



Safer Custody Learning Bulletin

Enhanced Case Management - Prisoners at Risk of Suicide and Serious Self-Harm including those subject to Constant Supervision

Who needs to see this Bulletin?

All Senior Managers, Regional Safer Custody Leads, Safer Custody Teams, Residential Staff, Custodial Managers, ACCT Case Managers, Offender Management Teams (including NPS and CRC), Healthcare Teams.

Key Learning Points:

- The enhanced case management process is designed to help staff in managing prisoners whose behaviour is so disruptive, challenging, and/or difficult to manage that they need additional levels of case management in order to manage their heightened or exceptional risk of harm (to self, others and/or from others) appropriately within the normal custodial regime.
- Prisoners may display anti-social or disruptive behaviour during periods of distress and, whilst this could be deemed as poor behaviour, it is also a sign of increased risk of vulnerability and should be fully explored.
- Enhanced case management is suitable for those prisoners subject to Assessment Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) procedures, who pose a significant risk of harm to themselves in the sense that there is a high likelihood of suicide attempts and/or highly dangerous self-harming behaviour. Whenever a prisoner is subject to constant supervision, consideration should be given to managing them with the additional input of enhanced case reviews.
- Decision making about whether or not to manage someone at high risk using enhanced case reviews should be recorded in their ACCT document and on the prisoner's case notes.
- The enhanced case review team should include all relevant disciplines and include more specialists (as appropriate to the individual case) and a higher level of operational management than a typical ACCT case review team. Those involved should know the prisoner, be involved in their care and be able to contribute positively to the review.
- Every effort must be made to secure regular attendance at meetings. Multi-disciplinary working is an essential element of enhanced case reviews. In exceptional circumstances, where a member of staff is unable to attend and their contribution is vital, a written account should be submitted.
- Consistent, integrated care by all staff involved with the prisoner is critical and the case review should ensure care planning enables staff to provide this. The care provided must actively attempt to engage the individual.

The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) have recently issued reports into a number of deaths in custody in which the prisoner may have benefitted from a more co-ordinated approach to managing their behaviour through the use of enhanced case management, bringing together multi-disciplinary team members with a broader experience of dealing with complex cases.

This safer custody learning bulletin provides an overview of the enhanced case management process and highlights the benefits that a higher level of multi-disciplinary coordination can bring when managing complex behaviour and needs. Showing care, compassion, support and empathy is extremely important in responding to those at risk, including disruptive prisoners who may be trying to hide their vulnerability. It is important to invest the time to talk to, listen and respond to their needs. **Remember – it's okay to talk.**

What is Enhanced Case Management?

- Chapter 8 & 9 of **PSI 64/2011** - Management of prisoners at risk of harm to self, to others and from others (Safer Custody) details the circumstances in which prisoners may benefit from the enhanced case management process.
- Enhanced case management enables staff to identify a prisoner's heightened risk and individual needs and to put in place better arrangements for managing it.
- The principle of enhanced case management is to provide a flexible but consistent approach to managing those at serious risk of harm, actively attempting to engage the individual in order to achieve the desired changes in their behaviour and manage their risk.
- Consistent, integrated care by all staff involved with the prisoner is critical and the case review team will need to ensure care planning enables staff to provide this.

When should Enhanced Case Management be used?

It will be up to case review teams to determine whether an individual's risk has increased and therefore, whether or not enhanced case management is required (further information on defensible decision making in relation to ACCT can be found [here](#)). Below are some suggestions of when it might be appropriate to put enhanced case reviews in place:

- Prolific, sustained and/or extreme incidents of self-harming behaviour (usually requiring medical intervention)
- Prolonged active suicidal intent - from time to time being managed on constant supervision or high level observations
- Prisoners subject to constant supervision
- Prisoners who have been involved in multiple incidents of fire-setting

If enhanced case management has been considered this should be recorded in the ACCT and on the prisoner's case notes (even if the decision was that it was not required).

Who should attend an Enhanced Case Management Review?

- A manager (minimum band 5 in public sector prisons) must chair the review and the prisoner must be involved in case reviews. The review must be multi-disciplinary, with representatives from relevant disciplines to identify challenging behaviour and provide appropriate interventions.
- Individuals attending the review must be given time to prepare, this includes familiarising themselves with the content of the ACCT Plan in advance of it. (Remember, prisoners should be offered a copy of their ACCT Caremap so they will also be able to prepare for the reviews should they wish to do so.)
- It is important to consider, where appropriate, involving positive external relationships such as family members, Carers and Social Workers in all case reviews, including enhanced case reviews where the prisoner gives their consent and there are no public protection concerns. Involvement can either be in person, or through telephone contact with the case manager.

Information on effective multi-disciplinary working for those at risk of suicide or self-harm can be found [here](#).

What happens if someone can't attend a review?

- Every effort must be made to secure attendance from relevant parties. Where a member of staff is unable to attend, a written account must be submitted.
- If individuals have been invited to a review but have not attended and not sent a written submission, consideration must be given as to the importance of their input and whether it is so vital that the review cannot continue without it, this should be recorded in the review write-up.
- The case manager is responsible for raising concerns about non-attendance at review meetings – concerns should be raised to the establishment's Head of Safety.

Case Study:

Mr S was a prolific self-harmer and managing him safely was a significant challenge. During his seven months in prison, staff held over 80 ACCT reviews with him. He also had nearly 50 recorded incidents of self-harm, over 30 of which were by tying ligatures around his neck to self-strangulate.

Mr S's ACCT reviews focussed on controlling his risk, with little evidence of what his needs were, what triggered his distress or what strategies had been agreed to respond to his difficulties. Caremap actions are fundamental to the ACCT process; however, no specific issues were identified, such as his lack of progression, sentence plan, his location, use of psychoactive substances or mental health which, if addressed, might have helped reduce his level of risk.

Mr S was being considered for transfer to a secure hospital. However, only half of his ACCT reviews were attended by healthcare staff, and at his last case review no one from the healthcare team was invited. His case review was held alone, contrary to the instructions in PSI 64/2011.

The nature and frequency of Mr S's self-harm made it difficult for prison staff to prevent his death, but, use of the enhanced case review system would have allowed a high level and more coherent approach to managing his behaviour.