

Isle of Wight Social Services and Housing Directorate

Emergency Duty (Out of Hours) Service

Best Value Improvement Plan

The Best Value Review of Out of Hours Services (now renamed the Emergency Duty Service) was undertaken between May 2000 and March 2001. A report of the Review, which included the **Best Value Improvement Plan**, was presented to the Executive on 31st May 2001. The Review was subsequently endorsed by the Social Services Inspectorate who reported to the Select Committee of 6th March 2002 that the reviewed 'out of hours services' were designated "Good and very likely to improve", the equivalent of a 3 star rating.

This updated document states the original improvement points and goes on to outline the actions required, resource implications, deadlines and indicators for each improvement point. It also outlines the actions taken in relation to the Best Value Improvement Plan over the last year.

It should be recognised that this plan was written two years ago so does not address the priorities arising from such recent events as the Victoria Climbié Inquiry and developments in the Government's health and social care agenda; therefore the Best Value Improvement Plan remains a working document. These and other issues continue to inform the evolution of the Emergency Duty Service (EDS), as do local requirements. With reference to corporate priorities, the following year will also feature work towards improved performance management and human resources strategy.

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Manager, Emergency Duty Service. 19th March 2003

	Improvement	Action	Resource Implications	Deadline	Indicator	Progress
Fair Access						
1	<p>Information on services to be re-designed and re-distributed to target those most in need of information on the role and scope of the of the out of hours service.</p> <p>Format and media to be used will include the potential for rapid production of information for those with a sensory impairment or to meet the communication needs of people from ethnic minorities.</p>	<p>Promotion of the Emergency Duty Service (EDS) as an emergency only resource outside office hours.</p> <p>Production of a leaflet for public distribution the information within which meets the Improvement Point criteria.</p>	<p>None.</p> <p>£300 for a small print run of basic information leaflets.</p>	<p>June 2003</p> <p>June 2003</p>	<p>Every field work team to have received a presentation on the interface protocol.</p> <p>Leaflets available at all Social Services offices, GP surgeries etc.</p> <p>Additional communication needs able to be met.</p>	<p>Given that an average 95% of users of the EDS are existing clients of Social Services, communication with key workers regarding the role and scope of the service has been prioritised. These discussions have culminated in an Interface Protocol, which will now be presented to staff. A translatable public information leaflet on the EDS is in production and distribution of this will coincide with these presentations. The EDS is featured on the IWC Website.</p>

2	Out of hours content for the Council's electronic access arrangements to be included in the Directorate's electronic access strategy.	Ensure that EDS criteria published on IWC website. Ensure EDS included in IT developments.	None Included in overall Directorate costs of new IT system.	Completed. Linked to ACCISS replacement timetable. IT Project Manager in place May 2003.	EDS information available to the public via IWC website. New IT system to meet EDS operational requirements and provide for retrieval and collation of management information.	EDS Manager has completed the IWC website entry and is to sit on the Project Assurance Group to ensure that the user specifications of the new IT system meets the defined information needs of the Emergency Duty Service and Service Users.
3	Service users to be periodically consulted on access arrangements and service quality of the out of hour's services.	Put in place consultation arrangements.	Up to 1 hr per week of the time of a 'third party' assessor. Provided by IT Section.	Arrangements in place but, due to sampling method, it will take at least a further three months to accumulate an indicative sample of user satisfaction.	The collation of a meaningful sample of service user consultations to be included in future Annual Reports.	Working from the experience of other authorities and the SSI, the best means of judging service user satisfaction with the EDS is via a brief telephone questionnaire undertaken as soon as possible after the EDS contact.

