

Moving prisoners to and from mental health hospitals Guidance



NHS England and NHS Improvement



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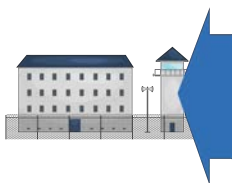
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Introduction



Many prisoners will have some mental health problems while they are in prison.



Most will be able to be treated by the prison mental health services.



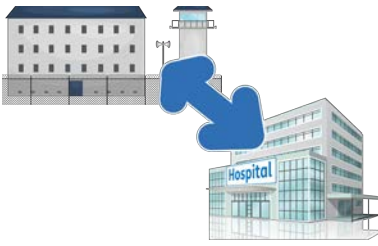
Some will have to go to a mental health hospital for treatment.



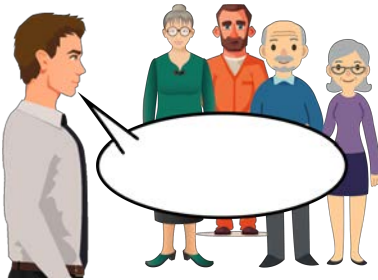
This has to be agreed by the **Ministry of Justice**.



The **Ministry of Justice** is a government department in charge of courts, prisons, criminal law and people's legal rights.



This **guidance** explains how prisoners are moved to and from a mental health hospital.



The person, their family and any carers must be told all about the move to and from hospital.



Guidance is advice and information.



This **guidance** is written by the NHS to tell staff in the different services what they have to do.

Paying for health services for prisoners



Normally local doctors (GPs) arrange treatment for their patients.



All GPs belong to a clinical commissioning group (CCG).



The CCG pays for the treatment arranged by GPs in their area.



Sometimes it is difficult to work out which CCG should pay for treatment for a patient in a prison.

But these patients will get treatment before working out which CCG will pay.

Prisoners who are registered with a GP



If a prisoner is registered with a GP, then that GP's CCG will pay for the treatment in a mental health hospital.



Prisoners who are not registered with a GP

For prisoners who are not registered with a GP, the CCG that covers the area where they usually live will pay.

Referral and assessment



Referral

The prison mental health service will see the prisoner first.



They have to decide if the prisoner's mental health has got so bad that:

- They may harm themselves or other people



- It is affecting their physical health



- The prison needs to protect them



The prison mental health service may decide that the prisoner should be assessed by a psychiatrist.

This is called a **referral**.



The prisoner should not have to wait more than 14 days between first deciding they need to go to hospital and seeing the psychiatrist.

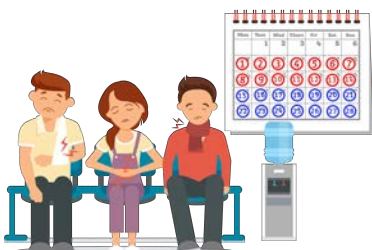


The assessment

The psychiatrist may decide that the prisoner should go to a mental health hospital. This is called an **assessment**.



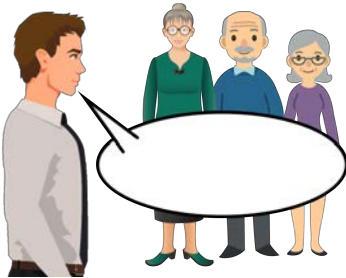
The prisoner should not have to wait more than 14 days between seeing the psychiatrist and being moved to a mental health hospital.



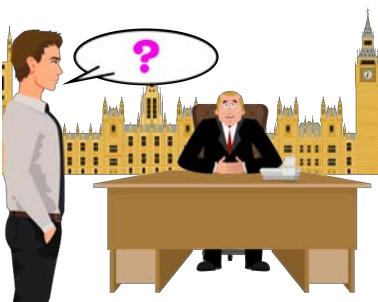
Prisoners should not have to wait more than 28 days between first seeing the prison healthcare staff and being moved to a mental health hospital.

Going to hospital

When they have decided that the prisoner needs to go to a mental health hospital, the prison healthcare staff should:



- Tell the prisoner's family what is happening



- Ask NHS England and NHS Improvement and the Ministry of Justice about which mental health hospital would be best



The Ministry of Justice has to decide whether to allow the prisoner to go to the mental health hospital.

What next?



If the Ministry of Justice decides the prisoner can go to a mental health hospital, prison healthcare staff contact the mental health hospital and give them information about the prisoner.



The hospital has to decide the date that the move can take place.



The prison staff have to make the arrangements for the transport and any escort needed.

Going back to prison



The prisoner will have to go back to prison when the hospital doctors decide either:

- The prisoner doesn't need hospital treatment any more
- There isn't any effective treatment for the prisoner



The Ministry of Justice, the mental health hospital and the prison have to work together to arrange for the prisoner to go back.



The patient must be involved in arrangements for going back to prison.



This should all be done within 14 days.

What happens



The hospital doctors contact the prison mental health service, the prison officers and the Ministry of Justice.



The hospital doctors meet with the prison mental health service to discuss how the prisoner should be treated back in prison.

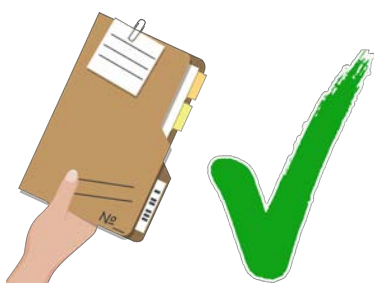


Prisoners will usually go back to the nearest prison.

Sharing information



Staff should follow the rules about sharing information between the prison and the mental health hospital.



Prison staff are allowed to share information about the prisoner with the hospital, including the reason that they are in prison.