recorded on Eclipse.	Information to be shared with LP and recorded on Carenotes and in care plan. If there is no LP, the s75 worker will add a note to Carenotes summarising the support plan.
Mental Capacity Act Assessments and Best Interests Decisions which relate to statutory decisions	All forms and casenotes to be recorded on eclipse.	Casenote to be recorded to Carenotes if appropriate.
Restrictive Practices, DOLS, DOLS Objections	All forms and casenotes to be recorded on eclipse. All legal paperwork to be uploaded on eclipse.	Casenote to be recorded to Carenotes if appropriate.
Mental Health Act Assessments and related statutory assessments	Currently under review	Currently under review

For the purposes of this schedule, BHCC Mental Health Social Work functions are defined as:

1. Promotion of individual wellbeing (Care Act 2014).
2. Providing advice and information (Care Act 2014).

3. Undertaking assessment, care, and support planning duties in line with the Care Act and [statutory guidance](#).
4. Support Planning to meet eligible care and support needs including but not restricted to the acquisition of commissioned services.
5. Supporting the transition into adulthood for people with care and support needs.
6. Contributing to planning arrangements for people subject to Mental Health Act S117 After Care.
7. Providing professional social work interventions to meet eligible social care needs or to ensure that the wellbeing (Care Act 2014) of a person with care and support needs is supported.
8. Leading Safeguarding Adults enquiries and overseeing support arrangements for people at risk of abuse or neglect.
9. Performing statutory duties associated with the Mental Health Act when acting as an Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHP).
10. Maintaining Legal literacy to support excellent practice, including: Care Act, Mental Health Act, Mental Capacity Act, Equality Act, Human Rights Act, Children and Families Act, Criminal Justice legislation.
11. Maintaining an understanding of the social determinants of health (i.e. relationships, financial security, and employment) and championing social and psychosocial interventions for people with mental health needs.
12. Social supervision under Part 3 of MHA.

Existing systems are already in place to deliver these functions, but under this agreement a Joint Operational Group (JOG) (see section 11 below) is tasked with reviewing and developing these processes to ensure they deliver on the principles and statutory requirements outlined above.

Cases which present high risk to individual(s) with care and support needs, which are complex or high profile, or which present a reputational risk to BHCC should be escalated through agreed channels via the General Manager for Adult Social Care

Effective Workforce Planning Systems (Standard 2)

Maintaining safe and effective practice is critically dependent on effective workforce planning and vacancy levels across SPFT and BHCC. Staffing levels will be maintained in line with those outlined in Schedule 6 (staff posts allocated to the arrangements).

Where the delivery of statutory social care would be compromised by labour market influences such as those resulting in a low supply of appropriately qualified social care staff (or where this is anticipated), the Joint Operational Group will monitor and agree actions which promote the continuation of safe and effective practice. Necessary remedial actions will be set out by the JOG to mitigate identified risks relating to BHCC being unable to discharge statutory Care Act duties due to workforce depletion.

Workforce risks will be logged on the JOG risk register.

The Joint Operational Group (JOG) will agree a joint approach to the recruitment of Newly Qualified Social Workers and the provision of placements for social work students, maintaining links with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) through BHCC Professional Education

Consultants, Learning and Development team and through the BHCC social work Teaching Partnership.

Workforce needs will be overseen by the JOG alongside broader performance measures to ensure that staffing levels are adequate to maintain core business for both SPFT and BHCC and that safe and effective practice is supported.

The JOG will escalate workforce needs to Joint Management Group where necessary.

Safe Workloads & Case Allocation (Standard 3)

It is the responsibility of BHCC, (through designated management roles) to oversee social care work which falls within the definitions in Standard 1 above and this includes the allocation of work.

A mechanism for safe and timely allocation of work will be agreed through the JOG to ensure oversight, accountability and safe and transparent decisions in line with the expectations set out in this schedule. This will be a system agreed jointly with social work practitioners and line managers to set transparent safe working levels in each service area.

Caseloads will be regularly assessed by the practitioner, their supervisor and line manager (where they are different) to take account of work complexity, individual capacity and time needed for supervision and continuing professional development.

Cases will be allocated transparently, with prior discussion with the individual social worker/social care worker, and with due consideration to experience and existing caseloads

Professional judgment about workload capacity issues will be respected in line with the requirements of the practitioner's professional registration (Social Work England Professional Standards).

Contingency action will be taken when workload demand exceeds staffing capacity and escalated, in the first instance to the joint operational management group.

