

Supporting families and carers to maintain contact with service users admitted Out Of Area (OOA)

The Trust is committed to offer anyone assessed with acute mental health needs that requires admission to an adult mental health unit, appropriate and timely care at the nearest inpatient facility to where they live. However, we recognise that there may be occasions where this is not possible due to a range of factors including bed availability, clinical need, or patient choice. Where a decision has been made to place a service user outside of their usual catchment area, the following support will be provided so that they can maintain regular contact with family members or carers, and feel familiar as possible with the local environment.

Family informed of decision to admit OOA



Where a decision has been made to admit a service user OOA, the assessment team will contact the family and carers and provide details of the inpatient unit that they will be transported to for treatment, along with relevant contact details. A copy of this leaflet will also be provided to the service users, family, and carers.

Regular contact offer to maintain continuity of care

There are a number of ways to maintain contact including telephone, virtual and face to face. This can be organised by contacting the respective inpatient ward team where service user is admitted:



- Where service users have access to a mobile device, virtual and telephone contact can be maintained directly
- Telephone, virtual or face-to-face contact can be organised with staff, for example, as part of ward rounds with clinical staff or joint meetings with the respective community and inpatient teams to discuss care & treatment, and discharge plans.
- Local community teams where the service user is known to will maintain regular contact virtually as they would if user was admitted locally, and retain their critical role in supporting discharge/transition.

Travel Costs



The Trust will support families and carers with travel costs associated with visiting service users placed OOA*. The reimbursement process for this is to submit receipts of the relevant costs to the ward management team or the local Petty Cash Office at the inpatient unit to receive payment.

All costs related to repatriating service users back to their usual locality of residence will be covered by the Trust (within UK).

**This applies to service users entitled to free NHS care and treatment and usually reside in the UK.*