

# Approved Mental Health Professional



## Approval and Re- approval Policy

Review Date: November 2017

## **1. Background**

Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHPs) are approved to act as such by a Local Authority Social Services Department when they are satisfied that the person has appropriate competence in dealing with people who are suffering from mental disorder. Section 114 of the MHA 1983 (as amended by the MHA 2007) define the functions of Local Authorities and the Secretary of State with regard to the approval of AMHPs. Section 13 of the MHA 1983 (as amended by the MHA 2007) defines the duty of AMHPs to make applications for admission (to hospital) or guardianship. This included the requirement that an AMHP be satisfied that the application ought to be made in respect of the 'patient' (as defined by the MHA 1983) and that the AMHP be of the opinion, having regard to any wishes expressed by relatives of the patient or any other relevant circumstances, that is necessary or proper for the application to be made.

The AMHP must be approved by only one local authority but they can be authorised to act on behalf of other local authorities whom they have an agreement.

The AMHPs role is to carry out statutory functions under the Act on behalf of their contracted local authority.

## **2. Local Authority Responsibilities**

Local authorities' social services departments are responsible for ensuring the sufficient AMHPs are available in their area to carry out their roles under the Mental Health Act.

Local authorities' social services department are also responsible for approving individual AMHPs. They cannot delegate this responsibility to an NHS organisation through section 75 partnership arrangements.

AMHPs must be approved by only one local authority however can be authorised to act on behalf of other local authorities with whom they have an agreement.

The Local Authority, therefore, has a responsibility to appoint, approve and re-approve suitably qualified and experienced workers to undertake specific duties, as laid down by the Mental Health Act 1983. The regulations allow the approval of registered and professionally qualified mental health professionals to act as an AMHP including;

- Registered social workers
- Nurses who filed of practice is mental health or learning disabilities
- Registered occupational therapists; and
- Chartered psychologists.

### **3. Functions of the AMHP**

The Act sets out the range of functions that an AMHP may undertake. The main functions of the AMHP are listed below however this list is not exhaustive and reference should be made to legislation and the Code of Practice guidance.

Main AMHP functions

- To enter and inspect premises (other than an NHS hospital) in which a mentally disordered person is living, if he has reasonable cause to believe that the patient is not under proper care (s115).
- To apply for a warrant to enter specified premises and remove a patient, if appropriate, to enable an assessment to be made (s135).
- To interview and assess a person removed to a place of safety or move to another such place (s135/136).
- To co-ordinate the process of assessment for the patients they assess for possible detention under the Act (CoP 4.40).
- When considering the need to admit the patient to hospital wither voluntarily or under compulsion, to reach and independent judgement about whether the use of compulsion is necessary, in all circumstances of the case and to pursue alternatives to the use of compulsion wherever possible (s13(2) and (5)).
- To make an application for admission to hospital or a guardianship application where the AMHP is satisfied that such an application ought to be made in respect of the patient and is of the opinion, having regard to any wishes expressed by relatives of the patient or any other relevant circumstances, that it is necessary or proper for the application to be made (s13(1A)).

#### **4. Register of Approved Mental Health Professionals**

Each Local Authority are to ensure that robust systems for approving/re-approving AMHPs are in place. Section 114 (MHA 2007) outlines statutory duties to be complied with in relation to the approval / re-approval responsibilities of AMHPs and Local Authorities and must be complied with to avoid the possibility of litigation regarding either individuals AMHPs and/or their employing agency.

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council (NPTCBC) Chief Executive who delegates responsibility of AMHP approval and re-approval to the relevant Senior Manager (Principal Officer) will be responsible for maintaining a register of AMHPs. This register will provide an overview of the AMHP service provision in NPTCBC. To aid the registration renewal process there is a flow-chart (Appendix 6 App Six) which details each step in the process. NPTCBC Learning, Training & Development Team will ensure the provision of suitable learning and development opportunities for AMHPs required as part of the re-approval process.

Individual AMHPs and their line managers will be responsible for being aware of their current status regarding approval and arranging the re-approval process within three years of approval. This will be overseen by the Senior Manager (Principal Officer).

Individual AMHPs hold the responsibility for building a portfolio of evidence during the 3 year validity period of their warrants. AMHPs are responsible for arranging approval/re-approval meetings with their line manager and Senior Manager for the verification and endorsement of approval/re-approval. Following approval/re-approval Warrant Card will be issued by Corporate Human Resources Team on instruction from the Senior Manager.

#### **5. Approval Of AMHPs – Training Process**

**Swansea Uni requirements.**

**Historic requirements**

Swansea University award 120 credits at Masters Level (Level 7). The Exam Board ratifies the completion of the course and issues certificates to the candidate. This qualification is a PG Dip in Approved Mental Health Practice. It is then the decision of the to approve the individual to be an AMHP.

