

Payments and Availability Policy and Procedures

Approved by	<i>Debora Colvin: Chief Mental Health Advocate</i>
Contact	<i>Senior Advocate or Manager</i>
Related documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Terms and conditions of engagement</i> • <i>Mental Health Act (2014) especially S351(d)</i>
Date effective	<i>30 November 2015</i>
Date of next review	<i>30 November 2016</i>

Contents

A. Purpose	1
B. Scope	2
C. Policy and Procedures	2
Appendix 1 – Travel forms for intrastate travel.....	9
Appendix 2 – Reimbursement of meal expenses for intrastate travel	10
Appendix 3 – Alternative Pay Claim for Advocates.....	10
D. Version Control and Change History.....	10

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to articulate the Chief Mental Health Advocate’s (Chief) policy and procedure in relation to making payments to Mental Health Advocates (Advocates) and Senior Mental Health Advocates (Seniors). More specifically the policy and procedure will provide guidance on the workings of:

1. Recording Advocates’ activities
2. Minimum hours for Advocates
3. Working more than 75 hours per fortnight
4. Motor vehicle allowance
5. Administration payments
6. Call out fees
7. Advocates’ claims for payment
8. Seniors’ claims for payment
9. Intrastate travel

- 10. Planned unavailability/Time off
- 11. Unplanned absences

B. Scope

- B.1. This policy and procedure applies to all Advocates and Seniors.
- B.2. The Chief and MHAS Manager have an oversight role.

C. Policy and Procedures

POLICY AND PROCEDURE (*Policy in italics*)

RESPONSIBILITY

POLICY AND PROCEDURE (<i>Policy in italics</i>)	RESPONSIBILITY
<p>1. <u>Recording Advocates' activities</u></p> <p>Advocates must record all work activity in the Integrated Case Management System (ICMS).</p> <p>Where the ICMS does not allow for recording an activity, the Advocate must keep a record which is to be provided to the Senior (and advise the Senior of the recording issue with the ICMS).</p>	<p>Advocate</p> <p>Advocate</p>
<p>2. <u>Minimum Hours for Advocates</u></p> <p><i>Some advocates may be guaranteed payment for minimum hours of work provided they meet certain conditions including availability to work. Their letter of engagement states the minimum hours they are guaranteed and that the Chief Mental Health Advocate "will undertake to ensure the availability of work for these minimum number of hours".</i></p> <p><i>Other advocates are not guaranteed minimum hours of work in which case their letter of engagement states:</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>"You will be expected to be available to work a minimum of 0 hours each fortnight. I will undertake to ensure the availability of work for these minimum number of hours."</i></p> <p><i>Advocates without minimum hours who regularly do not make themselves readily available for work may find that work is allocated to other advocates.</i></p> <p><i>Advocates who are guaranteed minimum hours are responsible for alerting the Senior in a timely manner if there is a prospect that the minimum hours for that fortnight might not be met so that additional work can be allocated.</i></p> <p><i>Seniors are also responsible for the management of Advocates' contracts for service and ensuring that Advocates work the minimum number of hours they</i></p>	

<p><i>have been contracted to perform where specified.</i></p> <p>Advocates with minimum hours in their contract must monitor and advise the Senior immediately if they discover they do not have enough work to ensure they meet their minimum hours. Failure to do so may result in the Advocate not being paid their agreed minimum hours.</p> <p>Seniors must produce ICMS reports listing Advocates and the hours they have worked during the pay period and compare the report to minimum hours for each Advocate who is contracted to work on minimum hours.</p> <p>Where the report indicates that there is a risk that an Advocate may not meet the minimum hours, the Senior will contact the Advocate to try to resolve the matter.</p> <p>Additional work will be allocated to an Advocate at risk of not meeting the minimum hours.</p> <p>Advocates who are unavailable to do the work necessary to meet the minimum hours will be paid for the hours worked but not the contracted minimum hours.</p>	<p>Advocate</p> <p>Senior</p> <p>Senior</p> <p>Senior</p> <p>Advocate</p>
<p>3. <u>Working more than 75 hours per fortnight</u></p> <p><i>In recognition that working too many hours can have a detrimental effect on an Advocate or Senior Advocate's effectiveness and health, and to manage the MHAS budget, a maximum number of 75 hours work per fortnight is set.</i></p> <p>Advocates need to advise the Senior and Chief if they are at risk of working more than 75 hours a fortnight so that Senior can reallocate work.</p> <p>Only the Chief can approve payment for more than 75 hours per fortnight for Advocates or Seniors. Prior written approval must be sought from the Chief.</p>	<p>Advocate</p> <p>Advocate or Senior</p>
<p>4. <u>Motor vehicle allowance</u></p> <p><i>A visit to a consumer in a facility is the preferred means of contact by an Advocate when the consumer is a child, has just been made an involuntary inpatient, is not known to the Advocate, or where a Serious Issue as defined by the Serious Issue Protocol is indicated. Advocates are therefore regularly required to travel to facilities to carry out their statutory functions for which a motor vehicle allowance may be claimed including from and to the Advocate's home and facilities.</i></p> <p><i>Advocates are usually allocated to facilities close to their home in order to conserve costs and make efficient use of their time but this is not always possible. In limited circumstances, claims for travel time may be authorised by the Chief in order to ensure that the Mental Health 2014 obligations and MHS</i></p>	

