

Appendix 3

Service users requesting a change of Healthcare Professional or second opinion.

- 1 If the service user is requesting a change of Health care professional or a Second Opinion this appendix should be followed.
- 2 **Process for a Change of Healthcare Professional**
 - 2.1 Requests for change of Healthcare Professional, and wherever possible reasoning for the request, should be made to the Team Manager either in writing or verbally if that is not possible.
- 3 **Request Logged**
 - 3.1 Upon receipt of the request the Team manager should enter this on Rio and log this for audit purposes. The Clinical lead/ clinical supervisor should then discuss this with the Healthcare Professional involved.
 - 3.2 The Team Manager should then respond to the service user in writing explaining the procedure and the next steps. The letter will describe the two week consideration period. The consideration period allows the service user and those working with the service user to consider if the difficulties can be resolved in another way. It also allows time for reflection upon the advantages and disadvantages of changing, and the service user's expectations. The service user will also be informed of the need for assessment of their capacity. This discussion should be recorded in the clinical record.
 - 3.3 The Team Manager should contact the service user to ascertain their current needs after the two weeks 'consideration' period. If the service user decides to withdraw the change of Healthcare Professional request, the log can be updated and no further action is required.
 - 3.4 The two week period can be waived if the clinical team consider that a delay in the change of Healthcare Professional would be detrimental and that an immediate change is required. It is the responsibility of the Team Manager to ascertain the above from the clinical team, and amend the letter of acknowledgement accordingly.
 - 3.5 If the service user's request is still in place at the end of the two week 'consideration' process, the Team manager will update the relevant Associate Director of the reasons, and process the request until it is resolved.

4 Advocacy

- 4.1 Support or advocacy is available for all service users in making such decisions. This includes a chosen carer/supporter, professional and service user organisations.
- 4.2 **Requests for change which are not considered to be in the Service User's 'Best Interests'**
- 4.3 If after the two week 'consideration' period it is believed by the professionals involved that a change in Healthcare Professional is not in the service user's best interests. The Team Manager will discuss this with the service user and ensure it is recorded within the clinical record.
- 4.4 **Requests for change which are considered to be in the Service User's 'Best Interests'**
- 4.5 If it is deemed appropriate to change the Healthcare Professional, the Team Manager will identify a new Healthcare Professional to take over this element of the care and intervention. If the service user has requested a specific Healthcare Professional every effort will be made to accommodate this, if the Team Manager feels this is logistically and clinically appropriate.
- 4.6 If having gone through the above process, the service user is not satisfied with the outcome; discussions should take place with the relevant Associate Director for the service. If the service user remains dissatisfied the complaints procedure can be instigated using the trust's policy, CNTW (O) 07 – Complaints and Comments Policy.

5 Process for Seeking a Second Opinion

- 5.1 A request for a second opinion could come from either the service user, or the Healthcare Professionals themselves.
- 5.2 In both of these situations, the Healthcare Professional should refer to a colleague who will take responsibility for appointing an appropriately skilled clinician. The person suggested to act as a second opinion should be another Healthcare Professional whose areas of interest and expertise are appropriate to the clinical situation. If difficulty arises in identifying an appropriate person, discussion should take place with the relevant Associate Director.
- 5.3 The service user should be advised that their GP is also able to refer them for a second opinion.

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- 5.4 In situations, where the Healthcare Professional does not feel a second opinion is in the service user's best interests, the views of others involved in the service user's care, the GP and carer(s)/relative(s) should also be considered.
- 5.5 If the Healthcare Professional is opposed to a second opinion, they should explain the reasons to the service user. If the Service user continues to request a second opinion the relevant Associate Director should be informed. If the service user remains dissatisfied the complaints procedure can be instigated using the Trust's policy, CNTW(O)07 – Complaints and Comments Policy.
- 5.6 The outcome of the second opinion assessment will be discussed with the service user and expressed in a written report.
- 5.7 Any Healthcare Professional suggested as the second opinion should be acceptable to the service user. If the service user has requested a specific Healthcare Professional every effort will be made to accommodate this request, if logistically and clinically appropriate
- 5.8 Healthcare Professionals who provide second opinions should keep a record of time spent in this activity for job planning and appraisal purposes.