

Protocol between Mental Health Branch and Community Correctional Services

Department of Justice and Department of Human Services

The Mental Health Branch (MHB), Department of Human Services and Community Correctional Services (CCS), Department of Justice, have jointly developed a protocol recognising the need to enhance coordination and improve communication between staff of the respective sectors to better meet the mental health needs of adults with offences and a mental illness or mental disorder.

The client group will often have multiple problems requiring intervention and support from health and community and social services. More specifically, the protocol focuses on providing a comprehensive and coordinated mental health response. It recognises a number of challenges including:

- Managing the response when an urgent mental health assessment and intervention is considered necessary.
- Managing the complexities of engagement, assessment, diagnosis and/or treatment of some offenders with mental health problems, particularly those with co-morbid personality and/or substance use problems as well as social isolation.
- Managing the differing understandings and expectations of mental illness/disorder among CCS workers, non-government agencies, primary care practitioners and area mental health service (AMHS) staff.

The protocol also outlines best practice principles, the service system, who should be referred, how to make contact with an AMHS and what information is likely to be needed.

Copies of the protocol are available at:

Mental Health Branch

www.health.vic.gov.au/mentalhealth

Community Correctional Services

www.justice.vic.gov.au

Protocol