Wellbeing (Standard 4)

SPFT will provide a safe working environment for co-located social workers/social care workers and ensure that their health, safety and welfare needs are met.

Managers with operational responsibility for BHCC employees should refer to the HR schedule.

Managers with operational responsibility for BHCC employees should also refer to the BHCC attendance management tool kit and policy and the BHCC flexible working policy.

Health and safety at work is not only determined by the physical environment but also by the nature of work, which, in the case of social work/social care work is emotionally demanding and complex. BHCC provides a number of [resources, support and guidance](#) in relation to improving general wellbeing of everybody working for the council.

SPFT will ensure the availability of confidential, private spaces which are available for supervision, informal confidential professional discussions between colleagues and other professional meetings.

BHCC will provide co-located staff with the practical tools to work effectively, for example, access to the case recording system (Eclipse), information technology and relevant training to use systems.

Jointly agreed lone working policies will be in place and robustly implemented.

There will be jointly agreed mechanism which enables staff to report and respond to their experience of racism, bullying and/or harassment and ensure staff know about and have access to the Council's BME and Disabled worker fora.

SPFT will actively support social workers and social care workers to participate in professional peer group meetings such as the social work forum which provide an important source of additional support.

Supervision (Standard 5)

Supervision is a core process in supporting the delivery of high quality and high performing mental health social care services. It is an integral part of professional practice, ensuring that people who use social care services are getting the right help and are supported to achieve best outcomes.

It is essential, therefore, that practitioners who are managing complex and emotionally challenging situations have access to regular, high-quality supervision from skilled supervisors and that they engage with reflective practice groups, where they are available.

Supervisors have responsibility for overseeing the professional practice of social workers and social care workers.

BHCC will ensure the availability of professional supervision and reflective practice groups in line with its supervision policy. The policy specifies that supervision should take place regularly, as a one-to-one meeting, in an environment in which confidential discussions can take place.

SPFT will enable social workers and social care workers to access and engage with supervision in line with BHCC's supervision policy and will maintain compliance with the expectation that formal 1 to 1 supervision should be provided, at a minimum, of once every 4 – 6 weeks but the frequency should also be tailored to the supervisee's professional needs.

Where management and supervision arrangements are shared between a SPFT line manager and a BHCC practice supervisor, respective roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities must be set out in the supervision agreement to ensure that they are clearly understood. It is expected that these arrangements are reviewed regularly to ensure that they continue to offer the supervisee the right level of managerial, performance and professional support to maintain safe and effective social work/care practice and that the practitioner is confident in their knowledge and skills to support the delivery of health related (SPFT) tasks

Continuing Professional Development (Standard 6)

BHCC will ensure that all co-located staff receive appropriate training and development to enable safe and effective practice and to meet professional registration requirements (for regulated professionals).

BHCC will ensure annual appraisal and development reviews (PDPs) are undertaken by management for all BHCC employed co-located staff and that this information is used jointly by Council and Trust managers for the co-located staff as appropriate for the purposes of individual development activities.

SPFT will allow all co-located staff learning and secondment opportunities as per the Council policy.

SPFT will provide development opportunities to co-located BHCC staff to ensure that they have access to necessary and appropriate training opportunities relating to clinical aspects of mental health which are applicable to social care practitioner roles or which support collaborative working across multidisciplinary teams.

BHCC has delegated statutory care and support planning functions to SPFT. BHCC must therefore ensure that these functions are carried out and that all relevant duties under the Care Act, regulations and statutory guidance are fulfilled.

As SPFT is carrying out care and support functions on behalf of BHCC (for example conducting a care act assessment) relevant SPFT Staff must have the appropriate training, knowledge, and skills to do so.

BHCC will ensure that appropriate training and development opportunities are available to SPFT staff who undertake care and support planning statutory duties on its behalf and SPFT will enable these staff to participate in this training.

Where mandatory training targets have been jointly agreed with the aim of enabling safe and effective practice (either solely for BHCC or jointly for SPFT/BHCC staff), these will be monitored by the BHCC Finance and Performance Board.

Training requirements and expectations (including training targets) may evolve where practice development needs are identified through the Joint Operational Group (JOG).

The BHCC Practice Development and Assurance Board (PDAB) is responsible for governing, steering and leading practice development requirements. The JOG will therefore be represented at the PDAB.

Professional Registration (Standard 7)

BHCC will reimburse registration fees for co-located BHCC staff in circumstances where professional registration is a requirement of the role.

