



Protocol and procedures for secure accommodation services on the use of registered emergency beds

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1. Introduction

Secure accommodation services were deemed registered with the Care Commission in 2002 and most existing services possessed what was, and remains, colloquially described as an 'emergency bed'. This 'emergency bed' is a single secure bedroom which is not an integral part of one of the secure houses. It may be located close to the reception area, for example, or in another part of the service's campus.

Across the sector emergency bedrooms are used infrequently and for short periods. Circumstances where the bedroom may be used include when the presenting behaviours of a young person are too unsettled for them to be in a shared house.

A bedroom may also sometimes be used when a service is full, but may have an impending vacancy, and a previous resident needs to be returned urgently to a secure setting. Whilst in these circumstances the young person is usually "attached" to a house and only sleeps in the bedroom, the other scenario detailed above would be classed as a young person experiencing single separation.

This protocol is designed to ensure consistent practice, expectations and outcomes around the use of these 'emergency beds.'

Providers should also take into account the Health and Social Care Standards and National Secure Care Standards in all considerations of emergency bed placements.

2. Principles of use of a secure accommodation service emergency bedroom

- Services should always operate within their conditions of registration and the maximum number of children and young people detailed on their registration certificate.
- Services may only use an additional bedroom on an emergency basis if their conditions of registration specifically allow this.
- The use of an emergency bed placement, over and above the standard maximum occupancy number on a service's conditions of registration, should be viewed as a very unusual occurrence. It should never be used as a method of managing admissions and/or capacity in either individual services or the secure sector.
- The aims and objectives of services that may use emergency bed placements should contain comprehensive criteria for the use of that placement.

- Emergency bed placements may only be used for a maximum of 72 hours. Services may extend this for a further 48 hours in highly exceptional circumstances, where it can be evidenced that this extension benefits the young person's wellbeing and immediate safety, against all other available care planning options.
- The notification process detailed in the protocol does not indicate 'approval' by the Care Inspectorate of any specific placement or use of the 'emergency bedroom'. It provides a degree of assurance to the regulator that the use of the bedroom meets the protocol parameters. It is the provider's responsibility to assess, on each and every specific occasion, whether the use of the emergency bedroom is a safe and appropriate placement choice.

3. Requirements of secure accommodation services using a registered emergency bed placement

I. Should the emergency bedroom require to be used for an existing young person accommodated in the service it is expected:

- That the placement agency, carers, and advocates for the young person have been consulted on the need for the bedroom to be used. The placing authority must confirm their knowledge of the location of the bedroom and how care, support and supervision will be provided both during the day and night, throughout the young person's stay.
- That the young person and their family have the arrangements appropriately and sensitively explained in a way which they will understand
- A service assessment is undertaken that concludes that the use of the 72-hour emergency bed placement positively meets the young person's needs. This would include: a full assessment of the needs of the young person and the service's capacity to meet their needs, particularly safety; an assessment of the location of the emergency bed and its suitability for that specific young person; the staffing assessment and needs required to manage both the additional young person in the specific location of the emergency bed and the wider group dynamic.
- The use of the bedroom should be notified to the Care Inspectorate through the eforms system under the heading of incidents.
- Should the use of the emergency bed placement be required for a further 48 hours, after the initial 72-hour placement, the provider must submit a further notification to the Care Inspectorate updating the previous confirmations and assessments from the initial notification.
- Throughout the period that the emergency bed is being used the provider must ensure there are formal internal review arrangements of the young person's welfare and initial assessment. Should the use of the emergency bed extend to over 72 hours a formal external review must be held.

- No further extensions to the use of an emergency bed placement should take place. Should the use of the emergency bed placement extend past five days services will be in breach of their conditions of registration.

II. Before accepting an emergency bed placement request, the service must notify the Care Inspectorate on every occasion. It is expected the service will have available, and confirm in the notification:

- Written confirmation from the placing authority that they are aware that the bed placement being offered is for the purposes of an emergency. The placing authority must confirm their knowledge of the location of the bedroom and how care, support and supervision will be provided, both during the day and night, throughout the young person's stay.
- That the young person and their family have the arrangements appropriately and sensitively explained in a way which they will understand.
- Written confirmation from the placing authority of their actions to find/develop alternative provision to the use of the emergency secure bed placement that is being requested. The service must be able to evidence prior to admission that the placement is being made with an initial short-term intention. It is important before the use of any emergency bed placement that both the placing authority and the registered provider are clear about the next steps for the young person.
- Written confirmation from the placing authority that the emergency bed placement is for a maximum period of 72 hours. This should include details of the planned service/ support package that the young person will move to following the 72-hour emergency bed placement.
- A service assessment that concludes that the use of the 72-hour emergency bed placement positively meets the young person's needs and does not/ will not impact on other young people resident. This would include: a full assessment of the needs of the young person and the service's capacity to meet their needs, particularly safety; the needs of other young people in the service and the impact of an additional young person on the existing resident group; an assessment of the location of the emergency bed and its suitability for that specific young person; the staffing assessment and needs required to manage both the additional young person in the specific location of the emergency bed and the wider group dynamic.
- This should be notified to the Care Inspectorate through the eforms system under the heading of incidents.

- Should the use of the emergency bed placement be required for a further 48 hours, after the initial 72-hour placement, the provider must submit a further notification to the Care Inspectorate updating the previous confirmations and assessments from the initial notification.
- Throughout the period that the emergency bed is being used the provider must ensure there are formal internal review arrangements of the young person's welfare and initial assessment. A formal external review must be held within the 72 hours.
- No further extensions to the use of an emergency bed placement should take place. Should the use of the emergency bed placement extend past five days services will be in breach of their conditions of registration.

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