The Hertfordshire Street Triage Scheme

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What is Street triage?

- Partnership working at its best; three organisations working together
- Reducing the number of detentions by the police under Section 136 of the Mental Health Act
- Mental health care professionals provide direct support to police officers dealing with people who are vulnerable because of their mental health condition. They can offer guidance such as how best to make the person safe and provide ongoing care.
- A positive impact on the vulnerable person’s health and a reduction in costs to the public purse; both police and health services.
Section 136 of the Mental Health Act

The Act gives the police the power to remove a person from a public place, when they appear to be suffering from a mental disorder, to a place of safety. The person will be deemed by the police to be in immediate need of care and control as their behaviour is of concern. The police power is to facilitate assessment of their health and wellbeing as well as the safety of other people around them.
The Background

- The Street Triage trial started in April 2016 with one clinician based in the Constabulary’s Force Control Room during peak periods.

- The scheme received positive feedback and was adapted in August 2016 so that now clinicians and officers travel countywide in police vehicles to incidents where mental health is a factor between 9am and 4am.

- Street Triage schemes are operating in over 25 of the 42 police forces in the UK.

- A short film to give you a flavour of the project [https://youtu.be/uoSxlcppp5E](https://youtu.be/uoSxlcppp5E)
Issues

• Before the introduction of the countywide scheme there were approximately 94 S136 detentions in August 2016 compared to 51 the following month.
• Estimated costs in public services were £6.5k per person
• Those experiencing a mental health crisis in Hertfordshire have not been detained in a police cell as a place of safety for over two years – only two forces in the UK.
• Officers spent time waiting with the detained person for an assessment
• Those experiencing a mental health crisis having to wait to receive assessment and treatment
The Benefits

• Much improved experience for service user removing stigma of sitting with officers in waiting areas and reducing delay in receiving assessment and treatment.

• In December 2016 a pilot was conducted with a Paramedic in one vehicle and this prevented 44 people from attending Accident & Emergency departments.

• Officer A&E waiting times reduced by approximately 264 hours or almost 7 weeks of an officer’s time.
In Addition

- Police and Ambulance service have access to advice via mobile phone on all types of mental health related issues.
- Ambulance service provides an equipped vehicle with the ability to treat most minor injuries, access to the poisons database and capable of conveying the service user to the Kingsley Green facility complying with the National Guidelines.
- Working closely with Hertfordshire NightLight; an out of hour’s crisis service providing a safe and welcoming space for people who are feeling distressed and experiencing a crisis.
The future of Street Triage

• Looking to move to 24 hour cover, seven days a week for improved levels of service and legislation compliance.
• Researching a bespoke street triage ambulance with space for paramedic equipment, staff and shared IT with ability to convey service users in safety and comfort.
• New Mental Health and Vulnerability training packages being delivered to front line police officers incorporating College of Policing guidelines.
Next steps

• New Paramedic trial started in March 2017, now extended to 31st Dec 2017.
• Evaluation being conducted through Police and Crime Commissioner Office and HPFT; to assess impact across agencies and determine whether it should become a permanent partner resource with formal agreements.