

TRIAGE SCALE



MENTAL HEALTH & ADDICTION SERVICES PROTOCOL

Code / descrip tion	Response type / time to face-to face contact	Typical presentations	MH&AS action / response	Additional actions to be considered
A Current actions endangering self or others	Emergency services response IMMEDIATE REFERRAL	Overdose Other medical emergency Siege Suicide attempt(s) serious self-harm in progress Violence / threats of violence and possession of weapon	Triage clinician to notify ambulance, Police and / or fire brigade	Keeping caller on line until emergency services arrive. Crisis Service notification / attendance Notification of other relevant services (e.g. child protection)
B Very high risk of imminent harm to self or others	Very urgent MH&AS response WITHIN 2 HOURS	Acute suicidal ideation or risk of harm to others with clear plan and means and/or history of self-harm or aggression Very high risk behaviour associated with perceptual / thought disturbance, delirium, dementia, or impaired impulse control Urgent assessment requested by Police	Crisis or equivalent face-to-face assessment AND / OR Triage clinician advice to attend a hospital emergency department (where Crisis cannot attend in timeframe or where the person requires ED assessment / treatment)	Providing or arranging support for consumer and / or carer while awaiting face-to-face MH&AS response (e.g. telephone support / therapy; alternative provider response) Telephone secondary consultation to other service provider while awaiting face-to-face MH&AS response Advise caller to ring back if the situation changes Arrange parental / carer supervision for a child / adolescent, where appropriate
C High risk of harm to self or others and / or high distress, especially in absence of capable supports	Urgent MH&AS response WITHIN 8 HOURS	Suicidal ideation with no plan and / or history of suicidal ideation Rapidly increasing symptoms of psychosis and / or severe mood disorder High risk behaviour associated with perceptual / thought disturbance, delirium, dementia, or impaired impulse control Unable to care for self or dependents or perform activities of daily living Known consumer requiring urgent intervention to prevent or contain relapse	Crisis, continuing care or equivalent (e.g. CAMHS urgent response) face-to face assessment within 8 HOURS; AND Crisis continuing care or equivalent telephone follow-up within ONE HOUR of triage contact	As above Obtaining corroborating / additional information from relevant others
Moderate risk of harm and / or significant distress	Semi-urgent MH&AS response WITHIN 72 HOURS	Significant client / carer distress associated with serious mental illness (including mood/anxiety disorder) but not suicidal Early symptoms of psychosis Requires priority face-to-face assessment in order to clarify diagnostic status Known consumer requiring priority treatment or review	Crisis, continuing care or equivalent (eg. CAMHS case manager) face-to face assessment	As above
E Low risk of harm in short term or moderate risk with high support /	Non-urgent MH&AS response	Requires specialist MH&AS assessment but is stable and at low risk of harm in waiting period Other service providers able to manage the person until MH&AS appointment (with or without MH&AS phone support) Known consumer requiring nonurgent review, treatment or follow-up	Continuing care or equivalent (eg. CAMHS case manager) face-to face assessment	As above

Issue Date: Apr 2016	Page 1 of 2	NOTE: The electronic version of
Review Date: Apr 2019	Version No: 2	this document is the most current.
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Protocol MHAS.A1.53

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Referral: not requiring face-to-face response from MH&AS in this	Referral or advice to contact alternative service provider	Other services (e.g. GPs, private mental health practitioners, ACCS) more appropriate to person's current needs Symptoms of mild to moderate depressive, anxiety, adjustment, behavioural and / or developmental disorder Early cognitive changes in an older person	Triage clinician to provide formal or informal referral to an alternative service provider or advice to attend a particular type of service provider	Facilitating appointment with alternative provider (subject to consent / privacy requirements), especially if alternative intervention is time-critical
G Advice or information only / Service provider consultation / MH&AS	Advice or information only OR More information needed	Consumer / carer requiring advice or opportunity to talk Service provider requiring telephone consultation / advice Issue not requiring MH&AS or other services MH&AS awaiting possible further contact More information (incl discussion with an MH&AS team) is needed to determine whether MH&AS intervention is required	Triage clinician to provide consultation, advice and/or brief counselling if required and / or MH&AS service to collect further information over telephone	Making follow-up telephone contact as a courtesy

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