POLICY AND PROCEDURE (*Policy in italics*)

RESPONSIBILITY

<p><i>protocols are met. Time spent travelling to and from the Advocate’s home and facilities is not claimable.</i></p> <p>Motor Vehicle Allowance</p> <p>An Advocate may claim a motor vehicle allowance to perform their statutory functions under the Mental Health Act 2014 (eg visit consumers or attend hearings) for travel to and from the Advocate’s home and the facility, and between facilities. In some cases the Advocate’s home may be a different address as agreed with the Chief.</p> <p>A Senior may claim a motor vehicle allowance for travel from the office to a facility or another place to perform statutory functions to provide approved services on behalf of the Chief.</p> <p>A motor vehicle allowance for an Advocate or Senior to travel to non-statutory work (eg approved meetings or training) will be paid for round trips in excess of 50 kilometres.</p> <p><u>Travel Time:</u></p> <p>1) An Advocate or Senior may be given prior and standing approval in writing to claim travel time where the Advocate is required by the Chief to travel:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. regularly to, from and between multiple facilities including across team boundaries in the same day, provided that the distance travelled between the facilities on the same day is more than 30kms; or b. on a regular basis between two facilities that are more than 30kms apart (based on the shortest route as calculated by whereis.com) provided the claim is limited to a maximum of 1 hour for the day. <p><i>[Examples:</i></p> <p><i>(a) the Youth Advocate or another specialist Advocate who has been asked to operate across team boundaries);</i></p> <p><i>(b) where an Advocate has been allocated to two hospitals such as Fremantle and Rockingham or Midland and Joondalup, or Joondalup and Graylands and is expected to have to regularly visit each in order to complete initiated tasks; or where an Advocate is allocated to cover for another Advocate on leave and will have to regularly visit two hospitals more than 30kms apart in order to complete initiated tasks.</i></p> <p>The travel time claim must be reasonable and be shown to have been an</p>	<p>Advocate</p> <p>Senior</p> <p>Advocate or Senior</p> <p>Advocate or Senior</p>
--	---

POLICY AND PROCEDURE (*Policy in italics*)

RESPONSIBILITY

<p>efficient and economic use of time on the day or that the trip was necessary in order to comply with time constraints in the Mental Health Act 2014 or MHAS protocols. Advocates are expected to try to combine work to avoid travelling between two hospitals in one day.</p> <p>The claimant may be required to provide proof that the travel was necessary.</p> <p>Where a call-out fee or travel time can be claimed, the lesser of the two prevails. See clause F on “Call out fees” below.</p> <p>Travel time between an Advocate’s home or a place designated as the normal place of business, and a facility, cannot be claimed.</p> <p>2) Seniors may claim travel time to meetings, presentations and inspections outside the office.</p>	<p>Advocate or Senior</p>
<p>5. <u>Administration payments</u></p> <p><i>In recognition of the requirement to perform administration tasks, Advocates are entitled to claim payment without the need to demonstrate how this time was used.</i></p> <p>Advocates may claim one hour payment per fortnight for administration time. This will need to be claimed but details of how this time was spent will not need to be set out in the claim for payment.</p> <p>Either the Chief or the Senior may approve additional administration payments.</p>	<p>Advocate</p> <p>Senior or Chief</p>
<p>6. <u>Call out fees</u></p> <p><i>Call out fees are paid in recognition of those Advocates who might have to travel to a facility to comply with the requirement of the Mental Health Act 2014 and then only spend a few minutes talking to the consumer.</i></p> <p><u>Regional Advocates</u></p> <p>Regional Advocates will be entitled to a claim a one hour call out fee in their fortnightly claim for payment when they are required to leave their home to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">1.1. visit a consumer(s); or1.2. perform a service for a consumer(s) <p>subject to the work being conducted in a cost and resource efficient manner.</p>	<p>Regional Advocates</p>