4	Conclude a service level agreement with Wightcare Services for the provision of call taking and call management, to include service standards and protocols.	Review, with Wightcare Services Manager, the interface between the EDS and Wightcare Services.	None	Arrangements completed with Wightcare Services but subject to ongoing review.	Updated arrangements in place formalised in SLA..	Although arrangements are already in place, the interface between the EDS and Wightcare has changed incrementally over the past year requiring further review and amendment. These arrangements to be formalised.
5	Monitor the effectiveness of jointly managed Approved Social Work services out of hours, and respond to improvement needs	Review respective roles of managers involved in the ASW service.	None, this service is already provided.	Monitoring is ongoing and review of roles will be subject to the timetable of change within Adult Services.	Clear internal arrangements and interagency protocols in place for ASW operational management, financial processes and professional accountability.	Although the budget for the ASW Service sits within the Emergency Duty Budget, operational and professional management is provided by the Head of Adult Services. The effectiveness of the ASW Service should be seen in relation to the ability of other agencies to play their part in Mental Health assessments.

Improvement	Action	Resource Implications	Deadline	Indicator	Progress	
Strategic Development						
6	<p>A continuous strategic review of the scope and role of out of hours services, with a cross Directorate emphasis on responding to emergencies only. (Strategy should ensure that resources are used by those most in need, and that staff of the service have clear instructions on how best to deal with a growing workload of non-emergency calls. The structure should be changed as needed to ensure a Best value service).</p>	<p>Review patterns of referral and ensure an appropriate level of service provision.</p> <p>Complete a protocol clarifying the interface between in-office hours and out of hours services.</p>	<p>Increased use of staff already in place outside office hours represents a Best Value use of resources.</p>	<p>Continuous review.</p> <p>Completed.</p>	<p>Continuous strategic review of EDS in place.</p> <p>Every field worker to be aware of and have access to a copy of the Interface Protocol.</p>	<p>The Best Value Review identified that 20% of calls to EDS regarding children were non-emergency contacts from Foster Carers. Extensive consultation has led to the creation of a protocol clarifying respective roles in supporting Foster Carers, which has reversed this situation and improved the range and clarity of Foster Carer support. Arrangements regarding the relationship between the EDS and in-office hours services have been clarified in an Interface Protocol. This provides definitive criteria for emergency responses.</p>

7	A core set of service protocols to be developed based on best practice.	Protocols to be produced for all key areas of service delivery.	None.	December 2003	A chart of all services utilised by or subject to joint working with the EDS to be produced detailing existing service protocols with dates of completion. This applies to services both within and outside the Directorate.	Areas of service provision prioritised for protocol development: Foster Carer support, Missing Young Persons, Child Protection, Adult Protection, some Mental Health Services and NCSC.
8	Service standards to be monitored and performance reported on. Standards to be regularly reviewed and targets set; user, carer and stakeholder feedback and satisfaction to be included.	<p>Monitoring of work undertaken by EDS.</p> <p>EDS Standards to be clarified.</p> <p>Feedback to be facilitated.</p> <p>Filtering Officer Overview report to be improved.</p>	<p>To be absorbed within existing budget.</p> <p>No financial implications but due to the need for a paper system this will add to the Filtering Officer's workload.</p>	<p>Completed but subject to permanent review.</p> <p>May 2003</p>	<p>Arrangements in place for weekly monitoring of activity.</p> <p>Standards clarified.</p> <p>A programme in place for stakeholder feedback and satisfaction survey.</p> <p>New Overview Report in use with process for collation and utilisation of statistical and performance information to inform targets.</p>	<p>Job sheets from Filtering Officers scrutinised weekly by EDS Manager and cross-referenced with recording. Specific issues re. standards raised.</p> <p>Standards clarified in Interface / Recording protocols.</p> <p>Stakeholder review commencing with Foster Carer survey.</p> <p>Survey of Service User satisfaction as per Improvement Point 3.</p> <p>Overview report in draft, for consultation.</p>

