

STANDARD 1: Outcomes For Service Users

Service users receive a prompt and effective Social Services out of hours response, which is adequate to deal with the need referred or is sufficient to support service users until mainstream services can be provided, if necessary.

CRITERIA	YES	NO
1. Public information is provided on the emergency out of hours service, which includes access arrangements and any eligibility criteria that apply.		
2. Service users can access the emergency out of hours service quickly.		
3. Service users receive an appropriate response which is effective in reducing risk and stabilising an emergency.		
4. Out of hours intervention is followed up efficiently by mainstream services, where necessary.		
5. Service users are able to access the complaints procedure, if dissatisfied with the service they received		
6. Service users express satisfaction with the service provided and are positive about the outcome of their enquiry.		

STANDARD 2: Principles and Policy

The Social Services Department has a clearly written, up-to-date and comprehensive policy for securing emergency out of hours services.

CRITERIA	YES	NO
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1. The department's policy is based on an assessment of the needs of the community, and other relevant organisations, for emergency services outside normal office hours.		
2. The policy defines those emergencies to which the SSD will respond, and the range and nature of that response.		
3. The policy includes all emergency services provided out of hours by the department, including those provided by a designated emergency duty team or staff on rota.		
4. Explicit standards define the quality of service to be provided by the emergency out of hours staff.		
5. The policy defines the links between out of hours and mainstream services.		
6. Where services are provided by another social services department, or as part of a consortium of authorities, the out of hours policy is specified in contracts or service level agreements.		
7. The policy is reviewed periodically, and updated to take into account changing needs in the community.		

STANDARD 3: Inter-agency Collaboration and Cooperation. The Social Services Department works collaboratively with other agencies, and departments within the local authority, to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the provision of emergency out of hours services.

CRITERIA	YES	NO
1. Protocols have been agreed that define the nature and extent of each agency's contribution to shared out of hours responsibilities.		
2. Inter-agency protocols include arrangements for access, exchanging information and maintaining confidentiality.		
3. Regular reviews of inter-agency working are held and working arrangements are adapted as necessary.		
4. Other agencies express satisfaction with the service provided by the social services department.		

STANDARD 4: Assessment and Service Provision

Out of hours assessments are sufficient to determine the nature and extent of the response or services needed, which are then provided promptly.

CRITERIA	YES	NO
1. Services provided by emergency out of hours staff are in accordance with statutory requirements and regulations, that apply to particular service user groups, and in accordance with the SSD's policies and procedures.		
2. Written, up-to-date procedures are available to support the emergency duty team, and are used by staff.		
3. Decisions in response to service user requests are based on clear assessments of need, urgency and risk.		
4. Emergency out of hours staff have access to adequate information about known service users, held by the SSD and other agencies, or departments of the local authority.		
5. Emergency out of hours staff receive care or protection plans which include contingency arrangements for those existing service users who are likely to need an out of hours response.		
6. Emergency out of hours staff are able to access an adequate range of resources to support their intervention, including those commissioned by the SSD and provided externally, which are provided promptly.		
7. On-going casework is communicated effectively through out of hours staff shift changes, and with mainstream staff, in a manner that maintains consistency and avoids duplication.		
8. Intervention demonstrates that emergency out of hours staff understand other agencies' responsibilities, and promote co-operative working.		
9. Case recording complies with the SSD's recording procedures and gives a sufficient account of action taken and services provided.		

STANDARD 5: Equal Opportunities

Emergency out of hours services respond to the needs and preferences of service users, and services provided are sensitive to race, religion, language, culture, gender and disability.

CRITERIA	YES	NO
1. The emergency out of hours policy and procedures demonstrate the department's commitment to equal opportunities.		
2. Information on emergency out of hours services provided is available publicly in a range of media and languages, which reflects the needs of the community.		
3. A range of interpretation and translation services can be accessed by staff out of hours.		
4. Choice is available in the services provided in response to the needs or requirements of service users.		
5. Training in equalities issues is provided for emergency out of hours staff.		
6. The department's ethnic monitoring procedure includes requests for emergency out of hours services, and informs the development of future services.		
7. Service users say that they were treated with respect and that services provided were appropriate to their particular needs.		

STANDARD 6: Staff Competence and Deployment

Emergency out of hours staff are appropriately

recruited, trained, deployed and supervised.

CRITERIA	YES	NO
1. The skills, knowledge and qualifications of out of hours staff are sufficient to provide an emergency out of hours service.		
2. There are clear standards of competency for staff providing emergency out of hours services, which is supported by appropriate training.		
3. Rotas provide adequate staff to deal with the level and nature of anticipated demand.		
4. Staff receive regular and effective supervision, which includes monitoring of their performance.		
5. Where services are contracted out, monitoring arrangements include evaluation of staff performance		
6. Staff on duty can access managers for guidance, support and decision making.		
7. Staff are aware of developments or changes in policy or procedures within the SSD, other departments, agencies or contracted services.		
8. Adequate arrangements are in place to promote the safety and protection of staff providing out of hours services.		
9. Accommodation for staff, which may include working from home, are satisfactory, and allow a rapid response to referrals or enquiries.		

STANDARD 7: Organisation and Management

The SSD's organisation and management arrangements support effective emergency out of hours services.

CRITERIA	YES	NO
1. The organisation of emergency out of hours services is clearly stated and is adequate to implement the SSD's policy.		
2. The provision of emergency out of hours services demonstrates that		

best value for money is obtained.		
3. The delegation of decision making authority is formally recorded and understood by staff and managers.		
4. Management information is collected for monitoring and review purposes.		
5. Information from complaints, both from service users and other agencies, is used to review the effectiveness of the service, and indicate any changes necessary.		
6. Emergency out of hours services provided by other local authorities, or as part of a consortium, are supported by contracts that define management accountability and monitoring arrangements.		
7. There are adequate administrative arrangements to support the provision of out of hours services.		