

CHIEF PSYCHIATRIST STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)

Appointment of Mental Health Officers under the *Mental Health Act 2015 (s. 201)*

PURPOSE	To outline the process for appointing a Mental Health Officer .
DEFINITIONS	<p>Chief Psychiatrist is a psychiatrist and public servant appointed by the Minister. Functions of the Chief Psychiatrist include provision of treatment, care or support, rehabilitation and protection for persons who have a mental illness.</p> <p>Mental Health Officer is a person appointed or nominated by the Minister for Minister Health to occupy a position as a Mental Health Officer.</p> <p>An eligible nurse, nurse practitioner, psychologist, occupational therapist, or social worker is eligible for appointment as a Mental Health Officer.</p>
DETAILED DESCRIPTION	<p>Before appointing a Mental Health Officer, the Chief Psychiatrist must be satisfied that an applicant is eligible for appointment and has demonstrated competence in the assessment of mental illness and mental disorder and the application of the Act.</p> <p>Appointing a Mental Health Officer</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Clinical Service Director (or equivalent) will make a request, via email to chiefpsychiatrist@act.gov.au for an applicant to be appointed as a Mental Health Officer. This should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • start and end date (if relevant) of employment • confirmation that the applicant has completed prerequisite eLearning in relation to the Act, and • confirmation that the applicant has successfully completed the <i>Mental Health Officer Self-Assessment</i>. 2. The Chief Psychiatrist will review the request, including supporting documentation, and meet with the applicant to ensure they have an in-depth understanding of the role and functions of the Mental Health Officer. 3. The Clinical Service Director (or equivalent) and the applicant will be notified of the decision within three working days of the meeting with the applicant. They will receive a copy of the signed appointment, or the reasons for not approving the appointment.

	<p>Revoking appointment as a Mental Health Officer</p> <p>A person’s appointment as a Mental Health Officer may be revoked:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by the Chief Psychiatrist at any time • when a Mental Health Officer ceases their employment with the service • if there is no operational need for the Mental Health Officer to perform this function • if the Chief Psychiatrist has concerns about the person’s ability or competence to perform functions as a Mental Health Officer. <p>The service will notify the Chief Psychiatrist, via email to chiefpsychiatrist@act.gov.au, immediately when a Mental Health Officer ceases their employment or there is no longer an operational need for the Mental Health Officer to perform this function.</p>
IMPLEMENTATION	<p>The service will disseminate this SOP to all staff.</p> <p>A service-specific policy or procedure may be developed in line with this SOP.</p>
RELATED LEGISLATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mental Health Act 2015</i> • <i>Mental Health (Secure Facilities) Act 2016</i> • <i>Legislation Act 2011</i>
SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	<p>Attachment 1 - Mental Health Officer Application Package</p>

Purpose

The purpose of a Chief Psychiatrist Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to ensure consistent health care provision across the ACT in line with the SOP. It outlines mandatory requirements across the ACT public health system, including requirements for awareness, orientation, education or training.

ACT public health system organisations must comply

A SOP requires ACT public health system organisations (including any affiliated health organisations that comprise the ACT public health system) to comply.

Implementation

- ACT public health system organisations are encouraged to develop their own Policy (includes Procedure, Guideline, Protocol or Pathway) documents to comply with the SOP, if necessary.
- All ACT public health system organisations must ensure that necessary and appropriate orientation, awareness, education and training in relation to the SOP and accompanying organisation-specific Policy (includes Procedure, Guideline, Protocol, Pathway) are provided to relevant staff and documentation maintained.

Further information

SOPs are approved by the Chief Psychiatrist and published on the ACT Health website www.act.health.gov.au

SOPs are reviewed regularly and updated based on new evidence and best practice information. In addition to updating information on the ACT public health system website, a notification will be sent to the distribution list if a SOP is rescinded or superseded.

Relevance for other healthcare organisations in the ACT

Private health providers in the ACT and other relevant ACT Government Directorates involved in provision of healthcare are encouraged to consider this SOP to ensure the same standard of health care is delivered to all health care consumers in the ACT.