## **6. Approval Process**

Upon successful completion of the AMPH training course, a letter is sent by the AMHP Training coordinator to the candidate, their manager and the Principal Officer to arrange an “AMHP Approval Meeting”.

The portfolio of practice must be started at this point. (See Section 10 Portfolio Section 10). The Social Work Lead/Advanced Professional will cover this, and also establish the process of transition on to the local rota. Often it is necessary to establish for the newly qualified AMHP what they will need in terms of first going on the rota through shadowing and/or extra support.

## **7. Re-approval Process**

Achieving re-approval involves:

- A) Keeping a portfolio of practice during the three year validity of each warrant period (see Appendix 1). The portfolio is structured to provide evidence of practice as an AMHP and demonstrate the number of Mental Health Act Assessments carried out. If the AMHP does not meet the minimum requirement of completed assessments in the warrant validity period there will need to be clear alternative evidence of knowledge and competence shown. Acknowledgement of other related activities can provide additional evidence but this does not negate the need to participate on a local AMHP duty rota. The requirement will be to evidence all competencies as laid out in Appendix 5. If an AMHP is not in a position to meet the above requirements, a meeting will be arranged by the Principal Officer, Team Manager and Training & Development Officer – Adult Services to formulate an action plan to enable re-approval.
- B) Completion of minimum required learning and development days in relation to mental health practice. These may also form part of the standard Social Work re-registration requirements (90 hours).
- C) Attending a re-approval panel meeting with line manager, principal officer and training representative. It is the responsibility of the individual AMHP

to be aware of the need to convene a meeting before their warrant is due to expire.

The AMPH will need to provide their portfolio, which will include evidence of four MHA's per year, training attended (30 hours per year – 18 of which MUST be specialist to mental health), and the three evidence sheets which are included in this document (Appendix 3) App Three. This must be provided a minimum of 10 working days prior to the re-approval panel meeting. If the AMHP is unable to do so, then the re-approval meeting will need to be re-convened.

Following the successful completion of the re-approval process, new warrant card will be issued.

#### **8. AMHP's Transferring From Another Authority**

On appointment to the new Local Authority, AMHP status must be verified by the appointing manager and Principal Officer. A portfolio of practice from the previous local authority should be requested. When the appointing manager and principal officer are satisfied with the verification of the individual's AMHP status, notification will be given to warrant the individual for a new period of 3 years. The AMHP should then initiate a new portfolio of practice under the requirements set by NPTCBC. The AMHP is responsible for informing their previous LA and returning old warrant cards.

#### **9. Previously Approved AMHP With A Gap in Practice**

After clarifying the previous date of working as an ASW/AMHP, and any evidence of practice, the re-approval procedure will identify the appropriate training/practice needs that are required before the re-approval can take place. The format of the meeting will be the same as the re-approval meeting, i.e. presentation of portfolio, and meeting to look at learning/practical needs. With the New Roles document, this will be applicable to people who have completed their AMHP training in the last five years and any "lapsed" AMHPs who completed the transitional training and were converted from ASW to AMHP in November 2008.

## **10. Appeals Procedure**

Grounds for appeal exist only where it can be shown that the approval/re-approval procedures were not properly followed. It will be the responsibility of the complainant to produce evidence to support his/her contention.

The complainant should follow NPTCBC'S Corporate Complains Procedure.

## **11. Training Requirements For Re-approval**

A minimum of three full training days with specific relevance to mental health and the AMHP role must be completed annually. Training days are coordinated across the Western Bay Region.

The AMHP Forum who's role is to facilitate support and resolve practice issues should be attended regularly by all AMHPs. The Forum also provided an opportunity of support to newly qualified AMHPs.

NPTCBC Learning Training & Development Team will hold a central database of training completed by all AMHPs. Training records will be reviewed regularly as required and the Training and Development Officer is on hand to provide advice and guidance in relation to learning, training and development opportunities for all AMHPs including newly qualified AMHPs in need of additional support. Any learning, training and development opportunities identified by the AMHP Forum or individual AMHPs should discuss with the Training and Development Officer.

## **12. Portfolio**

**See Appendix 1**

Once qualified, the AMHP needs to build up a portfolio of practice. This is a continuous process and should include:

- Record of training including personal evaluation of learning
- Record of statutory work (assessments)
- Tribunal reports/other reports
- Self-appraisal/reflective practice statement
- Additional information to support competence

*The portfolio is intended to show the range of work undertaken and to show evidence of competence, in particular of thoughtful/reflective practice. It does not have to be detailed and show every piece of work over the warrant period.*

### **13. Governance**

All updates, amendments or revisions of this policy will be provided to the AMHP Forum for consultation and will require the approval of the designated Principal Officer for the service.