POLICY AND PROCEDURE (*Policy in italics*)

RESPONSIBILITY

<p>Payment of call out fees may be queried and must be approved by the Senior.</p> <p><u>Youth Advocate and other Advocates visiting children:</u></p> <p>The Youth Advocate, or any Advocate working in the metropolitan area, required to visit a child by the Chief or a Senior Advocate at short notice to comply with s357 of the Act:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who has no other work that day; or • when the visit cannot be combined with other work (see example below); <p>may claim a 1 hour call out fee, provided that they are not already claiming travel time and subject to work being conducted in a cost and resource efficient manner.</p> <p>The instruction to the Youth Advocate to visit a child may be delegated to the Advocate checking the answering machine on weekends.</p> <p><i>[Examples. On a weekend when a child has been made involuntary and the Advocate was not doing any other work, or where the Advocate has finished work for that day and is required to go out again in order to meet the 24 hour time limit.]</i></p>	<p>Senior</p> <p>Youth and other Advocates</p>
<p>7. <u>Advocates' claims for payment</u></p> <p><i>A claim for payment needs to be made every fortnight. This is so the MHAS budget and Advocates' workloads can be effectively monitored.</i></p> <p>Advocates must generate a payment claim report using ICMS (if this functionality has been built) otherwise using the attached form at Appendix 3.</p> <p>The Advocate must ensure the claim is a true, accurate and complete reflection of the time spent providing MHAS functions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Time must be recorded against each consumer and/or facility performing their functions under the Mental Health Act 2014 (including entering information into ICMS, visits, tasks relating to consumers). ii. Detail time for approved non-advocacy work (ie attend training or a meeting, monitor the answering machine over weekends, give a presentation or represent MHAS on a committee). iii. Mileage costs (see Motor vehicle allowance). <p>The Advocate must forward the claim to the Senior every two weeks within the timeframes requested which will be advised by the Seniors or office staff. Claims received late may need to be processed for the next pay date.</p>	<p>Advocate</p> <p>Advocate</p> <p>Advocate</p>

POLICY AND PROCEDURE (*Policy in italics*)**RESPONSIBILITY**

<p>The Senior must review the claim for payment. Any queries should be discussed with the Advocate where possible and a record made of the issue and resolution must accompany the pay claims and be provided to the Advocate.</p> <p>The Senior forwards approved pay claims for processing.</p> <p>Where an Advocate has a query regarding their payment, they should raise this with the Senior in the first instance.</p>	<p>Senior</p> <p>Senior</p> <p>Advocate</p>
<p>8. <u>Seniors' claims for payment</u></p> <p><i>A claim for payment needs to be made every fortnight. This is so the MHAS budget and Seniors' workloads can be effectively monitored.</i></p> <p>Seniors are responsible for maintaining a record of the hours worked and to advise the Chief if they are at risk of failing to work the minimum number of hours.</p> <p>A Senior needs to lodge a pay claim setting out the hours worked and any kilometers travelled each fortnight in the approved form.</p> <p>A Senior cannot claim more than 75 hours in a fortnight unless they have received prior written consent from the Chief.</p> <p>The Chief, or the Chief's delegate, will approve the payment and arrange for the payment to be processed.</p>	<p>Senior</p> <p>Senior</p> <p>Senior</p> <p>Chief</p>
<p>9. <u>Intra and Interstate Travel</u></p> <p><i>Intra and interstate travel requires prior approval by the Chief and is to be based on the most economical and efficient means of transport available. Reimbursement of expenses for meals when travelling intrastate on MHAS business will be made on production of a tax invoice and original receipt (could be the same). The payment amount will be capped to the amounts set out in Public Sector Award, Schedule 1 or the value of the receipts provided, whichever is the lesser.</i></p> <p><i>Travel time is not reimbursed. Travel arrangements may be organised by MHAS office staff or by reimbursement if there is prior agreement.</i></p> <p>A Senior or Advocate needs to complete a travel application where intra or interstate travel is required to perform a service for MHAS (see Appendix 1).</p> <p>Applications for travel for Advocates should be forwarded to a Senior; applications for travel for Seniors should be forwarded to the Chief or their delegate for processing.</p>	<p>Advocate or Senior</p> <p>Advocate or Senior</p>