9	Formal protocols for working with Mental Health Services and Island Doctors on Call to be developed.	Production of protocols for all Mental Health Services and IDOC.	No additional costs. It may be possible to add value to services via developments in emergency care arrangements.	Linked to service developments in both areas. Anticipated date for completion, December 2003.	Production of protocols for all Mental Health Services and IDOC / Emergency care.	EDS Manager is part of Emergency Services Network (Emergency Health & Social Care) and Mental Health Services working party.
10	All staff on out of hours duty to have a contractual agreement with the Council clearly stating responsibilities, accountabilities and rewards.	Review and revise Job Descriptions and Terms of Reference. Review allowances.	None, reviewed allowances introduced at nil cost to existing budget.	Completed.	All EDS staff received revised Terms of Reference.	Job descriptions reviewed and revised Terms of Reference sent to staff. Filtering Officer allowances enhanced with costs absorbed by savings.
11	Improved communication between out of hours staff, including feedback on performance to be included in improved operational management.	Maintain programme of quarterly EDS 'Team' Meetings. Direct feedback to be given to staff on specific case issues. Group supervision to be offered.	No additional financial costs but group supervision will further add to time pressures in EDS staff's daytime roles. Staff attendance must therefore be negotiated with 'day-time' managers.	Completed.	Annual programme of meetings. Reporting / feedback process clear to all EDS staff. Supervision groups set up.	Feedback from EDS staff on issues arising from their duty sessions is freely communicated. Matters picked up by the EDS Manager via scrutiny of recording are communicated to staff involved. Any performance or practice issue may require a meeting.

12	Improved record keeping to be introduced for monitoring of performance and outcomes, particularly against standards. Compliance with record keeping policies to be monitored.	Recording / Contingency Planning Protocol. A more sophisticated reporting system to be designed for reporting of outcomes.	None. No financial implications but this will add to the Filtering Officer's workload until a new IT system performs this function.	Completed May 2003	Protocol completed. New Overview Report and associated information system in place to enable the process of collation and utilisation of outcome / performance information.	A Recording / Planning Protocol has been completed. Currently, the Filtering Officer Overview Report is in draft form and is out for consultation. A spreadsheet has been designed to process the information gleaned. The IT Section is able to provide reports on patterns of recording. The EDS information systems have been 'Caldicott assessed' and improvements made.
13	Introduce to all strategic managers a checklist for ensuring that key operational policies and procedures give due regard to the needs of staff working out of hours.	Clarification of areas of operation and implications for policy and procedural changes.	None. Active involvement in specific service developments has been found to be more effective than a pre-emptive checklist.	Completed.	Interface Protocol completed.	EDS Manager also attends key meetings of managers across the Directorate and sits on a number of working parties to ensure joint policy / procedural issues are addressed.

14	The interface between daytime and out of hours working to be clarified, with attention to communication, the transfer of work from one service to another, and the management implications of extended daytime hours.	Interface Protocol to be concluded. Remain involved in service developments that might lead to changes in working hours.	No financial implications. Clarification of eligibility criteria and case working arrangements should contribute to a Best Value service.	Completed.	Every field worker to be aware of and have access to a copy of the Interface Protocol.	The structure of the Interface Protocol addresses each of these points in turn and clarifies definitions and criteria for emergency response and other case interventions. For example it makes provision for a Children's Services Emergency Duty Officer to be 'contracted' by a daytime team to 'cold call' in the case of non-emergency child protection concerns. As per Improvement Point 13, the EDS Manager attends any meeting that may lead to implications for out of hours working. EDS data has helped inform some of these developments.
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Using Resources for Best Value

	Improvement	Action	Resource Implications	Deadline	Indicator	Progress
15	<p>The appointment of an operational manager to oversee improvement and development of the service including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial management and reporting. • Reduce variation and inconsistency. • Supervision and staff control. • Service Development (Care Direct and other joint development work). • Staff training and development. 	Appointment of Manager.	<p>Increase in budget to allow for service to be managed approved by the Executive, May 2001.</p> <p>Operational management, in developing the outcomes indicated in the original Best Value Improvement Plan, has rationalised activity and worked towards the development of a Best Value Service.</p>	Completed.	Manager in post working towards defined Best Value objectives.	<p>The EDS Manager took up this post on 21st January 2002. This BV Improvement Plan summarises progress so far in delivery of these objectives and indicates outstanding issues.</p> <p>There have also occurred many operational, legislative and interagency developments, unforeseen in the original plan, which have required attention. Many of these will develop into improvement points themselves e.g. the Laming Recommendations. Care Direct is ended.</p>