Neath Port Talbot CBC

AMHP Portfolio

1. Record of refresher training including personal evaluation of learning
2. Record of statutory work (e.g. Form 648/MH1)
3. Tribunal Reports/other reports
4. Competency Evidence Forms 1, 2 and 3 (to be photocopied as required)
5. Self-appraisal
6. Miscellaneous information

**Keeping a portfolio**

Whether you're starting a new job, continuing your current job, participating in a learning event or undertaking/completing a qualification, it's worth keeping an on-going portfolio.

**What is a portfolio?**

A collection of evidence from your day-to-day work that demonstrates your competence and helps you to identify areas for development.

**Why keep a portfolio?**

Increasingly we are all required to evidence our achievements and our ability to do our job well. Keeping a portfolio not only enables you to do this as part of your day-to-day work but also helps you to make good use of supervision, appraisal and learning opportunities by giving you framework for:

- Identifying your learning needs
- Demonstrating your competence
- Thinking about your practice
- Providing information for job applications

**Getting started**

- Keep it simple
- Take this flyer to supervision and discuss it



## AMHP Re-approval Evidence Form – Part 1

*\*This template should be replicated for the number of assessments completed.*

<b>Case Details</b>		<b>Initials of Client</b>
<b>Age</b>	<b>Male/Female</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>
<b>Living / Family Situation:</b>		
<b>Source of Referral and Referral Request / Problem:</b>		
<b>Brief History:</b>		
<b>Work Undertaken:</b>		
<b>Outcome of Intervention and Future Plans:</b>		
<b>Any Relevant Intervention:</b>		
<b>Competencies Demonstrated:</b>		
<b>Comments / Points of Interest</b>		
<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	

## AMHP Re-approval Evidence Form – Part 2

**Where a competency was demonstrated (i.e. Ward Meeting, Team Meeting, Child Protection Meeting, etc)**

**Description of Activity**

**Details of AMHPs Involvement**

**Points of Interest**

**Any Relevant Legislation**

**Competencies Demonstrated**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

### AMHP Re-approval Alternative Evidence Form – Part 3

**Alternative Sources of Evidence (i.e. relevant work other than direct client contact – e.g. project work / special interest):**

**Brief Description**

**Background and Objectives:**

**Who was Involved in the Project:**

**Development Methods Used:**

**Length of Time:**

**Outcomes and Future Plans:**

**Point of Interest:**

**Competencies Demonstrated**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

## AMHP Competencies

### Key Competence Area 1: Application of Values to the AMHP Role

- The ability to identify, challenge and, where possible, redress discrimination and inequality in all its forms in relation to AMHP practice;
- Understanding and respect for diversity and the ability to identify and counter any decision which may be based upon oppressive practice;
- Respect for individuals' qualities, abilities and diverse backgrounds, enabling them to contribute to decisions which affect their quality of life and which may affect their liberty;
- Promotion of the rights, dignity and self-determination of individuals consistent with their own needs and wishes;
- Sensitivity to individuals' needs for personal respect, choice, dignity, and privacy while exercising the AMHP role.

Area 1 Evidence:

### Key Competence Area 2: Application of Knowledge: The Legal and Policy Framework

- Application of knowledge of mental health legislation, related Codes of Practice and national local policy guidance;
- Application of knowledge of other relevant legislation, Codes of Practice, national and local policy guidance;
- Race and culturally-sensitive understanding in the application of knowledge in the Mental Health Legislation.
- An explicit awareness of the legal position and accountability of AMHPs in relation to the legislation, any employing organisation and the authority on whose behalf they are acting;

- The ability to use critical evaluation of local and national policy to inform AMHP practice;
- The ability to base AMHP practice on a critical evaluation of a range of research relevant to evidence based practice, including that on the impact of the experience of discrimination on mental health.

**Area 2 Evidence:**

### **Key Competence Area 3: Application of Knowledge: Mental Distress**

- Critical and applied understanding of a range of models of mental distress, including the contribution of social, physical and development factors;
- Critical and applied understanding of the social perspective on mental distress and mental health needs including personality disorder, in working service users, relatives, carers and other professionals;
- Critical and applied understanding of the implications of mental distress for service users, children, families and carers;
- Critical and applied understanding of the implications of a range of relevant treatments and interventions for service users, children, families and carers;
- Critical and applied understanding of the impact of the experience of discrimination on mental health.