SPFT and BHCC will be familiar with Social Work England's [Professional Standards](#) for safe and effective practice and understand a social worker's regulatory requirements to maintain their professional registration.

SPFT will foster and encourage a culture of ethical practice to ensure that social workers are supported to challenge unsafe practice and report concerns in accordance with professional standards.

Social Workers will be supported and encouraged to uphold the regulators professional standards which are specialist to social work, ensuring that effective CPD opportunities and supervision are provided.

SPFT and BHCC will support social workers in upholding the regulator's professional standards, which are specialist to social work, ensuring effective CPD opportunities and supervision are provided.

Any decision about fitness to practice referral to professional regulators will be taken following or in conjunction with formal HR procedures and in consultation with the BHCC Principal Social Worker.

Strategic Partnerships (Standard 8)

BHCC and SPFT recognise that the expectations set out in this schedule requires a jointly agreed programme of work which sets out priorities and monitors progress and actions. This is an essential requirement to deliver the best outcomes for both staff and population

To enable this, the following governance structure has been jointly agreed:

- Quarterly Joint Management Group (Schedule 4) provides over-arching governance for the Section 75 agreement.
- A monthly Joint Operational Group (JOG) is responsible for developing a jointly agreed work programme to improve and maintain operational practices, pathways and processes which enable safe and effective practice as outlined within this schedule.
- The JOG will jointly monitor, develop and where necessary improve operational processes and pathways. The JOG will use existing performance measures and feedback sought from practitioners to inform actions and priorities. The JOG will provide quarterly progress and update reports to the Joint Management Group.
- The JOG will develop and maintain a risk register to identify and monitor operational risks which relate to compliance with BHCC's statutory duties and practice requirements, and which includes specific reference to assessing compliance with the expectations set out in this schedule.
- The JOG will use data to monitor compliance with BHCC performance indicators.
- Where the JOG identifies the need for additional performance measures (quantitative or qualitative), approval will be sought from the BHCC Finance & Performance Board. The BHCC Finance & Performance Board is responsible for strategic oversight of Health and Adult Social Care performance more broadly.
- Where SPFT operational team leads are responsible for the day-to-day management of social care practice and compliance with BHCC statutory social care duties, there participation in the JOG is an essential requirement.
- It is the responsibility of SPFT to ensure that team leads are adequately familiar with the social care requirements of their role and that this is reflected in the induction of new staff and in ensuring access to the relevant social care training and continuing professional development.
- There will be joint participation in quality assurance/ practice audits, as required by BHCC.

Appendix 1

Joint and BHCC Governance Functions

BHCC Finance & Performance Board	Enables oversight of directorate performance within a framework of key performance indicators - providing a forum for actions to be agreed and progress monitored	
BHCC Practice Development & Assurance Board	Provides governance and a visible platform for practice development and assurance. It is responsible for quality assurance of practice, identifying gaps and making recommendations for development/investment to the Director of Adults Social Services (DASS), reporting quarterly to the BHCC Directorate Management Team (DMT).	
Joint Operational Group	<p>Review and develop processes to ensure they deliver on the principles and BHCC statutory requirements (Standard 1)</p> <p>Monitor workforce vacancies to promote the continuation of safe and effective practice. Maintain a risk register of workforce related risks (Standard 2)</p> <p>Agree a joint approach to the recruitment of Newly Qualified Social Workers and the provision of placements for social work students (Standard 2)</p> <p>Jointly agree a mechanism for safe and timely allocation of work to ensure oversight, accountability, throughput, and safe and transparent decisions in line with the expectations set out in this schedule and to set transparent safe working</p>	

	<p>levels in each service area (Standard 3)</p> <p>Take Contingency action when workload demand exceeds staffing capacity (Standard 3)</p> <p>Identify practice development needs and maintain links with the BHCC Practice Development and Assurance Board (PDAB) (Standard 6)</p> <p>Develop a jointly agreed work programme to improve and maintain operational practices, pathways and processes which enables safe and effective practice as outlined within this schedule. (Standard 8)</p> <p>Develop and maintain a risk register to identify and monitor operational risks relating to compliance with BHCC's statutory duties and practice requirements, and which includes specific reference to assessing compliance with the expectations set out in this schedule (Schedule 8)</p> <p>Provide quarterly progress and update reports against the work programme to the Joint Management Group and as required to the BHCC Finance and Performance Board and the BHCC Practice Development and Assurance Board (Standard 8)</p>	
Joint Management Group	Provides over-arching governance for the Section 75 agreement, and the separate schedules identified within it	

