

## From Met Police Website

# Introduction of Right Care, Right Person model

Right Care, Right Person (RCRP) is an operational model developed by Humberside Police that changes the way the emergency services respond to calls involving concerns about mental health. It is in the process of being rolled out across the UK as part of ongoing work between police forces, health providers and Government.

It is aimed at making sure the right agency deals with health related calls, instead of the police being the default first responder as is currently the case in most areas. It has been shown to improve outcomes, reduce demand on all services, and make sure the right care is being delivered by the right person.

It does not stop the police continuing to perform their key role of keeping people safe and where there is a real and immediate risk to life or serious harm – whether that be a person seeking to harm themselves or to harm others – officers will respond swiftly as they currently do.

In a letter sent to leaders of London health and social care providers on 24 May 2023, Commissioner Sir Mark Rowley confirmed that the Met will begin to introduce RCRP from September.

Sir Mark wrote: “It is important to stress the urgency of needing to implement RCRP in London.

“Every day that we permit the status quo to remain, we are collectively failing patients and are not setting officers up to succeed.

“In fact, we are failing Londoners twice. We are failing them first by sending police officers, not medical professionals, to those in mental health crisis, and expecting them to do their best in circumstances where they are not the right people to be dealing with a patient.

“We are failing Londoners a second time by taking large amounts of officer time away from preventing and solving crime as well as dealing properly with victims, in order to fill gaps for others.”

## The current challenge

In March 2023, Met officers detained 573 people under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act and many more under Section 135, the two most commonly used powers of detention where there are concerns that someone poses a risk to themselves or others.

In London, it takes on average 14.2 hours in A&E and 8.5 hours at a health-based place of safety from the police arriving with a patient to medical staff taking over their care.

It is estimated that Met officers spend well over 10,000 hours each month responding to mental health concerns and dealing with what should principally be health matters.

Figures from the recent National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) Productivity Review showed that nationally, police officers are spending just under one million hours a year sat with mental health patients in hospitals waiting for assessment. These are precious hours that are being taken away from tackling crime, addressing core policing priorities or using the powers that only the police have to target offenders and support victims.

While Met officers and staff are professional, compassionate and highly skilled in many areas, they are not trained to deliver the level of mental health care required by patients in crisis.

## Implementation

As part of the roll out of RCRP, Met call handlers will receive training to use the model to triage incoming calls and decide on an appropriate course of action, including whether to deploy police officers or not.

The triage process is expected to result in officers attending far fewer calls, while identifying those where there is still a need for the police to be deployed, such as where health and social care partners need help, such as with patients who are violent or have assaulted healthcare staff or clinicians.

The Met continues to hold discussions with partners in ambulance, mental health, acute hospitals and social services to build, test and agree the approach so that there is a clear and shared understanding on when police will be deployed. The roll out in London is also supported by the NPCC Mental Health Lead and the College of Policing, and is underpinned by new national policy being agreed between police forces and health services, with the support of Government.

## Results at Humberside Police

Humberside Police identified that before the introduction of Right Care, Right Person, the force was deployed to an average of 1,566 incidents per month relating to issues such as concerns for welfare, mental health incidents or missing persons.

As a result of implementing Right Care, Right Person, Humberside saw average incidents per month reduce by 508 deployments – equating to 1,132 officer hours. This has allowed the force to reallocate saved resource to other specialist teams.