**Area 3 Evidence:**

## **Key Competence Area 4 – Application of Skills: Working in Partnership**

- The ability to articulate, and demonstrate in practice, the social perspective on mental distress and mental health needs;
- The ability to communicate appropriately with and to establish effective relationships with service users and carers in undertaking the AMHP role;
- The ability to articulate the role of AMHP in the course contributing to effective inter agency and inter professional working;
- The ability to use networks and community groups to influence collaborative working with a range of individuals, agencies and advocates;
- The ability to contribute effectively to planning and implementing option for care such as alternatives to compulsory admission, discharge and aftercare;
- The ability to recognise, assess and manage effectively risk in the context of the AMHP role;
- The ability to effectively manage difficult situations of anxiety, risk and conflict, reflecting on their impact on self and others;
- The ability to work with the conflict between inherent power in the AMHP role and objective of empowering practice and advocacy;
- The ability to compile and complete statutory documentation, including an application for admission;
- The ability to plan, negotiate and manage, compulsory admission to hospital or arrangements for supervised community treatment;
- The ability to manage and coordinate effectively the relevant legal and practice processes including the involvement of other professionals as well as other service users, relatives and carers.

**Area 4 Evidence:**



## **Key Competence Area 5: Application of Skills: Making and Communicating Informed Decisions**

- The ability to assert a social perspective and to act independently;
- The ability to obtain, analyse and share appropriate information from individuals and other resources in order to manage the decision-making process including decisions about supervised community treatments orders;
- The ability to provide reasoned verbal and written reports to promote effective, accountable and independent AMHP decision making;
- The ability to present at a legal hearing;
- The ability to exercise the appropriate use of independence, authority and autonomy together with an appropriate use of self-reflection, consultation and supervision;
- The ability to evaluate the outcome of interventions with service users, carers and others, including the identification of unmet needs;
- The ability to make and communicate decisions that are sensitive to diversity.

**Area 5 Evidence:**

**Notes**

**APPENDIX 2**

**Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council**

**Appointment / Approval / Re-Approval Authorisation From to Act as  
Approved Mental Health Professional – Section 114: Mental Health Act 1983**

<b>Name of AMHP</b>	
<b>Work Address</b>	
<b>Contact phone number</b>	

**Appointment**

I am writing to confirm that, having completed the necessary enquiries, the above named person is appointed to act as an Approved Mental Health Professional. Your approval is valid for a period of three years, ceasing on the;

Expiry date: .....

A copy of this form will be sent to the holder of the AMHP Register for inclusion on the Register (Catherine Roberts, Learning, Training & Development).

**Approval / Re-Approval**

I am writing to confirm that, having completed the necessary practice and learning, training and development opportunities; you are re-appointed to act as an Approved Mental Health Professional for Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council with effect from;

Re-approval date: .....

Your approval is valid for a period of three years, ceasing on the;

Expiry date: .....

A copy of this form will be sent to the holder of the AMHP Register for inclusion on the Register (Catherine Roberts, Learning, Training & Development).

**Re-Approval / Un-authorised to Work for NPT**

I am writing to confirm that having undertaken the necessary procedure the above named person has not met the approval / re-approval requirements and therefore will not act as an AMHP for Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council. No warrant card will / should be issued.

Effective date: .....

**Signatures**

**Approved Mental Health Professional**

Signature		Date	
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**Team Manager**

Name			
Contact Details			
Signature		Date	

**Senior Manager / Principal Officer**

Name			
Contact Details			
Signature		Date	

**NPTCBC Chief Executive / Warranting Officer (e.g. Director of Social Services)**

Name			
Contact Details			
Signature		Date	

**Endorsed by**

Training Representative			
Name			
Contact Details			
Signature		Date	

Human Resources Representative			
Name			
Contact Details			
Signature		Date	

**AMHP REGISTRATION  
RENEWAL PROCESS**

1. DCC ACS HR Admin send renewal reminder to AMHP and line manager (12 months prior to renewal) advising the AMHP of the requirement to book themselves onto AMHP renewal training.

2. AMHP attends refresher training, completes training & learning portfolio evidence and presents AMHP Training Co-ordinator.

3 months prior to renewal date, DCC ACS HR Admin send a second email renewal reminder to AMHP (copied to line manager, AMHP Training Co-ordinator & DPT Head of Social Work)

3. AMHP Training Co-ordinator verifies that all training/learning requirements have been met

**Requirements met**

4. Portfolio signed off.  
Training/Learning verification passed to line manager and Advanced Professional Social Worker (or Principal Social Worker in their absence) to sign off and verify that appropriate AMHP annual practice and taken place

5. AMHP1 form completed 2 months prior to renewal

6. Completed AMHP1 passed to DPT Head of Social Work for endorsement (at least 6 weeks prior to renewal)

7. AMHP form sent to LTD to arrange issues of warrant card.

**Requirements not met – further discussion with AMHP, line manager and DPT Head of Social Work**

2 months prior to expiry, DCC HR Admin will notify DPT Head of Social Work & Head of Integrated Children's Services and Adult Care management advising them of the warrant expiry date and that the AMHP will not be able to undertake any work under the mental health act after the expiry date.

Stages 3 & 4 can be completed at one meeting if convenient but process should not be delayed if a joint meeting within these timescales is not convenient.