16	The ethnicity of service users to be monitored to inform communication and service development.	EDS staff to ensure that ethnicity is recorded in all cases opened out of hours.	None.	Completed but subject to continuous monitoring.	Scrutiny by EDS manager to record 100% compliance in cases opened by the Filtering Officer	Additional quality control will be achieved by inclusion of ethnicity checks as a data field in the Filtering Officer Overview Report.
17	Operational management to identify training needs with a contribution to the Personal Development Plans of staff. Service training needs to be reported to the service strategic managers.	To put systems in place to identify and promote training needs of EDS staff.	None. Training to be identified within the existing Training Plan.	Current PDP round, ending approximately October 2003, but this is a continuous process reflecting evolving training priorities.	PDPs reflect training needs of EDS staff specific to, or complimentary to, their practice out of hours. Training needs reported to SMG.	EDS Manager is currently reviewing individual training histories. This will inform discussions on training needs as the year progresses. Nomination for specific training is ongoing, e.g. Adult Protection.
18	The identification of resources and service providers to enhance out of hours services will be undertaken, and a 'market map' of need out of hours to be produced to inform commissioning.	Survey of key resources and services that operate outside office hours. Creation of 'market map.'	None anticipated. More effective use of existing resources will enhance and add value to the operations of the EDS.	Completed but subject to continuous review. Market map to be completed by April 2003.	Information in duty bags of EDS staff. Market map to complement and cross reference with the chart of partner agencies with Service Protocols in Improvement Point 7.	New resources are researched and information on the service and access arrangements placed in the EDS duty bags. Market map currently being drawn up.

19	Construct a realistic and manageable budget for the out of hours service, and enter structural costs into the Directorate budget book.	Patterns of expenditure and potential savings identified. Review and repair of financial processes.	A stable budget with a Best Value assessment of all expenditure.	Completed but subject to permanent review.	<p>A stable targeted budget with anticipated annual costs.</p> <p>Best Value assessment of all expenditure resulting in savings whenever possible.</p> <p>Clear processes for all expenditure with identified audit trail.</p>	<p>Total budget reviewed. All predictable costs checked for Best Value. All variable costs (overtime, telephones etc) checked also for potential savings and actions taken. A revised claim processing system has been implemented resulting in the ability to track expenditure more effectively.</p>
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	Improvement	Action	Resource Implications	Deadline	Indicator	Progress
Assessing Need and Providing Services						
20	The improvement of access to the Computer database for Homelessness Officers. Review of computer access for Approved Social Workers and Social Workers (EDOs). To be undertaken as part of the Directorates re-investment in information systems.	Provision of access to ACCISS to ASWs and Homelessness Officers (who staff the rota outside office hours). EDO access requirements to be decided.	Costs found from main service budgets. Whilst currently EDO access is not economic, this may change with the introduction of the new IT system. Some small savings may be made by EDOs being able to record at home rather than travel to their offices but these do not match additional costs.	Completed prior to Improvement Plan implementation. To be subject of ongoing review.	ASWs and Homelessness Officers have access to ACCISS when on duty outside office hours. EDO access requirements decided.	ASWs and Homelessness Officers were provided via the respective main services with laptops and dial-in access to ACCISS prior to implementation of the Improvement Plan. EDO dial-in access is not currently a Best Value action due to: The cost of provision of IT equipment. The cost of the resultant DSE regulation assessment and maintenance. The limited access capacity of the current system leading to potential 'lock out' of prioritised users. The fact that EDO's are instructed

						by Filtering Officers who obtain background from ACCISS whereas the other two parts of the service receive direct referrals.
21	Recording Policy to be reviewed and amendments made with regard to out of hours working and contingency planning.	Recording and Contingency Planning reviewed and revised.	None.	Completed but subject to continuous review.	Recording policy clear. Contingency Planning Protocol in place.	This has been a major area of activity as the effectiveness of the service depends on good information being passed between services. Recording standards have been reiterated for individuals in the revised Terms of Reference and for the Directorate in the Interface Protocol. Contingency Planning Protocols have been drawn up for Children's and Adults Services. 'Pro-formas' for structuring Plans on ACCISS are being trailed.

