



# Telephone Triage – After Hours Procedure

Procedure Number  
*CHC-MHS-0004*

Version Nos:  
**6**

## 1. Purpose

This Procedure provides a guideline for the management of telephone contacts, out of hours, and to ensure that all calls are appropriately responded to and documented in a timely manner within the West Coast District Health Board (WCDHB) Mental Health Service (MHS)

## 2. Application

This Procedure is to be followed by all TACT and IPU staff of the WCDHB MHS.

## 3. Definitions

For the purpose of this Procedure:

**After Hours** is defined as the time between 2130-0800 hours, during this time all calls are taken by the Manaakitanga staff, in the first instance.

**Triage** is the clinical process of undertaking a preliminary assessment to establish whether a person is likely to have a mental disorder, and the nature and urgency of the response required.

**After Hours Telephone Triage** is the process undertaken

- to determine the need for the TACT team members / Duly Authorised Officers to attend and undertake an urgent out of hours assessment of mental health issues;
- to facilitate a client's crisis management plan;
- to engage (briefly) with the client or their family/significant others in the management of acute distress.

## 4. Responsibilities

For the purposes of this Procedure:

All **TACT** and **IPU** staff members are required to abide by the requirements of this Procedure.

## 5. Resources Required

This Procedure requires the following resources:

- WCDHB MHS Referral / Triage Form
- Manaakitanga Triage Log
- Details of Client of Concern Notification (if completed) ie updated risk assessment, risk management, crisis and relapse prevention plan.

## 6. Process

1.00 When a call is received a preliminary assessment is to be undertaken. This will include

- Identification of the caller and relationship to person of concern
- Specific concerns of the person phoning, safety and risk information
- Exploration of the current situation, what has lead to this situation developing
- Whether the person needs to be seen at this time, or wait until the morning.



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- The person’s willingness to be seen by MHS, and their current location
  - Exploration of previous history, contact with MH services
  - Specific advice regarding MHA processes if applicable
  - Brief / supportive intervention focused on resolution of immediate concerns (as per client’s crisis plan)
- 1.01 Required level of response is assessed and facilitated:
- Emergency response – IPU nurse undertaking triage will contact the appropriate emergency services directly to facilitate (in negotiation with the client’s family)
  - TACT / DAO assistance – TACT are to be contacted after hours **only** when either
    - It is clear that an urgent response is needed that night from MHS staff
    - When specific DAO assistance is requested to undertake MHA processes
  - TACT or CMH Case Manager follow-up the next morning (client safe in Police custody, or medical ward, over night)
  - Brief supportive advice to assist immediate management of current distress, with CMH follow-up (existing clients)
  - Referral to other agency / PHO
- 1.02 Documentation to be completed as follows:
- i) Referral / Triage Form
    - Copy provided to TACT team member attending
    - Copy provided to the CMH team (includes AOD/CAMHS) for follow-up the next day (existing clients)
  - ii) Manaakitanga Triage Log completed
    - Time and duration of call
    - Identity of caller and outcome of contact
    - TACT response that night
    - Emergency services requested
    - TACT/CMH follow-up
    - Advice given, no further MHS follow up

## 7. Precautions And Considerations

- ➔ The key aspects of the telephone triage involves the collection of information to allow the determination of the need for assessment of the client
- ➔ In situations where the staff member receiving the call believes that there is an immediate risk to the client, or another person, they will contact an appropriate emergency service.

## 8. References

There are no references associated with this Procedure.



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### 9. Related Documents

WCDHB MHS Policies and Procedures

WCDHB Service Provision Framework

<b>Revision History</b>	<b>Version:</b>	6
	<b>Developed By:</b>	Mental Health QI Co-Ordinator
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