POLICY AND PROCEDURE (*Policy in italics*)

RESPONSIBILITY

<p>MHAS staff will make intrastate travel arrangements for accommodation and airfares where an Advocate is required to travel by the Chief.</p> <p>Separate arrangements for partial reimbursement of Advocates travel may be made with the prior approval of the Chief where the Advocate is contributing to some of the travel expense. In such cases the Advocate may be required to organise the travel arrangements and original invoices and receipts will be required.</p> <p>The Senior or Advocate can claim for reimbursement of the cost of meals on the attached form (Appendix 2). To access the form:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">1.1.1. Click on the icon in Appendix 11.1.2. The form will open in Excel1.1.3. Choose "Enable macros" <p>Complete the form, attach receipts and forward to the Senior or Chief for approval and processing.</p> <p>The Senior or Chief (or their delegate) approves the claim and forwards it for processing.</p>	<p>Staff</p> <p>Advocate or Senior</p> <p>Senior or Chief</p>
<p><u>10. Planned unavailability/Time off</u></p> <p><i>Advocates and Seniors are expected to take 4 weeks of time off from MHAS functions per calendar year in recognition that working without a break can have a detrimental effect on an Advocate or Senior Advocate's effectiveness, health and wellbeing.</i></p> <p><i>Planned periods of absence need to be approved prior to commencement providing as much notice as possible to allow for arrangements to be made to re-allocate their work and find alternative Advocates.</i></p> <p><i>Where a person is unable to make themselves available for 48 weeks each year, consideration may be given to reducing the amount of work allocated.</i></p> <p><i>Planned periods of absence need to be approved with due regard for the operational requirements of MHAS and the circumstances of the Advocate or Senior.</i></p> <p><i>MHAS will make reasonable efforts to accommodate requests for periods of unavailability.</i></p> <p><i>Periods for which Advocates and Seniors have an approved absence will be recorded in an MHAS register and available to all parties.</i></p>	

POLICY AND PROCEDURE (*Policy in italics*)

RESPONSIBILITY

<p>Advocates must seek approval for planned absences in writing from the Senior.</p> <p>Seniors must seek approval in writing for planned absences from the Chief.</p> <p>The person approving the absence will consider whether there are sufficient Advocates or Seniors available to meet the expected demand for services during the proposed period of absence.</p> <p>The person considering the request will make reasonable efforts to make arrangements to cover the absence so that the period of absence can be approved.</p> <p>The person considering the request will provide their decision in writing as soon as possible to the applicant. All approved periods of absence will also be forward to MHAS staff to be recorded in a register.</p>	<p>Advocate</p> <p>Senior</p> <p>Senior or Chief</p> <p>Senior or Chief</p> <p>Senior or Chief</p>
<p>11. <u>Unplanned absences</u></p> <p>An Advocate who is unexpectedly unavailable to perform the services for which they have been engaged must advise the Senior as soon as possible.</p> <p>A Senior who is unexpectedly unavailable to perform the services for which they have been engaged needs to advise the Chief as soon as possible.</p> <p>Both the Senior or Advocate (or a person on their behalf) must advise the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. reason for the absence; andii. expected period of absence. <p>If possible the Senior or Advocate should also advise of any urgent work and other ongoing matters that require attention and any possible arrangements that can to be made to meet that need (ie where another Advocate knows a consumer and can be temporarily allocated).</p> <p>Advocates and Seniors who are not available and do not provide good reason may have their contracts reviewed and potentially terminated.</p>	<p>Advocate</p> <p>Senior</p> <p>Advocate or Senior</p> <p>Advocate or Senior</p>

Appendix 1 – Travel forms for intrastate travel



Travel Proposal Form.DOCX



Travel Reconciliation Statement.DOC

Appendix 2 – Reimbursement of meal expenses for intrastate travel



AP2
REIMBURSEMENT OF

Appendix 3 – Alternative Pay Claim for Advocates



Microsoft Word 97 -
2003 Document

D. Version Control and Change History

Version number	Approval Date	Approved by	Amendment
1.0	21 October 2015	Chief	Original
1.1	27 October 2015	Chief	Explanation of zero minimum hours
1.2	18 May 2016	Executive Team	To clauses 4, 6, 9 and 10 and Appendix 1